

**“Salvation Is Not the Journey’s End; Rather, It’s a Lifestyle”
in Hermann Hesse’s *Siddhartha***

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Paper Received on 01-09-2026, Accepted on 01-10-2026
Published on 02-10-2026; DOI:10.36993/RJOE.2026.11.21

Abstract

The tale of ‘Siddhartha’ is a quest rather than a mere story.

“The word ‘Siddhartha’ itself possesses the resemblance of deconstruction in its meaning. ‘Siddha’ means ‘achieved’ and ‘Artha’ means ‘to search for’. The search and reaching of goal stand in the single medium of Siddhartha’s life. Siddhartha has searched the path of spiritual wisdom to attain the roots of salvation. He has achieved after a long journey of Sansara instead of getting from spirituality” (P.V. Rajlakshmi). It’s the thirst for attaining the right knowledge, the existence of Atman was growing exponentially. He was in the quest of his real self. Siddhartha was more interested to learn from his own experiences & then realize the true world as compared to that of the bookish learnings or the priest’s preachings. As the title of this paper suggests, that attaining Salvation is not the Journey’s End rather it’s a Lifestyle; it will completely showcase the same through the journey of Siddhartha. He’ll learn a lot through the occurrences of life that we’ll also see in this work. Siddhartha practiced these three skills i.e., thinking, fasting & waiting. Later, he came to know that the unquenched thirst for knowledge or whatever may be the thing for that matter was the real grief of life. Desire for anything is the root cause of misery. Towards the end, we’ll feel that he had the goal: to become empty of thoughts, get rid of desire, accept what’s coming on the way & to seek a state of mental-emotional equilibrium.

Siddhartha’s life was flowy like that of water. Just as water flows, he flowed along with the different phenomena of his life. To achieve salvation in ‘real terms’, one has to go through the thick & thin of life as to experience the real taste of life. One cannot attain salvation by following somebody else’s lifestyle. Hesse opines that the core of man’s existence is to unfold himself and to be himself, through the protagonist Siddhartha. We’ll also spot in the novel that both Siddhartha & Buddha were agreed to the fact that the experience of enlightenment could never be described in words; it can only be felt & this feeling is confined to a person’s own self & differs from person to person.

Themes were drawn from the Eastern religion such as meditation, fasting, renunciation, timelessness, transcending, suffering etc. The readers could get here a glimpse of the Eastern culture, thoughts, beliefs, traditions through this work who

were even unaware of the same. There are many uncanny similarities between the protagonist of Hesse's novel *Siddhartha* & the real historical Buddha's life starting from the lifestyle, his distinct phases of life to the renunciation of the material world, to reaching salvation & such. Hesse wanted to convey a strong sense of parallelism & to draw a line & also put an earnest effort to showcase both of the personalities hand-in-hand so that, the readers could connect with them easily.

Keywords Spiritual Quest, Thirst for Knowledge, Existentialism, Self-realization, Desires, Sansara, Repentance, Enlightenment, Indian philosophy.

Introduction:

The main aim of the paper is to showcase the fact that attaining Salvation or Nirvana is not a stop or a destination rather it's a way of living. We, generally think attaining enlightenment is the ultimate thing which a person could only get towards the end of his life however we could get it through our deeds. Basically, salvation means liberation of atman(soul) from the cycle of death and rebirth. People tend to consider that detachment from everything and keeping a one-track mind away from the material world will lead to salvation. However, we fail to understand that the path to salvation goes through the experience of this material world. And then we grasp the idea of liberation clearly. To understand this phenomenon crisply, *Siddhartha* is worth to be read.

Review Of Literature:

The title and the work that I have taken is new to a considerable extent. There are a few sources that directly or indirectly have taken on Salvation is not the Journey's End rather it's a Lifestyle in *Siddhartha*. The central theme of the novel being the idea of salvation; that's a way of living and how it is a broad concept to decipher, the paper aims to expand this idea vividly.

Methodology:

The novel *Siddhartha* has been referred as the primary source in presenting the Salvation as not a destination in the book, and the online websites or journal articles that have been referred to has been taken record of, and cited.

Siddhartha is a young man who leaves home to find the real meaning and purpose in life. He meets many people on this spiritual journey of self-discovery who assist him to find inner peace and enlightenment. This tale of *Siddhartha*'s trip towards attaining salvation is the interaction between the material world and the spiritual world. Generally, we people tend to think it's the material world which has everything in it and which is the only world whereas there is one such another world which is greater and even more sumptuous than the former one. It's the spiritual world. This book will be able to change this perspective of people and will be a torch

bearer to understand the spiritual world. The material world will not be complete without the spiritual one.

The novel revolves around the life of Siddhartha. It was the quest for acquiring authentic knowledge, real nature and real existential temperament. This tale contains a whole lot of emotions rolled into one; it has love, sorrow, anxiety, calmness, friendship, instability, divinity, alienation, kinship, disgust, enlightenment so on and so forth. How the trajectory of the life of Siddhartha moves through his actions, thought processes, perspectives & understanding; forms the base of the novel! A "1922" novel "*Siddhartha*" written by "*Hermann Hesse*" in German in a simple style. A Nobel prize winner in literature in 1946, knew aptly to cater to the literary hunger of the readers. Translated into "*English*" by "*Hilda Rosner*". Again, published in the U.S. in "1951" and became influential during the "1960s". The author has dedicated the 1st part of it to "*Romain Rolland*" & the 2nd part to "*Wilhelm Gundert*", his cousin, in Japan.

The novel commences with Siddhartha as a young man who is not contented with his life and searches for the true meaning. For this sake, he adopts the way of asceticism to achieve enlightenment. However, he realizes that all this is incomplete without experiencing the material world. He then, moved to that extreme from being a Samana to a hardcore materialist having a well-paid job, indulging in physical pleasures with that of a bewitching woman, immersing himself in gambling, drinking, eating as well as sense gratification. Siddhartha realized that this lifestyle is not desirable and suitable at least for a man like him and there must be an equilibrium between the two. He became successful in figuring out the balance towards the end of the novel with the assistance of a ferryman and the river.

For each and every one, the way of attaining enlightenment or salvation is distinct from the other. In life, we have to search our goal and reach it to fulfill ourselves. And the means to achieve it is necessarily not the same. Reaching salvation is not a destination rather it's a lifestyle. It works throughout the life. Salvation is not a matter of a single day. Everyday we work towards it little by little to achieve the same. Moreover, the essence of enlightenment already exists within us and is also present in this world at every moment. So, we don't really have to consider it to be a stop.

Siddhartha, the son of a Brahmin, had a quest for eternal knowledge & his quest is not satiated by the not so typical activities or practices done by the Sannyasis. He wanted something real, meaningful, something to which he could connect to & be able to decipher. He wanted to undergo everything by his own self. And certainly, not through somebody else's experiences.

Though he has learnt everything from the Vedas & Upanishads, his heart has the thirst to find the flawless ways of reaching salvation. He had learnt many arts from the Samanas way of practices. However, he was not contented. So, he entered the world of Samsara, the world of material & physical pleasures. At a stage, he realized that his tenderness, his real self & his spiritual skills have flown from him because of his deviation towards the worldly life. Eventually, he finds out the divinity within himself that he was searching outside, in the external world. Siddhartha used to ask a lot of questions & he needed the answers of that however, hardly one of them was being answered in a proper way. He was being told that asking so many questions would lead him to a sense of disappointment & dissatisfaction. He didn't want to learn through books or the bookish teachings. Instead, he was interested in the real-life experiences.

Siddhartha had started to nurse discontentment in himself, he had started to feel that the love of his father and the love of his mother, and also the love of his friend, Govinda, would not bring him joy forever and ever, would not nurse him, feed him, satisfy him. He had started to suspect that his venerable father and his other teachers, that the wise brahmans had already revealed to him the most and best of their wisdom, that they had already filled the expecting vessel was not full, the spirit was not content, the soul was not calm, the heart was not satisfied (Hesse, 11-12).

Siddhartha was a distinct person, not like any ordinary layman, who walks in a sheep's herd, doesn't apply his mind & will do according to others opinions. He was not like that. His mind and heart were like that of a child's, always full of questions and curiosity. Surely, a person's continuously posing questions may make him seem quite intellectual however, this curiosity leads a man towards unhappiness & disappointment. The desire to attain more knowledge, wisdom & enlightenment took him to the less treaded path taken up usually by the Samanas i.e., the stepping into the world of Sansara.

The meaning, the definition, the feeling of attaining Salvation differs from person to person. Its not the same what may be the means & the ends for the Salvation for one person is surely different for that to the other. Its through sole individual experiences. The fact was that Siddhartha could not hold on to a single thing. He had a wavering belief on things, situations & people. This led to rather attaining salvation, he glided towards the sensual pleasures of life.

"There's a traditional saying, that one man could never reach salvation if he belonged to Sansara. But Siddhartha finds the path to attain Salvation through comes across the experiences of Sansara" (P.V. Rajlakshmi).

Through experiences, we attain knowledge. Gaining wisdom is something which happens internally instead of externally. We do spiritual practices, we follow

it, for the gaining of knowledge & we get it from various teachers in our lives & as that the same with Siddhartha as well. However, to gain/reach wisdom, we have to push ourselves i.e., there's no teacher to make us learn wisdom, it comes from within. And everyone has his own degree & definition of wisdom.

"The combined experiences of, good and bad, bliss and stress, fortune and misfortune, are standing in the medium of Siddhartha's life in various circumstances. After experiencing all these emotions, Siddhartha turns his vision to himself rather than to the external experiences. He feels the satisfaction, when he starts to experience his inner self. Its his self-realization leads the human being towards the way for reaching salvation. The awakening happens, when he enchants the 'OM' after seeing the images of his life in the river stream. It's an inducing factor of suppressed emotions" (P.V. Rajlakshmi).

As we all know, there are four pillars of Hinduism namely, Dharma (righteousness), Artha (economic values), Kama (pleasure), Moksha (liberation). Also considered as the Purusharthas. It's believed that an individual could never ever attain liberation in real terms without passing the other three phases or stages in life. These three are necessary. These provide Hindus with the opportunity to live a happy life by behaving rationally & thoughtfully. These are supposed to be the blueprint for human fulfillment. Here, Siddhartha experienced the four pillars to attain the Salvation in real terms. In the commencement of the novel, we encountered the one-track mind of our protagonist i.e., to reach enlightenment, actual knowledge, to know the Atman whereas through the progression of the novel, he realized that all these things could be gained through individual experiences, doesn't matter whether the best or the worst. Because that could only be considered as Real.

Siddhartha felt that whatever works/ ablutions, meditation, yoga, practices he's been doing were a temporary cure from the self and along with that of the life of the Samanas. These are not full proof i.e., not the complete removal from the self. And this is not what he wanted. He was not an ordinary man who would get contented by the temporary peace. He expected something more meaningful, more precious, deeper. In this context, he was talking with his confidant Govinda about an aged Samana from whom these two men were learning spiritual practices where he says, *He has lived for sixty years and has not attained nirvana. He will turn seventy and eighty, and you and I, we will grow just as old and will do our exercises, and will fast, and will meditate. But we will not reach nirvana. He won't and we won't. O Govinda, I believe of all Samanas out there, perhaps not a single one, not a single one will reach nirvana. We find comfort, we find numbness, we learn feats to deceive others. But the most important thing, the path of paths, we will not find (Hesse, 26).*

"The temporary escape from the self is no more than tricks to deceive as Siddhartha says. Siddhartha feels that it isn't of much value as the purpose of attaining nirvana is not fulfilled; rather they fool themselves and their mind by finding a temporary cure which does no good to them/ their goal" (S. Manoj).

When Siddhartha left home along with that of his bosom friend Govinda to join the Samanas, one fine day they came to know, "News had been spreading around that in one or another place there was a man, a wise man, a knowledgeable one, whose word and breath was enough to heal everyone who had been infected with the pestilence" (29).

In this manner the myth ran through the land, that fragrant myth of Gotama, the Buddha, the wise man of the family of Sakya. He possessed, so the believers said, the highest enlightenment, he remembered his previous lives, he had reached nirvana and never returned into the cycle, was never again submerged in the murky river of physical forms (Hesse, 29).

When Siddhartha met Gotama, the brilliant, the exalted one, the larger-than-life figure, the person with an aura in himself & his personality, he became spellbound & had a talk with the legend. From that discourse, he got some significant takeaways which helped Siddhartha to get steps closer towards his goals. When Siddhartha asked the Exalted one about the latter's teachings which were considered to be somewhat perfect by everybody, the former also posed this question that why everything in this world that has unity is being broken through a small gap? And that gap may be something new or alien or something which had not been present there before & such. He's saying that this tiny breach is breaking up the uniformity & making it void. To this Gotama answered,

You've heard the teachings, O son of a Brahman, and good for you that you've thought about it deeply. You have found a gap in it, an error. You should think about this further. But be warned, O seeker of knowledge, of thicket of opinions and of arguments about words. There is nothing to opinions, they may be beautiful or ugly, smart or foolish, everyone can support them or discard them. But the teachings you've heard from me are no opinion, and their goal is not to explain the world to those who seek knowledge. They have a different goal; their goal is salvation from suffering. This is what Gotama teaches, nothing else (Hesse, 41).

After this, when we read further, we would stumble upon the clearer fact that, finding salvation is a person's own thing. It's the course of his own search, his own path, his realizations, his experiences. And most significantly, it's not going to come through anybody's teachings instead of individual's own adventures that I have stated earlier as well. Because when enlightenment will happen to any individual, only he'll be able to feel it, grasp it & experience it. Nobody else will. And this enlightened

person will not be able to make others understand about the same feeling. For this reason, Siddhartha made his mind up to become his own self & self-reliant. He'll find his own way to find his self, his inner peace, enlightenment. Doesn't matter how his expedition would be, good /bad! This would be his sole journey towards Salvation. Eventually, we would see that he would plunge himself into Sansara & also quit the same & would lead the life of a ferryman. He would learn from the River and would attain Enlightenment through Vasudeva. Lastly, Siddhartha would become a means for the attainment of Govinda's enlightenment.

Here, the question arises when Siddhartha decided to take up the journey towards his goal by being only a disciple of Buddha as his thirst for self-discovery is not quenched as compared to that of his friend Govinda that whether in the experiences of Siddhartha, the presence of existentialism is present or not? Can we consider his journey to be existential or not? To make this clear, we need to have a quick short recap of existentialism:

"Existentialism refers to a set of ideas about human existence. Precisely the main tenets include the following:

- *Freedom of Choice.*
- *Sense of unique Self & Individuality.*
- *We live; we experience; rather than just be.*
- *Every existence is unique; we have no universal humanity, but we must create ourselves individually through experiencing the world.*
- *We are not human except through what we do & such" (Muhammad Imran).*

We will encounter all these features in Siddhartha's journey which will turn him into a true existentialist. The emphasis would be laid on his own individuality & free-will. He'll listen to his own heart & mind as well as avoid blindly following up the teachings of others. He'll start to keep faith on his own self & and would be ready to bear the consequences of his decisions whether the Best or the Worst. As we are aware of the fact that the time of experiencing enlightenment would be purely subjective.

The questions regarding his existence started to haunt him. For inst, who is he? Where does he stand in the scheme of things of this universe? From where he has come from & to where does he belong? What is he supposed to do? Questions like these; he started to experience. Self-discovery & self-realization is the root cause of the protagonist's journey in the novel. To him, its to have an experiential learning rather than living a dull life like that of a hermit.

Siddhartha's life led him in a new direction & eventually towards a new life. He got attracted towards a woman who was a courtesan & loved her & was reciprocated as well, learnt the art of love & companionship from her, lived the life

of a merchant, accumulated wealth & such. This was Sansara in a pure form. Here, at this stage, he experienced the three among the four Purusharthas i.e., Dharma, Artha & Kama. He had completely forgotten about his previous life of a Samana/ the Ascetic life that he used to live.

Now, Siddhartha was completely lost in the world of desires & appearances & was indulged into the sense gratification. Started to enjoy the feelings of hopes, worries, anxieties & all those what an ordinary man feels. From the very beginning, he was leading a pure, serene life then it transformed towards the life of senses & achieving desires & then again returned towards his quest for the right knowledge as a Sannyasi. He took up many a roles & from that roles gained experiences. He was enjoying the Sansara fully when some storming thoughts emerged up in his mind. In those moments, he had a dream:

Kamala owned a small, rare singing bird in a golden cage. Of this bird, he dreamt. He dreamt: this bird had become mute, who at other times always used to sing in the morning, and since this aroused his attention, he stepped in front of the cage and looked inside; there the small bird was dead and lay stiff on the ground. He took it out, weighed it for a moment in his hand, and then threw it away, out in the street, and in the same moment, he felt terribly shocked, and his heart hurt, as if he had thrown away from himself all value and everything good by throwing out this dead bird (Hesse, 90).

Walking up from this dream, he was engulfed by a deep grief, worthlessness & pointlessness. He felt at that time that nothing was alive, there was nothing that he could hold himself to, nothing worth keeping his hands on. He stood empty, alone just like a castaway on the shore. Nobody was with him except guilt, misery & sadness. Then he thought about, went back to his thoughts to his previous life when he was at his best, controlled his own thoughts, made his own choices & was least affected by others. All of a sudden, he stood up & bade farewell to everything that he loved & was connected to, starting from the mango tree to the woman in his life Kamala & left it never to return back. Siddhartha introspected his whole life & felt disgusted of his own self. He thought,

"Dead was the singing bird, he had dreamt of. Dead was the bird in his heart. Deeply, he had been entangled in Sansara, he had sucked up disgust and death from all sides into his body, like a sponge sucks up water until it is full" (95). He even thought of putting an end to his life. Then the story took a twist & Siddhartha went to the river where he wanted to commit suicide but couldn't & met an old ferryman. He stayed with the ferryman, learned from him & the River. There he again returned to his previous life. He aptly realized what all has happened & what did he need to do! After all, he wanted this kind of realization.

"He had nothing to lose, nothing to earn, nothing to give & nothing to learn. Siddhartha was experiencing the emptiness and nothingness. He was feeling a peculiar sense of relief. Perhaps, this was the salvation Siddhartha had been looking for himself. He was new, he was now feeling eternal bliss and smiled with a wave of unfathomable peace like Buddha had once" (Anshuman Sharma & Arbind Kumar Jha).

This was the self- realization that Siddhartha wanted to have. He was ready to go through all this, to reach the extreme level of contentment. He carved his own way of life & even treaded on those paths. This shows that even the materialistic world could be used as a means to attain Salvation. When Siddhartha became the lover, we could not completely digest this one if we compare him with that of the previous one. He got so influenced by his senses & his physical desires that he became the servant of his senses. There was a time when he used to be the master of his senses. However, the scene flipped & we saw a distinct shade of him. He fell head over heels in love with Kamala, the courtesan, strikingly beautiful, whose one glance was so powerful that it made Siddhartha or for that matter any other man to approach her & insanely wanted to get favor from her. Even they both became parents.

A Samana became a full-fledged admirer when Kamala stepped into his life. Everything transformed! Kamala convinced Siddhartha to take up a job under Kamaswami, to accumulate wealth, to enjoy the company of people. Siddhartha ate & drank to his heart's content, wore silk luxurious clothes different from that of a Samana, gambled a lot, was dominated by anger, lust, greed & envy. This behaviour of his is just the same as that of the common folk whom he considered as the childlike people. Siddhartha shared a special bond with that of the River that he claims usually listened to him & to which he talked with. When Siddhartha tried to put a full stop to his existence being disgusted with himself & the life that he was leading, there he heard 'OM' that revived him to his senses.

He realized that his life has been tough & that the same was not a bed of roses for him & most significantly he had taken up different avatars & sported them quite impressively.

"I had to become a fool, to find Atman in me again. I had to sin, to be able to live again. Where else might my path lead me to? It is foolish, this path, it moves in loops, perhaps it goes around in a circle. Let it go as it likes, I want to take it" (105).

The main thing is that it must be his own. He was ready to commit errors, make blunders, enter into chaos created by him. He wanted to experience both sides of the coin to perfectly realize the Atman. Siddhartha remembered about a ferryman with whom he had crossed the river when he was a Samana & was entering into the city. Now, he saw the same ferryman who has aged and was not young as earlier.

Siddhartha immediately recognized him & they exchanged some words. The ferryman offered the former to stay with him, at his place. He requested Vasudeva, the ferryman to teach him to handle the boat & to become his assistant first & then he'll take up the job as a ferryman. Siddhartha told almost about everything that has happened with him in the last forty years. Vasudeva listened to all that patiently. Siddhartha got impressed by the impeccable listening skills of Vasudeva & told him that he's eager to learn from him a lot of things including listening as well as keeping patience to which the latter answered,

"You will learn it," spoke Vasudeva, "but not from me. The river has taught me to listen, from it you will learn it as well. It knows everything, the river, everything can be learned from it" (113).

They discussed that Siddhartha has learned a lot of lessons from life & it's the time for him to learn from the river which has a lot to teach. Vasudeva has learned a lot from the river by listening to its voices incessantly. Ordinary men cross through the river everyday however hardly did they stand & listen to the same. Because they don't know the value of it. As compared to Siddhartha, he's a learned & extraordinary man who has listened to the voice of the river & understood the same.

Siddhartha is now a changed man. A man who was not that attached, caring & loving previously has transformed into a doting father who loved his child more than anything else in this world. He actually wanted to control his son's destiny. Didn't want his son to experience what he has underwent. He had blind love for his son that made his vision blurred to the fact that suffering is a natural process of life & nobody could escape it. You could reach salvation only through the sufferings & pain. Vasudeva made him understand this lucidly,

"That perhaps your little son would be spared, because you love him, because you would like to keep him from suffering and pain and disappointment? But even if you would die ten times for him, you would not be able to take the slightest part of his destiny upon yourself" (129).

Siddhartha's son didn't at all like his father. He was a child who was living with all the comforts & luxuries whereas here in his father's place he didn't get all those. He felt his father controlling & dominating. He never ever felt at home in his father's place. He wanted to live like a free bird. And eventually, he left home when he got the slightest chance. Siddhartha failed to keep his son near him.

After this, he silently went back into the forest with Vasudeva, returned home to the ferry. Neither one talked about what happened today, neither one mentioned the boy's name, neither one spoke about him running away, neither one spoke about the wound (Hesse, 135-136).

Throughout his life, mostly in the beginning phase, Siddhartha had considered misery, love, suffering, hunger, grief, desire & such are nothing but mere illusions. However, he could relate to the same after the desertion of his son & realized that there are not mere illusions rather reality. Slowly & steadily, he learned about the emotions & feelings & understood the sensitivity of life, of situations, of what people go through.

Slowly blossomed, slowly ripened in Siddhartha the realization, the knowledge, what wisdom actually was, what the goal of his long search was. It was nothing but a readiness of the soul, an ability, a secret art, to think every moment, while living his life, the thought of oneness, to be able to feel and inhale the oneness (Hesse, 139).

Siddhartha also realized how, in what an extent he had hurt his father's sentiments when he pondered about the wound that he got from the desertion of his own son. And this, he realized through the river when he was rowing the boat. The river though it's in the dry season, yet it sounded weird. Then it laughed! Laughed prominently at the old ferryman (Siddhartha). When he bent over the water he saw a same face similar to his own. It was his father's! Here, he understood the grief that should have engulfed his old father. However, his heart was still hopeful, cheerful & was still fighting against the fate & was not dull even for a moment because of suffering. I perceive this is what is truly attaining enlightenment. That is, not to get over excited during good times & not to feel overwhelmed during vice-versa. An emotional balance must be there.

Siddhartha returned to the hut & shared about his feelings to Vasudeva. As usual, Vasudeva listened patiently. After this, both of them tried to listen & observe the river once more. Then, there, at that time, everything just flashed clearly in front of Siddhartha. The whole of his life screened like a movie. He could peep into his own heart. Siddhartha finally turned into a listener. The river taught him to be an avid listener.

And when Siddhartha was listening attentively to the river, this song of a thousand voices, when he neither listened to the suffering nor the laughter, when he didn't tie his soul to any particular voice and submerged his self into it, but when he heard them all, perceived the whole, the oneness, then the great song of the thousand voices consisted of a single word, which was Om: the perfection (Hesse, 144).

Finally in this hour, the protagonist ceased to suffer, ceased to fight with fate, just accepted the flow of things & events, accepted every people, became sympathetic, compassionate & cooperative. Found eternal contentment. Vasudeva actually waited till this hour and said:

"For a long time, I've been waiting for this hour; for a long time, I've been Vasudeva the ferryman. Now it's enough. Farewell, hut, farewell, river, farewell, Siddhartha!" (145).

Siddhartha watched him leaving serenely however, at that time he saw something magical. Vasudeva's body illuminated & his head full of shine & lustre. Towards the end, he met Govinda & the latter realized that the former has got enlightenment & at the same time surprised that how?

It was exactly the same what Siddhartha had once made Govinda understood that an individual could never ever get salvation through the teachings of others; doesn't matter how much wise the other person is! It doesn't matter even if the teacher is the exalted Gotama! The main matter is that, Salvation is the child of experiences. A person could attain salvation only through his own endeavors, experiences & understanding. Couldn't be fed by others. Its purely subjective & personal. Just as Vasudeva posed as a strong medium to make Siddhartha realize the enlightenment his own way likewise, Siddhartha played the same role for Govinda.

Whatever Govinda hadn't learnt throughout the major portion of his life even by being under the guidance of the wise people, he got to know after spending some time along with his friend. Got to know about the experiences of Siddhartha, had one on one talk with him, shared & discussed matters & such. Govinda noticed Siddhartha's face which had the glimpse of the exalted one, the Gotama, that glow, that calmness, benevolence, that stability, that peace & most significantly that powerful thousand-fold smile. From all this, Govinda understood that Siddhartha has attained the eternal peace, the enlightenment & the salvation.

Deeply, Govinda bowed; tears, he knew nothing of, ran down his old face; like a fire burned the feeling of the most intimate love, the humblest veneration in his heart. Deeply he bowed, touching the ground before him, who was sitting motionlessly, whose smile reminded him of everything he had ever loved in his life, what had ever been valuable and holy to him in his life (Hesse, 160).

"Siddhartha develops out of Hesse's knowledge of eastern religions. For example, many of the characters are named after Hindu or Buddhist Gods: Siddhartha is the personal name of Buddha, Vasudeva is one of the names of Krishna, and Kamala's name is derived from Kama, the Hindu God of erotic love. Clearly, the most obvious & significant aspect of Hermann Hesse's Siddhartha is its use of images, themes and ideas drawn from Eastern religions. In addition, Hesse bases most of the novel's themes on various Hindu or Buddhist principles. For example, Siddhartha seeks to gain an understanding of Atman, the Individual soul, and Brahma, the universal soul that unifies all beings. In order to achieve this understanding, however, he must experience a vision that reveals to him the true meaning of Om, the sacred word that Hindus chant when meditating upon the cosmic unity of all life" (Archana Kumari).

Conclusion

To search for Authenticity in this world is like chasing a Mirage. Nothing is pure in this world which is a true fact. Nobody could be able to attain Nirvana without coming across the experiences of the material or the physical world or i.e., the Sansara. An individual could never be able to attain Salvation so easily without any experiences by only following the path of spirituality. It could not be considered complete in actual terms. A person has to learn & face the adverse situations along with the favorable ones in life to gain wisdom. Salvation is not something like a trophy, that somebody will win after playing the innings of his life towards the resolution. To reach Salvation, a person has to toil a lot & work hard upon his own every single day! An individual's deed will make him eligible to reach the highest state.

Nobody is perfect! Perfect people can't reach Nirvana because they're simply perfect. It's the imperfect ones, who make mistakes, learn from them, make sure not to repeat them, understand, reach wisdom & attain Salvation. There are numerous ways of achieving it however, one could be able to do the same by leading an authentic life through exposing his/her true empirical self.

It somewhat goes like this:

Deeds—Experiences-- Takeaways—Wisdom—Enlightenment—Salvation/Nirvana.

So, its rightly portrayed that Salvation is not the Journey's end rather it's a Lifestyle!

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