"Vasudeva, radiant. And so he went away. Siddhartha watched him. With great joy and gravity he watched him, saw his steps full of peace, his face glowing, his form full of light," (Hesse 137)

During previous chapters, Vasudeva has been portrayed as not being your average ferryman. Hesse dropped hints that Vasudeva was holy in some way, or at least very enlightened. These final words definitely characterize Vasudeva as a truly, holy man. Words such as "radiant," "full of peace," and "glowing" are words one would use to describe a holy man. The final hint description, "his form full of light," makes it seems as if he has transcended the mortal realm.

"He [Siddhartha] felt that this motionless listener [Vasudeva], no longer a man was absorbing his confession as a tree absorbs the rain, that this motionless man was the river itself, that he was God Himself, and that he was eternity itself," (Hesse 133)

This quote contains a simile and perhaps multiple metaphors. Vasudeva's listening capabilities are compared to a tree that absorbs the rain. This describes Vasudeva's listening ability to seemingly derive substance from what he hears from Siddhartha, just as a tree absorbs water needed to grow. Vasudeva has been described in a previous chapter to have absorbed and let whatever he hears become a part of him. The theme of moving water then moves onto the metaphor "this motionless man was the river itself." The river is a central theme to the book, which I believe to represent the past, present, and future, and consequently, life. This metaphor may reference the effect of listening. Whatever Vasudeva hears becomes a part of him. Since Vasudeva frequently listens to the river, this leads into the next two metaphors: "he was God Himself," and "he was eternity itself." These two metaphors demonstrate how godlike Siddhartha recognizes Vasudeva and his listening to be. By listening to everything, Vasudeva lets information become a part of him. By becoming a part of everything, he may have achieved enlightenment.

"The river flowed on towards its goal... All the waves and the water hastened, suffering, towards goals, many goals, to the waterfall, to the sea, to the current, to the ocean...The water changed to vapor and rose, to become rain and came down again, became spring, brook, and river," (Hesse 135).

While this setting is not physical per se, the setting is of the river of life or enlightenment. Where the river flows to how the water rises and comes down again to join another body of water clarifies what the river does. Since the river eventually flows back into itself, and the river represents life/enlightenment, it could be that the river is everything. Life is a cycle. What is the beginning of a river and what the end of it is unclear, but to an observer, whatever portion of the river that are observing is what they know exists in the present.