

Spirituality & Community

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www.spiritualityandcommunity.com

New Serial: *Jarvis the Duck*

The Rebirth of Spirituality
Kurt Venables

The Giving Gift
Brian Joseph



The Gospel of Thomas **The Gnostics**

Judge Not ...
Stanley Peele

The Star Child
Stewart Bitkoff

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Who We Are

www.spiritualityandcommunity.com

Welcome! Seeking spiritual fulfillment? True happiness and mental wellness? Well, that's what we're all about. Spirituality & Community is a magazine, web site, and online community for those seeking answers to life's deepest questions. ***We are dedicated to promoting spirituality, true happiness, mental wellness, and appreciation for a diversity of spiritual beliefs.***

A New Age of Light

Our focus is spirituality, which we view as an inner search for happiness and fulfillment. We are concerned with what lies within the heart. ***We believe that within everyone lies a pure love that we call the Light or the Lord within. We believe that one must open one's heart to the Light to attain spiritual fulfillment and that only this brings true happiness and mental wellness.*** The Light is the essence of humanity. ***Ultimately, we find our way by casting our gaze inward.*** We will search this inner world over until we find our home:

***We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.
T.S. Eliot, Little Gidding***

We believe that mankind is entering a new age, an Age of Light. We see a growing spiritual crisis in the world today. Our culture has brought us unprecedented material well being, but we seem further away than ever from true spiritual wholeness. We also perceive an increase in mental health issues in our society and believe this to be linked to spiritual detachment. Many wander endlessly in search of the material gratification that will bring them happiness. Many have lost faith in religions and traditions. Others sincerely believe in traditional religions but remain unfulfilled spiritually and unhappy. Unfortunately, too many are so close-minded they refuse to ask what is missing from their lives. Yet, many hunger for spiritual wholeness and are searching for answers. ***We believe that we are entering a new age of enlightenment in which genuine spiritual progress will be made and that spiritual development depends upon a genuine appreciation for a diversity of spiritual beliefs.*** An appreciation for diversity of belief provides us with a fresh view of the beliefs of others, allows us to take from each set of beliefs that which rings true, and enables us to synthesize a personal spirituality that makes sense for each of us. When we view the beliefs of others with our hearts, we see truth shine through. We look with the highest regard to traditional beliefs and religions for guidance, and we also look forward. ***We believe that the past is not the end but the beginning.***



What We Do

Spirituality & Community produces a magazine and encompasses an online community. Both aspects serve as the basis for bringing together those who share our aspirations and beliefs, to meet each other and exchange ideas. We provide many opportunities for exploring spirituality and communicating with others:

- Spirituality & Community magazine*
- Features on the site*
- Online chats* (as interest arises)

The magazine is based on a Reader's Digest® type model. It is comprised primarily of reader submitted material. It is the primary mechanism for a member to both explore spirituality and communicate his or her ideas to others. Features are also posted on the site. When interest is sufficiently high, we will hold chats online. *We sincerely hope that you will find truth within, and we wish you only the best on your own personal journey!*

The Gospel of Thomas

Translated by Thomas O. Lambdin
The Nag Hammadi Library

The Gnostics

Gnosticism was an early form of Christianity. Gnostics placed a strong emphasis on the idea that God, and the living Jesus, lied within the heart of humankind. They believed that we could know God by knowing ourselves. Gnosticism flourished beside other forms of Christianity for centuries, but it was suppressed and its spiritual focus was sharply de-emphasized as early Catholicism became the official religion of the Roman Empire. The Nag Hammadi library, a collection of Gnostic texts, was found in 1945 in the Egyptian desert. The Gospel of Thomas is one of the texts in the library. The physical texts in the library have been dated to 350-400 AD. The Gospel of Thomas is known from other fragments (the Oxyrhynchus fragments) to have existed much earlier than the copies at Nag Hammadi and dates to the first or second century AD. For more, see: www.gnosis.org/naghamm/nhl.html.



These are the secret sayings which the living Jesus spoke and which Didymos Judas Thomas wrote down.

(1) And he said, "Whoever finds the interpretation of these sayings will not experience death."

(2) Jesus said, "Let him who seeks continue seeking until he finds. When he finds, he will become troubled. When he becomes troubled, he will be astonished, and he will rule over the All."

(3) Jesus said, "If those who lead you say to you, 'See, the kingdom is in the sky,' then the birds of the sky will precede you. If they say to you, 'It is in the sea,' then the fish will precede you. Rather, the kingdom is inside of you, and it is outside of you. When you come to know yourselves, then you will become known, and you will realize that it is you who are the sons of the living father. But if you will not know yourselves, you dwell in poverty and it is you who are that poverty."

(4) Jesus said, "The man old in days will not hesitate to ask a small child seven days old about the place of life, and he will live. For many who are first will become last, and they will become one and the same."

(5) Jesus said, "Recognize what is in your sight, and that which is hidden from you will become plain to you. For there is nothing hidden which will not become manifest."

(6) His disciples questioned him and said to him, "Do you want us to fast? How shall we pray? Shall we give alms? What diet shall we observe?"

Jesus said, "Do not tell lies, and do not do what you hate, for all things are plain in the sight of

heaven. For nothing hidden will not become manifest, and nothing covered will remain without being uncovered."

(7) Jesus said, "Blessed is the lion which becomes man when consumed by man; and cursed is the man whom the lion consumes, and the lion becomes man."

(8) And he said, "The man is like a wise fisherman who cast his net into the sea and drew it up from the sea full of small fish. Among them the wise fisherman found a fine large fish. He threw all the small fish back into the sea and chose the large fish without difficulty. Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear."

(9) Jesus said, "Now the sower went out, took a handful (of seeds), and scattered them. Some fell on the road; the birds came and gathered them up. Others fell on the rock, did not take root in the soil, and did not produce ears. And others fell on thorns; they choked the seed(s) and worms ate them. And others fell on the good soil and it produced good fruit: it bore sixty per measure and a hundred and twenty per measure."

(10) Jesus said, "I have cast fire upon the world, and see, I am guarding it until it blazes."

(11) Jesus said, "This heaven will pass away, and the one above it will pass away. The dead are not alive, and the living will not die. In the days when you consumed what is dead, you made it what is alive. When you come to dwell in the light, what will you do? On the day when you were one you became two. But when you become two, what will you do?"

(12) The disciples said to Jesus, "We know that you will depart from us. Who is to be our leader?"

Jesus said to them, "Wherever you are, you are to go to James the righteous, for whose sake heaven and earth came into being."

(13) Jesus said to his disciples, "Compare me to someone and tell me whom I am like."

Simon Peter said to him, "You are like a righteous angel."

Matthew said to him, "You are like a wise philosopher."

Thomas said to him, "Master, my mouth is wholly incapable of saying whom you are like."

Jesus said, "I am not your master. Because you have drunk, you have become intoxicated from the bubbling spring which I have measured out."

And he took him and withdrew and told him three things. When Thomas returned to his companions, they asked him, "What did Jesus say to you?"

Thomas said to them, "If I tell you one of the things which he told me, you will pick up stones and throw them at me; a fire will come out of the stones and burn you up."

(14) Jesus said to them, "If you fast, you will give rise to sin for yourselves; and if you pray, you will be condemned; and if you give alms, you will do harm to your spirits. When you go into any land and walk about in the districts, if they receive you, eat what they will set before you, and heal the sick among them. For what goes into your mouth will not defile you, but that which issues from your mouth - it is that which will defile you."

(15) Jesus said, "When you see one who was not born of woman, prostrate yourselves on your faces and worship him. That one is your father."

(16) Jesus said, "Men think, perhaps, that it is peace which I have come to cast upon the world. They do not know that it is dissension which I have come to cast upon the earth: fire, sword, and war. For there will be five in a house: three will be against two, and two against three, the father against the son, and the son against the father. And they will stand solitary."

(17) Jesus said, "I shall give you what no eye has seen and what no ear has heard and what no hand has touched and what has never occurred to the human mind."

(18) The disciples said to Jesus, "Tell us how our end will be."
Jesus said, "Have you discovered, then, the beginning, that you look for the end? For where the beginning is, there will the end be. Blessed is he who will take his place in the beginning; he will know the end and will not experience death."

(19) Jesus said, "Blessed is he who came into being before he came into being. If you become my disciples and listen to my words, these stones will minister to you. For there are five trees for you in Paradise which remain undisturbed summer and winter and whose leaves do not fall. Whoever becomes acquainted with them will not experience death."

(20) The disciples said to Jesus, "Tell us what the kingdom of heaven is like."
He said to them, "It is like a mustard seed. It is the smallest of all seeds. But when it falls on tilled soil, it produces a great plant and becomes a shelter for birds of the sky."

(21) Mary said to Jesus, "Whom are your disciples like?"
He said, "They are like children who have settled in a field which is not theirs. When the owners of the field come, they will say, 'Let us have back our field.' They (will) undress in their presence in order to let them have back their field and to give it back to them. Therefore I say, if the owner of a house knows that the thief is coming, he will begin his vigil before he comes and will not let him dig through into his house of his domain to carry away his goods. You, then, be on your guard against the world. Arm yourselves with great strength lest the robbers find a way to come to you, for the difficulty which you expect will (surely) materialize. Let there be among you a man of understanding. When the grain ripened, he came quickly with his sickle in his hand and reaped it. Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear."

(22) Jesus saw infants being suckled. He said to his disciples, "These infants being suckled are like those who enter the kingdom."

They said to him, "Shall we then, as children, enter the kingdom?"
Jesus said to them, "When you make the two one, and when you make the inside like the outside and the outside like the inside, and the above like the below, and when you make the male and the female one and the same, so that the male not be male nor the female female; and when you fashion eyes in the place of an eye, and a hand in place of a hand, and a foot in place of a foot, and a likeness in place of a likeness; then will you enter the kingdom."

(23) Jesus said, "I shall choose you, one out of a thousand, and two out of ten thousand, and they shall stand as a single one."

(24) His disciples said to him, "Show us the place where you are, since it is necessary for us to seek it."

He said to them, "Whoever has ears, let him hear. There is light within a man of light, and he lights up the whole world. If he does not shine, he is darkness."

(25) Jesus said, "Love your brother like your soul, guard him like the pupil of your eye."

(26) Jesus said, "You see the mote in your brother's eye, but you do not see the beam in your own eye. When you cast the beam out of your own eye, then you will see clearly to cast the mote from your brother's eye."

(27) <Jesus said,> "If you do not fast as regards the world, you will not find the kingdom. If you do not observe the Sabbath as a Sabbath, you will not see the father."

(28) Jesus said, "I took my place in the midst of the world, and I appeared to them in flesh. I found all of them intoxicated; I found none of them thirsty. And my soul became afflicted for the sons of men, because they are blind in their hearts and do not have sight; for empty they came into the world, and empty too they seek to leave the world. But for the moment they are intoxicated. When they shake off their wine, then they will repent."

(29) Jesus said, "If the flesh came into being because of spirit, it is a wonder. But if spirit came into being because of the body, it is a wonder of wonders. Indeed, I am amazed at how this great wealth has made its home in this poverty."

(30) Jesus said, "Where there are three gods, they are gods. Where there are two or one, I am with him."

(31) Jesus said, "No prophet is accepted in his own village; no physician heals those who know him."

(32) Jesus said, "A city being built on a high mountain and fortified cannot fall, nor can it be hidden."

(33) Jesus said, "Preach from your housetops that which you will hear in your ear. For no one lights a lamp and puts it under a bushel, nor does he put it in a hidden place, but rather he sets it on a lampstand so that everyone who enters and leaves will see its light."

(34) Jesus said, "If a blind man leads a blind man, they will both fall into a pit."

(35) Jesus said, "It is not possible for anyone to enter the house of a strong man and take it by force unless he binds his hands; then he will (be able to) ransack his house."

(36) Jesus said, "Do not be concerned from morning until evening and from evening until morning about what you will wear."

(37) His disciples said, "When will you become revealed to us and when shall we see you?" Jesus said, "When you disrobe without being ashamed and take up your garments and place them under your feet like little children and tread on them, then will you see the son of the living one, and you will not be afraid"

(38) Jesus said, "Many times have you desired to hear these words which I am saying to you, and you have no one else to hear them from. There will be days when you will look for me and will not find me."

(39) Jesus said, "The pharisees and the scribes have taken the keys of knowledge (gnosis) and hidden them. They themselves have not entered, nor have they allowed to enter those who wish to. You, however, be as wise as serpents and as innocent as doves."

(40) Jesus said, "A grapevine has been planted outside of the father, but being unsound, it will be pulled up by its roots and destroyed."

(41) Jesus said, "Whoever has something in his hand will receive more, and whoever has nothing will be deprived of even the little he has."

(42) Jesus said, "Become passers-by."

(43) His disciples said to him, "Who are you, that you should say these things to us?" <Jesus said to them,> "You do not realize who I am from what I say to you, but you have become like the Jews, for they (either) love the tree and hate its fruit (or) love the fruit and hate the tree."

(44) Jesus said, "Whoever blasphemes against the father will be forgiven, and whoever blasphemes against the son will be forgiven, but whoever blasphemes against the holy spirit will not be forgiven either on earth or in heaven."

(45) Jesus said, "Grapes are not harvested from thorns, nor are figs gathered from thistles, for they do not produce fruit. A good man brings forth good from his storehouse; an evil man brings forth evil things from his evil storehouse, which is in his heart, and says evil things. For out of the abundance of the heart he brings forth evil things."

(46) Jesus said, "Among those born of women, from Adam until John the Baptist, there is no one so superior to John the Baptist that his eyes should not be lowered (before him). Yet I have said, whichever one of you comes to be a child will be acquainted with the kingdom and will become superior to John."

(47) Jesus said, "It is impossible for a man to mount two horses or to stretch two bows. And it is impossible for a servant to serve two masters; otherwise, he will honor the one and treat the other contemptuously. No man drinks old wine and immediately desires to drink new wine. And new

wine is not put into old wineskins, lest they burst; nor is old wine put into a new wineskin, lest it spoil it. An old patch is not sewn onto a new garment, because a tear would result."

(48) Jesus said, "If two make peace with each other in this one house, they will say to the mountain, 'Move Away,' and it will move away."

(49) Jesus said, "Blessed are the solitary and elect, for you will find the kingdom. For you are from it, and to it you will return."

(50) Jesus said, "If they say to you, 'Where did you come from?', say to them, 'We came from the light, the place where the light came into being on its own accord and established itself and became manifest through their image.' If they say to you, 'Is it you?', say, 'We are its children, we are the elect of the living father.' If they ask you, 'What is the sign of your father in you?', say to them, 'It is movement and repose.'"

(51) His disciples said to him, "When will the repose of the dead come about, and when will the new world come?"

He said to them, "What you look forward to has already come, but you do not recognize it."

(52) His disciples said to him, "Twenty-four prophets spoke in Israel, and all of them spoke in you."

He said to them, "You have omitted the one living in your presence and have spoken (only) of the dead."

(53) His disciples said to him, "Is circumcision beneficial or not?"

He said to them, "If it were beneficial, their father would beget them already circumcised from their mother. Rather, the true circumcision in spirit has become completely profitable."

(54) Jesus said, "Blessed are the poor, for yours is the kingdom of heaven."

(55) Jesus said, "Whoever does not hate his father and his mother cannot become a disciple to me. And whoever does not hate his brothers and sisters and take up his cross in my way will not be worthy of me."

(56) Jesus said, "Whoever has come to understand the world has found (only) a corpse, and whoever has found a corpse is superior to the world."

(57) Jesus said, "The kingdom of the father is like a man who had good seed. His enemy came by night and sowed weeds among the good seed. The man did not allow them to pull up the weeds; he said to them, 'I am afraid that you will go intending to pull up the weeds and pull up the wheat along with them.' For on the day of the harvest the weeds will be plainly visible, and they will be pulled up and burned."

(58) Jesus said, "Blessed is the man who has suffered and found life."

(59) Jesus said, "Take heed of the living one while you are alive, lest you die and seek to see him and be unable to do so."

(60) <They saw> a Samaritan carrying a lamb on his way to Judea. He said to his disciples, "That man is round about the lamb."

They said to him, "So that he may kill it and eat it."

He said to them, "While it is alive, he will not eat it, but only when he has killed it and it has become a corpse."

They said to him, "He cannot do so otherwise."

He said to them, "You too, look for a place for yourself within repose, lest you become a corpse and be eaten."

(61) Jesus said, "Two will rest on a bed: the one will die, and the other will live."

Salome said, "Who are you, man, that you ... have come up on my couch and eaten from my table?"

Jesus said to her, "I am he who exists from the undivided. I was given some of the things of my father."

<...> "I am your disciple."

<...> "Therefore I say, if he is destroyed, he will be filled with light, but if he is divided, he will be filled with darkness."

(62) Jesus said, "It is to those who are worthy of my mysteries that I tell my mysteries. Do not let your left (hand) know what your right (hand) is doing."

(63) Jesus said, "There was a rich man who had much money. He said, 'I shall put my money to use so that I may sow, reap, plant, and fill my storehouse with produce, with the result that I shall lack nothing.' Such were his intentions, but that same night he died. Let him who has ears hear."

(64) Jesus said, "A man had received visitors. And when he had prepared the dinner, he sent his servant to invite the guests.

He went to the first one and said to him, 'My master invites you.' He said, 'I have claims against some merchants. They are coming to me this evening. I must go and give them my orders. I ask to be excused from the dinner.'

He went to another and said to him, 'My master has invited you.' He said to him, 'I have just bought a house and am required for the day. I shall not have any spare time.'

He went to another and said to him, 'My master invites you.' He said to him, 'My friend is going to get married, and I am to prepare the banquet. I shall not be able to come. I ask to be excused from the dinner.'

He went to another and said to him, 'My master invites you.' He said to him, 'I have just bought a farm, and I am on my way to collect the rent. I shall not be able to come. I ask to be excused.'

The servant returned and said to his master, 'Those whom you invited to the dinner have asked to be excused.' The master said to his servant, 'Go outside to the streets and bring back those whom you happen to meet, so that they may dine.' Businessmen and merchants will not enter the places of my father."

(65) He said, "There was a good man who owned a vineyard. He leased it to tenant farmers so that they might work it and he might collect the produce from them. He sent his servant so that the tenants might give him the produce of the vineyard. They seized his servant and beat him, all but killing him. The servant went back and told his master. The master said, 'Perhaps he did not recognize them.' He sent another servant. The tenants beat this one as well. Then the owner sent his son and said, 'Perhaps they will show respect to my son.' Because the tenants knew that it was he who was the heir to the vineyard, they seized him and killed him. Let him who has ears hear."

(66) Jesus said, "Show me the stone which the builders have rejected. That one is the cornerstone."

(67) Jesus said, "If one who knows the all still feels a personal deficiency, he is completely deficient."

(68) Jesus said, "Blessed are you when you are hated and persecuted. Wherever you have been persecuted they will find no place."

(69) Jesus said, "Blessed are they who have been persecuted within themselves. It is they who have truly come to know the father. Blessed are the hungry, for the belly of him who desires will be filled."

(70) Jesus said, "That which you have will save you if you bring it forth from yourselves. That which you do not have within you will kill you if you do not have it within you."

(71) Jesus said, "I shall destroy this house, and no one will be able to build it [...]."

(72) A man said to him, "Tell my brothers to divide my father's possessions with me."
He said to him, "O man, who has made me a divider?"
He turned to his disciples and said to them, "I am not a divider, am I?"

(73) Jesus said, "The harvest is great but the laborers are few. Beseech the Lord, therefore, to send out laborers to the harvest."

(74) He said, "O Lord, there are many around the drinking trough, but there is nothing in the cistern."

(75) Jesus said, "Many are standing at the door, but it is the solitary who will enter the bridal chamber."

(76) Jesus said, "The kingdom of the father is like a merchant who had a consignment of merchandise and who discovered a pearl. That merchant was shrewd. He sold the merchandise and bought the pearl alone for himself. You too, seek his unfailing and enduring treasure where no moth comes near to devour and no worm destroys."

(77) Jesus said, "It is I who am the light which is above them all. It is I who am the all. From me did the all come forth, and unto me did the all extend. Split a piece of wood, and I am there. Lift up the stone, and you will find me there."

(78) Jesus said, "Why have you come out into the desert? To see a reed shaken by the wind? And to see a man clothed in fine garments like your kings and your great men? Upon them are the fine garments, and they are unable to discern the truth."

(79) A woman from the crowd said to him, "Blessed are the womb which bore you and the breasts which nourished you."

He said to her, "Blessed are those who have heard the word of the father and have truly kept it. For there will be days when you will say, 'Blessed are the womb which has not conceived and the breasts which have not given milk.'"

(80) Jesus said, "He who has recognized the world has found the body, but he who has found the body is superior to the world."

(81) Jesus said, "Let him who has grown rich be king, and let him who possesses power renounce it."

(82) Jesus said, "He who is near me is near the fire, and he who is far from me is far from the kingdom."

(83) Jesus said, "The images are manifest to man, but the light in them remains concealed in the image of the light of the father. He will become manifest, but his image will remain concealed by his light."

(84) Jesus said, "When you see your likeness, you rejoice. But when you see your images which came into being before you, and which neither die nor become manifest, how much you will have to bear!"

(85) Jesus said, "Adam came into being from a great power and a great wealth, but he did not become worthy of you. For had he been worthy, he would not have experienced death."

(86) Jesus said, "The foxes have their holes and the birds have their nests, but the son of man has no place to lay his head and rest."

(87) Jesus said, "Wretched is the body that is dependant upon a body, and wretched is the soul that is dependent on these two."

(88) Jesus said, "The angels and the prophets will come to you and give to you those things you (already) have. And you too, give them those things which you have, and say to yourselves, 'When will they come and take what is theirs?'"

(89) Jesus said, "Why do you wash the outside of the cup? Do you not realize that he who made the inside is the same one who made the outside?"

(90) Jesus said, "Come unto me, for my yoke is easy and my lordship is mild, and you will find repose for yourselves."

(91) They said to him, "Tell us who you are so that we may believe in you."
He said to them, "You read the face of the sky and of the earth, but you have not recognized the one who is before you, and you do not know how to read this moment."

(92) Jesus said, "Seek and you will find. Yet, what you asked me about in former times and which I did not tell you then, now I do desire to tell, but you do not inquire after it."

(93) <Jesus said,> "Do not give what is holy to dogs, lest they throw them on the dung-heap. Do not throw the pearls to swine, lest they [...] it [...]."

(94) Jesus said, "He who seeks will find, and he who knocks will be let in."

(95) Jesus said, "If you have money, do not lend it at interest, but give it to one from whom you will not get it back."

(96) Jesus said, "The kingdom of the father is like a certain woman. She took a little leaven, concealed it in some dough, and made it into large loaves. Let him who has ears hear."

(97) Jesus said, "The kingdom of the father is like a certain woman who was carrying a jar full of meal. While she was walking on the road, still some distance from home, the handle of the jar broke and the meal emptied out behind her on the road. She did not realize it; she had noticed no accident. When she reached her house, she set the jar down and found it empty."

(98) Jesus said, "The kingdom of the father is like a certain man who wanted to kill a powerful man. In his own house he drew his sword and stuck it into the wall in order to find out whether his hand could carry through. Then he slew the powerful man."

(99) The disciples said to him, "Your brothers and your mother are standing outside."
He said to them, "Those here who do the will of my father are my brothers and my mother. It is they who will enter the kingdom of my father."

(100) They showed Jesus a gold coin and said to him, "Caesar's men demand taxes from us."
He said to them, "Give Caesar what belongs to Caesar, give God what belongs to God, and give me what is mine."

(101) <Jesus said,> "Whoever does not hate his father and his mother as I do cannot become a disciple to me. And whoever does not love his father and his mother as I do cannot become a disciple to me. For my mother [...], but my true mother gave me life."

(102) Jesus said, "Woe to the pharisees, for they are like a dog sleeping in the manger of oxen, for neither does he eat nor does he let the oxen eat."

(103) Jesus said, "Fortunate is the man who knows where the brigands will enter, so that he may get up, muster his domain, and arm himself before they invade."

(104) They said to Jesus, "Come, let us pray today and let us fast."

Jesus said, "What is the sin that I have committed, or wherein have I been defeated? But when the bridegroom leaves the bridal chamber, then let them fast and pray."

(105) Jesus said, "He who knows the father and the mother will be called the son of a harlot."

(106) Jesus said, "When you make the two one, you will become the sons of man, and when you say, 'Mountain, move away,' it will move away."

(107) Jesus said, "The kingdom is like a shepherd who had a hundred sheep. One of them, the largest, went astray. He left the ninety-nine sheep and looked for that one until he found it. When he had gone to such trouble, he said to the sheep, 'I care for you more than the ninety-nine.'"

(108) Jesus said, "He who will drink from my mouth will become like me. I myself shall become he, and the things that are hidden will be revealed to him."

(109) Jesus said, "The kingdom is like a man who had a hidden treasure in his field without knowing it. And after he died, he left it to his son. The son did not know (about the treasure). He inherited the field and sold it. And the one who bought it went plowing and found the treasure. He began to lend money at interest to whomever he wished."

(110) Jesus said, "Whoever finds the world and becomes rich, let him renounce the world."

(111) Jesus said, "The heavens and the earth will be rolled up in your presence. And the one who lives from the living one will not see death." Does not Jesus say, "Whoever finds himself is superior to the world?"

(112) Jesus said, "Woe to the flesh that depends on the soul; woe to the soul that depends on the flesh."

(113) His disciples said to him, "When will the kingdom come?"

<Jesus said,> "It will not come by waiting for it. It will not be a matter of saying 'here it is' or 'there it is.' Rather, the kingdom of the father is spread out upon the earth, and men do not see it."

(114) Simon Peter said to him, "Let Mary leave us, for women are not worthy of life."

Jesus said, "I myself shall lead her in order to make her male, so that she too may become a living spirit resembling you males. For every woman who will make herself male will enter the kingdom of heaven."

The Rebirth of Spirituality

Kurt Venables



I am writing this on Christmas Day. Samantha and Blaine, my little girl and little boy, are almost 8 and 6 years old. They eagerly tore into their presents shortly after dawn this morning, shredding paper and obliterating boxes en route to the hidden treasures. My job, groggy though I was, was to free the toys from the tangle of wires that bound them to their boxes and load them with batteries. Every toy nowadays, no matter how small or insignificant, requires a battery. Santa brought them an easy-bake oven, roller blades, a scooter, video games, dolls, cars, ...

The season is rich with symbolism of rebirth, spiritual rebirth, of good beginning to overcome evil. The winter solstice was a few days ago. Though shrouded in winter, the winter solstice is the point at which the days begin to get longer again. It is a symbol of rebirth, and as the sun is a symbol of spiritual light and life, the winter solstice is a symbol of spiritual rebirth. Christmas is, of course, a celebration of spiritual rebirth, a celebration of the birth of Christ. Christmas is a special season for children, and, indeed, every child is a symbol of spiritual rebirth- Every child is a symbol of hope; every child is a symbol that the rebirth of everything that is good and right with the world is possible.

The essence of spirituality is the idea that the Light within is the key to life. Life is nothing without joy, and true happiness is not possible without the Light within. The Light is love; the Light will not shine in a heart devoid of love. A heart without love is a heart without light and joy. When one opens one's heart to love without boundaries, one allows the Light to shine without obstruction. Spite begets darkness; love begets light. Many believe that the Light within is God or a universal energy known by other names. Even agnostics or atheists, however, can "believe" in spirituality. Although our minds are tied to our physical bodies while we live on earth, our conscious world is essentially non-physical, subjective rather than objective- joy, a conscious experience, a feeling, is the key to life, and love, another feeling, is the key to joy. Thus, love is the giver of life, "Lord" or "God", on earth, if not in heaven.

Gnosticism was an early Christian spirituality. Gnostics placed a strong emphasis on the idea that God, and the living Jesus, lied within the heart of humankind. They believed that we could know God by knowing ourselves. Gnosis means knowledge, and they used the word to refer to knowledge of God. Gnosticism flourished beside other forms of Christianity for centuries, but it was suppressed and its spiritual focus was sharply de-emphasized as early Catholicism became the official religion of the Roman Empire.

Spirituality has been discovered many times and within the framework of many different religions. Today, spirituality is being reborn as New Age spirituality. People all over the world are rediscovering the idea of the Light within. I truly believe that we are now entering an age in which humankind will again progress spiritually. By rediscovering ourselves, and the wealth that lies within, we may rediscover true peace and happiness, the hallmarks of this holiday season. The following lines are taken from The Gospel of Thomas, part of the Nag Hammadi library, a Gnostic treasure discovered in the Egyptian desert in 1945:

(3) Jesus said, "If those who lead you say to you, 'See, the kingdom is in the sky,' then the birds of the sky will precede you. If they say to you, 'It is in the sea,' then the fish will precede you. Rather, the kingdom is inside of you, and it is outside of you. When you come to know yourselves, then you will become known, and you will realize that it is you who are the sons of the living father. But if you will not know yourselves, you dwell in poverty and it is you who are that poverty."

(24) His disciples said to him, "Show us the place where you are, since it is necessary for us to seek it."

He said to them, "Whoever has ears, let him hear. There is light within a man of light, and he lights up the whole world. If he does not shine, he is darkness."

(50) Jesus said, "If they say to you, 'Where did you come from?', say to them, 'We came from the light, the place where the light came into being on its own accord and established itself and became manifest through their image.' If they say to you, 'Is it you?', say, 'We are its children, we are the elect of the living father.' If they ask you, 'What is the sign of your father in you?', say to them, 'It is movement and repose.'"

Jarvis the Duck

Kurt Venables

The Book of Ra

Jarvis is a young duck that lives on a small pond in The Great Poplar Forest. These are the chronicles of his adventures.

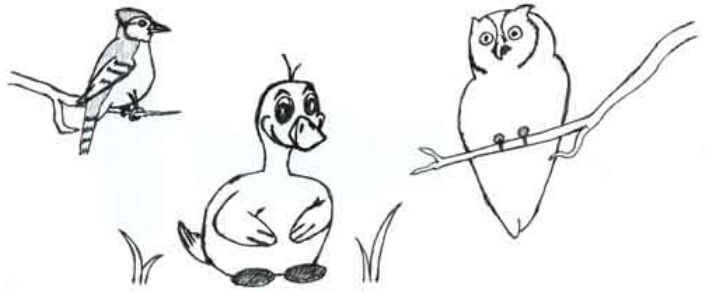
It was mid-September, and Jarvis was on his way over to the nest of an old grandmother duck named Harriet, an old friend of Jarvis's grandmother. Harriet had just moved to The Pond with her granddaughter, Angeldown, from further out in the country of The Great Poplar Forest. Harriet's husband, Walter, had passed away recently, and she had family at The Pond. Jarvis had been doing odd jobs for Harriet over the last month to earn a little extra pocket money.

When he got to the nest, Jarvis called for Harriet. "Hi, Jarvis," said Angeldown, popping her head out of the nest.

Angeldown was a very pretty young lady, as pale yellow and downy as a baby chick. She was also a very sweet girl, with a smile for everyone. Jarvis had noticed how pretty she was and the beauty that shone from the inside. Angeldown liked Jarvis; she had noticed that he wasn't arrogant and self-absorbed like the other ducks at The Pond. Angeldown was very smart, and she liked riddles. She and Jarvis had been trading riddles with each other on his visits to do odd jobs.

"Hi, Angeldown," said Jarvis with a smile. He thought it odd that his heartbeat quickened a little.

"I have a riddle for you, Jarvis," said Angeldown. She felt her heartbeat quicken



a little as well. She did not think it was quite so odd. She recited:

"This thing has a godlike power to change its shape.

At times, it can be more slippery than a snake.

At other times, it is as hard as stone.

At still other times, it can shrink until it is simply gone."

Jarvis thought for a while. He smiled and scratched his head. He was having trouble concentrating. Finally, he blurted out, "Water." "Normally, it flows right over your feet, but when it's cold, it turns to ice. And on hot days, little spots of water can dry right up."

"Very good, Jarvis," said Angeldown with a smile.

"I have a riddle for you," said Jarvis, with a malicious smile on his face. "How does a blonde learn to swim?"

Angeldown frowned, but before she could answer, Jarvis grabbed her and threw her into the water. She grabbed Jarvis as he threw her, and they both landed in the shallow water next to the nest. They were both laughing; then Angeldown said in mock seriousness, "I have another riddle for

you, Jarvis: What's big and white, and black and blue all over."

"I don't think I want to know," said Jarvis.

Harriet was making her way through the reeds towards the nest. As she approached, she called out, "Hello, Jarvis!"

"Hello, Harriet," replied Jarvis. "Just wanted to see if you had any odd jobs today."

"Nothing today, I'm afraid," said Harriet, settling down in the nest. "I was just off chatting with some of the other grandmothers. My, they do like moss and thistle down here at The Pond. Are you doing all right? How's your grandmother?"

"Grandma's fine. Angeldown and I were just trading riddles again."

"You two do like riddles," said Harriet, and after a brief pause, she said "I know one old riddle, Jarvis. Care to try your luck? I know Angeldown has already heard this one."

"Sure!"

Harriet recited:

"Enrobed in crimson and gold,
A wondrous vision to behold,
I am the beginning, and the end.
I steal dreams from most creatures of the land."

Jarvis thought for a while. He smiled and scratched his head again. He thought some more, then he smiled, "I know this one."
"The dawn sun, Ra at daybreak."

"Very good again, Jarvis," smiled Angeldown.

"That is from the ancient Book of Ra," said Harriet.

"Really," replied Jarvis. "That's an interest of mine. Do you know much about it?"

"I do," said Harriet. "My grandmother was a priestess. In the old days, we had those. She taught me all about it."

"Can you tell me what you know?"

"Of course, if you can stay a while," said Harriet.

"I can. Please tell me."

"I'd like to hear it again as well, Granny," said Angeldown.

"The Book of Ra tells of the creation. In the beginning, there was only a black ocean of emptiness. Ra created himself and an island. He stood on the island of land in the emptiness. This was the world. He created the sky and the oceans. Then he created four other gods: Osiris, Isis, Seth, and Nephthys. Finally, Ra created all life on earth. Osiris was a good and strong god. He was the original ruler of the earth, under Ra. Isis was the wife of Osiris. She was kind and loved Osiris very much. Seth quickly became jealous of Osiris and chose evil over good. Nephthys was the sister of Isis. She was to be the wife of Seth, but she rejected him because he was evil."

"Turning himself into a serpent, Seth killed Osiris as he took his daily walk. Osiris entered the underworld as a spirit. Isis found Osiris's body and drew the venom out of his blood. She then commanded the

winds to breathe life back into Osiris. Thus, Osiris was resurrected and returned to life on earth. As Osiris had entered the afterlife, however, Ra decided to make Osiris king of the underworld. Ra himself now rules over the world. Seth is a master of disguise. He eludes the eye of Ra, dwells in darkness, and tries to bring the creatures of the earth over to the dark side. Isis is also a master of disguise. She walks the earth trying to protect all creatures from evil, whether it be that of their own choice or that brought about by Seth. Nephthys helps her sister, Isis, with this never-ending task.”

“Every year, as the date of Osiris’s murder approaches, Ra becomes overwhelmed with sorrow. He allows himself to fade, and the earth dies in the winter, so that the world will understand the destructive power of evil. Ra is reborn in the spring, so that all creatures will remember that rebirth from evil is always possible.”

Jarvis sat in stunned silence for a while. Finally, he said, “Thank you, Harriet, there is much that I didn’t know,” and after a brief pause, “and much that I don’t know- The wiser one gets, the more one knows how much one doesn’t know.”

“Indeed, Jarvis,” said Harriet, and after a pause, she said “You seem to know a lot for your few years.” “There is one other thing I need to tell you two.”

“Yes,” said Jarvis and Angeldown in unison.

“When I was chatting with the other grandmothers, I found out that two ducks here at The Pond have come down with a strange disease. It has sapped their energy, they have strange black marks on their bodies, and one is becoming delusional. It is said that there are others like this at The Great Lake and other places as well.”

The Giving Gift

A Holiday Short Story, by Brian Joseph

After he had unwrapped his gifts on Christmas morning the the 5 year old boy's mother asked him which one of his presents he wanted to donate to a poor child who had less than him. "None", the boy replied. His mom sat him on her lap and explained to him that sharing with those who were less fortunate was part of the holiday spirit and how a child who had less would probably be very happy to receive a gift. This took some convincing from mom but the boy eventually agreed to part with one of his gifts. Mom told him that he could have until the following morning to decide. The day after Christmas the boy put his four gifts in front of him and tried to decide which one to part with. It was a difficult decision. His eyes scanned over the toy flute, book of Aesop's Fables, Popeye book bag, and the toy dump truck with doors that really opened. He decided that he part with the flute. "Where do we take it ?", he asked his mother. His mother explained that there was a Salvation Army box two streets away and that the people who emptied this box would make sure that it got to a child who needed a gift. "How will they know it is for a child ?", he asked. His mother told him that he could tape a note to the flute and she helped him to write one that read, "Please make sure this gets to a kid who doesn't have a lot of toys". After securely attaching the note to the flute the boy said, "I forgot to write my name, how will they know who this came from?" His mother explained that they wouldn't need to know who it came from and how sometimes part of giving was doing it so that others wouldn't know where it came from, like putting coins in the poor box at church. "Well, can I please write my name?" His mother said it would be okay and he wrote his name at the end of the note.

This parting with a gift the day after Christmas became a yearly ritual. When he was 8 years old the boy so treasured the gifts that he had that the decision needed to be made by eeny-meny-miny-mo and he had to part with a set of checkers. "I really love these mom", the boy said. His mother said that he could select something else but he didn't want to have to decide again. His mother left the room and returned with a piece of cardboard, the boy's crayons, and his bottle cap collection. Together they created a board and set of checkers. "I bet no other kid in the world has checkers like these", he said. That year he decided all on his own not to put his name on the note that he attached to the checkers box. Three months later when he saw a checkers set at his friend Jerry's house he fought back the temptation to say, "that was mine", after Jerry had told him that an army man had brought it to his door.

When he was 10 years old the laundrymat where his mother worked closed shortly after Thanksgiving and gifts were sparse. On Christmas he looked over his three inexpensive gifts. His mother came and sat beside him and told him that this year he didn't have to part with a gift. At first this sounded great but when he woke up the morning after Christmas he thought about how much fun he had seen Jerry have with the checkers and how the giving gift could be secret and magical. He told his mother that he wanted to put his new football in the Salvation Army box. "You don't have to do that", his mother said. He told her that he wanted to. She got teary-eyed and gave him a big hug.

Six months later his mother's birthday was approaching and the boy emptied his piggy bank and counted out three dollars and forty-nine cents. "What would you like for your birthday ?", he asked his mother. She was silent for a moment and then she spoke, "I've noticed Billy playing catch football with his dad and it looks like a lot of fun. I think I would like a football." That year his mother got a football for her birthday.

Many years later when he was a young man he talked to his mother about how in some ways it seemed strange that she had him give to the poor when he was a child since they themselves were poor. Then it happened. She gave him 'the look'. It was a look that if it could be put into words would say, "Don't you understand, haven't you learned ?" The look said that and so much more. It was the same look that he had seen many times before. Words that appeared to be carefully chosen usually came shortly after 'the look'. Certain instances were more memorable than others. There was the the time when he was 9 years old and he told his sister that she could never be president because she was a girl. That time "the look" was followed by his mother saying that people had all sorts of opinions about president Johnson but that she had never heard anyone comment on the importance of whether he stood or sat when he went to pee. This time he was 17 years old and 'the look' was followed with an explanation about what real poverty is and how the worst poverty to be in is poverty of the soul.

The giving gift tradition continued into adulthood. One Christmas his own 5 year old boy asked him, "What was the best gift you got for Christmas when you were a kid ?" He wanted to explain to his son that the best gift he ever received didn't come in a box, it wasn't wrapped and you couldn't even hold it in your hand.

He tried to explain the giving gift as best as he could in words that a young child might understand. "Do you still do that Dad ?" His father explained that he had not missed a Christmas in over 30 years. The following day the father selected a new sweater and wrote directly on the white box, "Please give this to someone who needs it". As he was getting ready for the drive to the Salvation Army box his son asked , "Can I come?" The father asked the boy to have his mother help him put on his boots, hat, and coat while Dad went to warm up the car. The father sat in the car waiting for ten minutes and thought about the Christmas of the first giving gift. He was just about to go back inside to see what was taking his son so long when the little boy came running out with a new play-doh set in his hands. "Dad, can you help me write the note ?"

There is joy in watching surprised looks on the faces of children as they open gifts. Material gifts can be precious but the greatest gifts that we can give to children aren't wrapped in fancy paper and they can't be purchased at the mall. The greatest gifts were meant to be passed on to others. The receivers of these gifts are often initially unaware of what they are actually receiving. The gifts of forgiveness, sharing, fairness, and caring are the most valuable gifts. These are the gifts that we can give away but still keep.

Brian Joseph is the author of the mystical, musical, inspirational novel, [The Gift of Gabe](http://www.giftofgabe.com/): <http://www.giftofgabe.com/>

"Judge Not"

Stanley Peele

I served as a soldier in the Korean War. While there, I acquired an opinion that South Korean soldiers were afraid of the North Koreans and would retreat when attacked. And that this put more of a strain on the allied soldiers. As the war wound on, this negative opinion became even stronger: I came to feel that the South Korean soldiers were cowardly and dishonorable.

Looking back at this now, I am very ashamed of my attitude. It was manifold ignorance and arrogant judgment. This feeling of shame has caused me to look at myself critically; and to assess my tendency to judge others.

Many religions teach us not to be judgmental. This is not easy. For we have to make judgments when we make important decisions. For instance when we are considering marriage, either we have good judgment or we may end up with an unhappy marriage. We use judgment when we decide to lock our homes up when we go out. We use judgment on getting a job, whether to see a doctor, what foods we choose when shopping at the grocery store, and in thousands of other ways.

These decisions involve discernment, and are necessary. The problem comes in the separation of discernment from judgment.

Let's say we see a man selling vegetables on the side of the road. We pull over, get out of the car, and look at the vegetables. We notice that man is not clean and there is trash on the ground near the vegetables. If we decide not to buy any of his goods, that is discernment.

Here is the point: if we decide not to buy any of his goods, and get into our car, we should not stand in judgment of the man. We should not think of the man as inferior in any way. Nor should we even feel we are wiser, or more intelligent than the man. The statement, "Do not judge a man until you have walked a mile in his shoes" is appropriate. We do not know what misfortune or turmoil the man is facing. He is dealing with life in his way. We are dealing with life in our way. We should leave with peace in our hearts.

When we judge others we block the natural process of loving them.. Therefore, look at yourself when you begin to judge others harshly. Every time someone says something we disagree with, and every time someone is disrespectful to us, there is the challenge to keep our hearts open.

Every time our heart starts to close, we have the opportunity to change our pattern. When we are faced with a person who is angry with us, or who is voicing an opinion that we strongly disagree with, we can do this:

We can breathe, relax ourselves, and go to that quiet place that is within us – a place of peace. Then, in the quietness of our minds, we can send love to him. Even if he continues to rant or fuss at us, we can stay in this quiet place. We can continue to breathe easily. Either he will stop, or we will rise to a place of such peace, that nothing can dislodge us.

The way we can open our hearts is to face adversity and overcome it by love.

The Bible contain the following sentence: "Judge not that ye be judged." This is a powerful statement.

Yet if we avoid judging others because we may, in turn, be judged, this is only a contract, a means of benefitting ourselves. Yes! We do not want to be judged!!

Rather, we should not judge because in making a judgment we make the assumption that we are better than the person we judge. Thus we inflate our egos.

When we judge others, we stand in the way of our desire to do good in this world. The process of judging others uses our energy; and this energy can be used to benefit others.

* * *

When someone criticizes us, we jump in quickly to defend ourselves. To defend our reputation – to show that we are of high caliber – to show that the person is mistaken. We become slaves to our ego.

We should not take ourselves so seriously. If we will listen closely to the person who is criticizing us, we may find that he is not angry with us at all; that he is angry about something else and he is taking it out on us.

The goal is this: Even while the person is lambasting us, we should see him as a child of God. In fact we should see everyone under the sun as a child of god.

Let me tell a story to illustrate this:

A spiritual teacher and his student are walking down the street. They see a drunk lying in the gutter. They walk up to the drunk and see that he is very dirty: his pants are wet, and he is drooling. The student snubs his nose, makes a disparaging remark, and steps away in disgust. The teacher looks more closely at the drunk, and says, "This man is enlightened, -- this is the last lesson he had to learn in this life."

Then the teacher gets down on his knees and bows down before the drunk.

How many times do we snub our noses at others?

*

Six steps that can be taken to avoid making judgments about others. (The first exercise is the easiest, and each step gets harder and harder to do.)

* 1. Go to a shopping mall. Find a chair or bench. Close your eyes, breathe easily, and go into a meditative state. Ask that you be given help from above in order to learn not to judge others. Then open your eyes. Be alert. When you see others, send light to them. See each person as a child of God. If you see someone behaving in a way that you feel is rude or harsh, then look at that person with empathy, followed by sending them light. Send out light to all – without exception and without surcease.

* 2. The above exercise may help you to be more aware of judging other people. Notice when you judge others, and examine the process. Ask yourself what made you react that

way. If you do this carefully, you may find that in the past, you had a traumatic experience with one person, and this event is causing you to react negatively to everyone that looks like that person. You may also find that your negative reactions to people are the result of an innate fear: (as, for instance, a fear of being assaulted or robbed).

* 3. Stop judging those in government! You may disagree with what they are doing; in fact you may become angry when they make mistakes. Yet you should not ascribe evil motives to them. For instance, you may have the desire to call them stupid or power-crazy or worse. Yet such judgments simply add to the negative thoughts of the world. Be tolerant of people who do not share your religious views. Every religion has value. Muslims teach us generosity to our guests; Jews teach us patience; Buddhists teach us common sense and self-worth; Hindus teach us acceptance of others and the value of inner peace; and Christians teach us how to love one another.

* 4. If you are in a serious controversy with another person, send love to him. This is the ultimate act of non-judgment. Particularly if the controversy is bitter. When a marriage breaks up, the man and wife sometimes engage in highly acrimonious and caustic court battles. Each spouse sees the other spouse as the devil incarnate. If you are a party to a divorce, and are met with this type of venomous behavior from your spouse, surely you qualify as a saint!

* 5. And perhaps the hardest of all is not to be in judgment of ourselves. Some feel that we judge others adversely because, in truth, we judge ourselves adversely.

Resolve to practice gentleness toward yourself. You are a source of light that is connected to the entire universe. Give kindness to yourself. This may not be easy, for your ego enjoys the continual drama of resentment. We were created with infinite love. We have the opportunity to continue the application of this love. When we do this, we can have a loving relationship with all that we meet.

Embrace your strengths, and forgive yourself for the things you have done that you would like to avoid. As you give yourself tenderness and warmth, you may discover that self-hate has kept you in turmoil. As you release yourself from self-judgment you will rid your self of shame, and you will open yourself to love. You will allow more love to come in and you will allow more love to go out.

If you are suffering, **compassion** will give you relief. Not contempt.

If a person has maimed or killed another person, it is very hard to have love for that person. Our ego causes us to separate ourselves from him. And condemn him! Yet the moment you rise above the passion, you send peace to yourself and to the world. Love sees all things with universal compassion. Every time you choose love, you take a step towards God.

* 6. If you practice these steps; if you make non-judgment a way of life; a miracle will happen!

You will no longer be afraid!

“The Star Child”

A Short Story by Dr. Stewart Bitkoff

Day- I

The people suffered. Long had it been a time of fear and darkness. All of the old ways had been tested and each failed. Greed consumed the lawmakers and Masters of Business. Their decisions turned against them and the once great structures of finance and service lay in the ashes of burnt dreams.

After the collapse of government and halls of finance, the Generals took control and worked toward order. Gradually, goods and services were restored. However, this system too was filled with graft and long delays. Even under the Generals, the rich got richer and the people worked long hours to feed their family.

After the graft, little was left for the people. Their hearts cried out for deliverance and freedom from the struggle of their daily lives and empty promises. Over time, the Masters of Religion had taken to hiding in the shadows. Also, fearful the people would turn against them, blaming them for the chaos and destruction. Had not the old prophecy come to pass? Was not the world in disarray and darkness? All could see greed and fear consumed the land. People from one sector turned against the people of another. Nightly, mother's cried as their children lay in their beds with swollen, empty bellies.

Lost in despair, most had forgotten the second part of the prophecy. From the ashes, The Deliverer would appear. On an inner level, the people's hearts called out for justice and redemption. Where was the One who would lead them from the darkness into the Light?

From the people's heart, the Deliverer was reborn. The people's suffering called forth her arrival. This was the time. This was the place.

* * * * *

As the moonlight glistened across the sand and the stars lit the night, the Star Child walked toward the town square. Each evening, the young people gathered to talk, play and socialize. Here the young ones had a few minutes of enjoyment away from the drudgery of their lives and the world their parents created. Dreams for tomorrow could be shared between friends and enthusiasm met with the thrill of expectation. In the hearts of the young, lay the foundation

for the New World. Instinctively, the young knew there was both a collective and individual destiny. Greed made people forget we were our brother's keeper and filled each with fear about their personal tomorrow.

Slowly, the Star Child inhaled the cool evening air and listened to the crickets singing to the evening. It had been a long time since she walked on this planet. There were many worlds and much work to be done. Here, The Great Cycle was completing and the Star Child was the final spoke in the wheel. Hope was to replace despair and renewal to replace decay. This was the beginning. This was the rebirth.

* * * * *

Before entering the town square, the Star Child paused and gazed upward at the evening sky. As she said a silent prayer, she smiled at the thousands of shining stars decorating the ebony ceiling. These points of light called to the light within. Darkness and Light were brothers; part of the greater whole of the universe. Each person was part of this. Each particle within was part of the fabric of Darkness and Light. Each was comprised of the very substance of the stars and once this was perceived, the corrective was added. In time, this corrective led to right action.

During the course of each life, there were opportunities to remember and reach higher. Joining the stars as a brother. Each person was part of this universal fabric and yearned to travel upward to fulfill their destiny.

In this world, the pull was in two directions. One toward the earth and one toward the heavens. When the balance was destroyed and the earthly blocked the spiritual, the Star Child was sent. The people's pain and suffering called her forth. She was the universal bringer of Light. She was the beacon for the stormy night and came to restore the balance.

* * * * *

As the young talked and laughed, deep inside many understood much was missing. Yes, it was fun to be with friends. Laughter and song were necessary, but how was their inner emptiness and pain to be eased? Something told these young, life was more than working, playing and struggling for food. Instinctively, many felt that to join the takers and give in to the

world of greed was no solution to the alternative of not having enough. Were these the only choices?

And the inner voice continued to whisper: “What of the heart and the longing of the soul to reach higher?”

Because this was a Dark Age, some young had taken to striking out against authority and those who disagreed with them. In their view, pain begot pain. For them, the solution resided in being strong and beating the takers at their game. These young roved in packs, using violence as a way to fill their lives. Covering their pain with anger and destruction, they took what they wanted and contributed to the darkness of the times.

* * * * *

Born of the people’s need, the Star Child appeared as one of them. Coming to heal the pain of those most injured, she walked as a young teenage girl. With silver blond hair, skin of light olive, eyes of ocean blue, just under five feet of height, she walked effortlessly across the sand, emanating with peace and stillness. Calling first to the young, gradually, her message would reach out to everyone. All were in need of healing, but none more than these. Their futures consumed by the sickness of greed and fear that filled the land.

And when she walked into that gathering of young people and took her place among them, at first, none recognized who she was. Gradually, as the Light danced about her and reached out into the darkness, touching the hearts of those gathered, they began to realize she was the answer to their hopes. Here, was the beacon for the dark night and the exemplar to follow.

Partake of that wondrous teaching. Even in this day, the Star Child’s words call to the child who is free and loving in you. Rise up as an aware soul. Make your place in the evening sky and embrace this opportunity to join the stars as kin.

* * * * *

“O children of the darkness, I have come to lead you home. I am the fruit of your suffering and the ointment for your tired soul.”

“Long have you cried and long have you searched. Yet, the solution to your problem is inside of you. I have come to display it to you and help you embrace your own higher destiny.”

“In many ways, with your thoughts you create your own world and have been taught to think and act only in certain ways. Daily, these ways must be pushed aside for a time and you must learn again to perceive your own Inner Light and stillness. For this light, is the light of the heavens and connects you to all things. You have forgotten, you are a star, which began in a distant galaxy and one day must return home. While in this world, you must put time aside to remember and honor your spiritual heritage. This remembrance is the balancing factor and, in this age, has been lost and forgotten.”

“Because of the pull toward the earth and the need for material expression, it is natural to be tied to the world. Yet, you are also a child of the heavens and must learn to awaken and use your spiritual capacity. Then the balance between the earth and stars will be restored.”

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The youngest of those gathered began to speak. “Who are you? Why do you speak to us in this way? Why should we believe anything you say? You are just a child like us.”

The Star Child smiled, slowly looked at all who were gathered and replied. “Can’t you feel it? It is the pull of the stars... My words travel on the energy of the universe and while words are necessary to convince you, feel the energy. Embrace this energy. It is your home and is the Source who sent me here.”

“I am the child of your longing. On a cold night, I am the brother to keep you warm and the sister with whom to whisper your secrets. In each, there is emptiness, a hunger that waits to be filled by the Light of Eternity. In this age, many have sought to fill this hunger with all kinds of material things. They have sought the things of the earth to quiet the universal desire for things of the spirit. Greed has blinded them to their own higher nature and they fumble around in the dark like a blindfolded fool.”

“Listen to my words and think about them. Perceive the energy and love that support the words. Question what I say. Deep inside, you will recognize the call of Truth. This call reaches out and heals the emptiness and loneliness inside you. It embraces the part that wants to make sense out of the pain and suffering in the world. To know and to believe. This is something you must decide for yourself. I have come to present this opportunity and offer a solution. Only you can decide to accept or reject it.”

Then another questioned, “Where did you come from? You call yourself the child of our longing. What exactly does that mean? What you say is in the form of riddles. The words sound grand but their meaning is vague?”

“I have come from a place far away. So far away that it may be said, it is beyond the stars. I am a traveler who has been sent here to bring the corrective. The balance has been disturbed and I have come to restore that which has been lost. In this age, people have forgotten they are both children of the earth and children of the stars. Both parts of their nature must be honored and developed. The pain and suffering of this time has called me forth. Like a magnet, I have been pulled into this realm to offer hope and a way to restore the balance.”

“You too are children of spirit and must learn to soar upward claiming your place in the evening sky. Tell your friends I have come. Invite them here to question and listen. Each evening I will be here so all of you will learn anew to perceive you’re higher nature. Listen to my words, evaluate them, travel on their energy and go deep within. This energy calls to the part of you that is a star child and will live on forever. Until this energy is awakened in each of you this world will be a dark place, filled with fear and greed.”

“The corrective for the dark night is Light. I am the bringer of this Light and serve another who is its Origin. Tell your friends, hope has been awakened and has come to balance the darkness of the long night.”

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Again the youngest questioned, “Who are you? I still don’t understand who you are?”

And with a smile on her face, the Star Child said, “Look into my eyes. I will show you who I am?”

Slowly, as the crowd looked into the Star Child’s eyes, her eyes began to sparkle and grow brighter. And as the young ones gazed deeper, the two orbs of brilliance began to expand becoming two blue, green oceans that were ablaze with a brilliant sunrise. And as this energy, emanating from her eyes grew stronger gradually all they could see was brilliance and light. Then the darkness of the evening sky was consumed by light. Many had to shield their eyes and turn away.

Suddenly, the light disappeared and the Star Child was gone.

At first blinded by the brilliance, the young ones fumbled about unable to see. Then as their sight returned, each silently walked home, and their hearts were filled with joy and hope.

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Day- II

It was the second night and more young people had come to question and learn from the Star Child. Among the young, word quickly spread of the messenger of Light and the town square was filled. Many had come hoping to be part of something greater than themselves. Others came to learn, and others came because they had nothing else to do.

As the anticipation and excitement grew, some of those gathered began to wonder if the Star Child would keep her word and appear a second time. The appointed hour was growing near and there was no sign of her walking across the sands. On the previous evening, this was the direction of her approach and expectantly eyes focused toward the western sands.

As the clock in the town square struck 7 pm, the Star Child appeared. Miraculously, she materialized from amongst the crowd. One moment there were groups of young people softly talking to each other, then a flash of light, which startled everyone and gradually she took form seemingly from the very air itself. Tiny particles of glimmering light rushed together and, in a moment, she was reborn.

Startled. The crowd was quiet and fixed their eyes upon her, wondering what next might happen. Amidst the wonder of this moment, some of the younger children began to grow nervous; sensing the fear, the Star Child addressed the crowd.

“O children of the dark night do not be fearful. I am one of you and have come to restore hope. I have been sent by One who loves you more than you can ever know. This is the hour when all your questions will have answers and all your fears will be replaced by love. Let the questioning begin.”

Then a young girl, no more than four years old, who was standing next to where the Star Child appeared, called out, “I am frightened. The people in our village do not travel about as you. My brother and his friends say you are a witch or a magician. I am frightened. Please do not hurt me.”

Gently, the Star Child gazed at the young one, smiled and whispered, "I would not hurt you, you are my sister and the reason that I have come." Taking in this reply, tentatively, the young girl put aside her fear and returned the smile.

Looking-up and turning toward the larger crowd, the Star Child commanded, "Now, bring to me your questions."

With a challenge in his voice, a tall teenager shouted from the middle of the crowd. "You say that you are one of us. Yet, how can that be? None of us travel about like you or have the powers that you appear to have. Why should we trust you?"

With a smile on her face, the Star Child replied, "Sometimes, you have to trust your heart. You must listen to your heart's whisper and believe that events will turn out for the best. It is good that you question. Your mind wonders, how can this girl, if she is indeed a girl, be like one of us? She looks like us, but she is clearly different with a strength and awareness that we do not have."

"Know that we are the same. We have the same Source. The One who Created this world and universe. Our Source has sent me here to help. Also, I am what you will become. I am that spark which is deep inside you and lives on; taking you through the many worlds. I am the accumulated energy of many hearts burning for freedom."

Again, the same teenage boy called, "Even if we were to accept what you say, why have you come to us? In this world of takers, we are nothing."

"Because the Source has a message for you. The Source says- this world is more than it appears. Remember, the race does not always go to the strongest or bravest. Sometimes, it goes to the one who hears the higher call and cannot be shaken. The Source says-if you will take one step toward me, I will take ten toward you. This is the hour of change, but before the change can be enacted, you must be prepared."

Then, the young girl called out, "Please, tell us more about the One who sent you, and if love be his way, why has our world fallen into darkness?"

"Because in order for there to be light; there must be darkness. What good is the sunrise without the ebony covering of the night sky? Both these opposites exist so you may travel beyond them. I am here to show you what supports this world of form. By connecting with this under lying reality, each of you will reach higher, remember and take the next step in your personal evolution."

Another youth, who was quickly reaching manhood, called out, “Enough with words. All of the adults in our world use words to make promises that have become empty. We need something more than words and promises. What do you have to say to that?”

“Tonight I will give you experience and show you what you each will become. By focusing inward, I will display to you, your own inner potential and you will consciously connect with the creative energy that is your Origin. But first, each of you must promise something. Will you promise me?”

“And what might that be?” shouted back the crowd.

“That you must talk about this and share this experience with everyone you know. Each of you must tell your parents, friends, and classmates. Tonight when you go back to your homes, you must use your computers and telephones and ask these people to speak with everyone they know about it. Can you do this?”

Growing excited, the crowd of young people called back, “Yes. We will do this.”

“Good,” called the Star Child. “Now, I want you all to sit down; if you are already seated, then, stay where you are.” Slowly, as the great crowd found a place to sit, the Star Child waited.

“Next, I want you all to take a deep breath and hold onto the air with your lungs; breath in through you nose and embrace the evening air. Feel its coolness and smell its sweetness. You are part of this wondrous beauty. Now, hold you breathe and exhale very slowly through your nose. Feel the air as it leaves your lungs returning to the greater world. Now, let us repeat this breathing exercise.”

Together, the great crowd repeated the timeless motion of going out and returning. In this way, gradually, they grew calmer and more familiar with following the Star Child’s soothing voice. As she spoke, her voice was a gentle whisper that even the most distant participant could hear; a soft melody, like peaceful water caressing the children, running across the night air.

“Next, I want you to close your eyes and focus inward. Do not be afraid. While I am here no one can harm you. Trust me. Close your eyes. Focus inward and picture a ball of white light. See this orb, in your mind’s eye, pulsating with clear, white, peaceful energy. This light calls to you and is part of you.”

“If your mind strays, and another thought enters, do not fight it; simply return to your ball of white light. This is a thought form you are creating in your mind’s eye; it is yours and is part

of you. Now, as the light pulsates with its peaceful energy pattern, feel this energy as it flows through your body and awareness. Slowly, you and this light must join and become one . . .”

And as the Star Child’s voice led the children along the ancient and universal path of spiritual awakening, she took the Light from the ether and focused it upon all the individual orbs that were aglow in each child’s heart. Then, because of the Star Child’s intervention, as each individual light grew brighter and stronger, it split apart. One portion stayed within the child, as each child remained seated in the town square, and another portion journeyed upward into the night’s sky. Finding its own place in the heavens, each child was now a star to illumine the darkness and shared its light across the heavens.

In that timeless moment, that part of each child that remained behind and was seated below, offered up their innermost hope in the form of a prayer. Miraculously, each prayer was answered, in the form of a personal dream, showing each child what still was possible with their lives.

Later, as the crowd broke-up and dispersed, each child was aglow with the hope of a brighter tomorrow. As they walked toward their homes, filled with renewed energy, children spoke to each other about what they experienced. Fantastically, while each had the same experience of being a star in the evening sky; no two shared the same dream, or personal wish for the future. Each life varied, full of possibility and the opportunity to create something personal.

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As the children promised, that evening, when they got home they shared their experiences with everyone who would listen. Phone calls, text messages and e-mails were sent out all across the world. Such was the thrill and the excitement of that hour. In a hundred homes, incredulously, parents listened to little ones relating stories about becoming a shining star and describing in detail their personal, bright future that lay ahead. It had been years, since so much hope had entered into so many homes.

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Day- III

And the next day, when the children went to school, all were a buzz about the night before and what the Star Child had brought. Quickly, the NEWS picked-up on this story and features were being aired on television and radio stations. Also, scores of meetings were held in halls of government, among the Generals and Masters of Religion. Debates raged how these events might alter their control of the people, and some planned so this would not happen.

* * * * *

It was time. Again, the Star Child materialized on the sands that bordered the town and felt their coolness underfoot as she walked effortlessly toward the square. Even at this distance, she could hear the noise and felt the many people, adults and children, who were waiting. Their combined energy was stronger than the previous evenings, with greater variability and shades of darkness. This was all part of the Plan and the inevitable outcome so that the Teaching might again manifest. She was but a vehicle and joyfully embraced her role.

Understanding there were too many people to pass through to reach the center of the square, she willed herself there. In an instant, she was standing beside the fountain, enjoying the cool spray of the water upon her skin and dress. Night had come to the surrounding countryside, but here in the middle of this great crowd of people, the lights from the TV cameras and their large companion spotlights made it seem like day. Much like an actress who enters upon a stage, she waited for the crowd to acknowledge her presence. Then, a young boy called, "Look. She has come. We told you, she was real."

In an instant, the cameras and their lights turned and further illuminated where she stood. Then, a young female reporter quickly moved forward and offered a microphone into which the Star Child could speak. The Star Child looked at the reporter and shook her head, indicating that this would not be necessary. With anticipation, every head turned and waited. On this night, they wondered, what wondrous teaching would be revealed?

* * * * *

On the roof of the tallest building that bordered the town square, General Gates gave his crack sniper team final instructions. These two rifles were the very best and had never failed in each of their many missions. This night, they were teamed together so there would be no doubt as to outcome. Earlier in the day, it was decided unanimously in a joint meeting between the Generals and the Masters of Religion, there would be no more gatherings and fantastic stories to ignite and impassion the young. Hope and optimism were to be replaced with order and control; several well placed bullets to the head would ensure this.

* * * * *

“In my journey to this world, this time, I brought my message to the young children. It is they, who are the hope for the future and most receptive to this teaching’s form. This time, I showed you the Source. This creative, life giving energy of which you all have a piece in your heart and will help lead you back home ...”

Suddenly, there was a twin explosion. “Crack! Crack!” Simultaneously, the snipers had released their bullets and before anyone could turn in the direction of that terrible sound, the Star Child disappeared. As the bullets raced to where she was standing, the Star Child was gone. In her place, a great balled figure of pulsating Light. The luminescence of this great 10 foot high ball of Blue White Light dwarfed the brightness output of the many TV Cameras and spotlights. Somehow, as the bullets passed into this lighted orb, they were absorbed and the ball grew even stronger.

Then, as the crowd realized someone had just tried to shoot and kill the Star Child, the great ball of Light began to ascend from the ground and slowly rise into the night sky. And as this Light grew brighter, it rested and hovered just above the town square. As final message, these were the words spoken, in her kind, gentle voice.

*“On the night when you are low and filled with despair,
look to the evening sky for I will be the brightest star there.”*

And as many tears began to fall, like a racing comet, the Star Child rose and filled the night sky with a long trail of Light, returning to her place, as the brightest star amidst the milky way galaxy.

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In the years that followed, the hundreds of children that initially experienced the Star Child's message, grew into adulthood and gradually took their rightful place as leaders in the larger world about them. And as the older generation passed away, these children of hope and change sang the praises of the Star Child by making their world a brighter place.

And in this land, it has remained a custom, that upon seeing the first star of the evening, each child sings the traditional song and makes a wish for their future.

For more, see: www.thedeeganproject.com

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