

# THUS SPAKE CHRISTOPHER

*A Tale of the Many and the One*

&

*The Way of the Modern Nazir*

by

*Niquio, An Unknown Person*

(nih-KWHY-oh)



**LISTEN TO TCHAIKOVSKY,  
SAVE THE WORLD!**

Dedicated

To

*Padmanabha Menon*

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## *The Book of Christopher*

1. I have been on the mountaintop for ... even I don't know for how long. It seems like forever and just for an instant. I have studied the *Book of Instruction*<sup>1</sup>, the *Book of Writings*<sup>2</sup>, the *Book of Channelings*<sup>3</sup>, the *Book of Learning*<sup>4</sup>, the *Wisdom Books*<sup>5</sup>, the *Book of Commentaries*<sup>6</sup>, the *Work of the Chariot*<sup>7</sup>, the *Work of Creation*<sup>8</sup>, the *Book of Creation*<sup>9</sup>, the *Book of the Assembler*<sup>10</sup>, the *Book of Clarity*<sup>11</sup>, and the *Book of Radiance*<sup>12</sup>. In addition, I've also studied the great religions and philosophies of the world. I've studied mathematics and the sciences, and I've studied what some call a pseudoscience<sup>13</sup>. I've meditated and contemplated and thought about what I have read and who I am. I've experienced ecstasy and great "aha" moments as I've put two and two together to make something new. I've gone from the Many to the One and then back again to the Many and then to both at once. I've watched the world and how everything within it is always changing except for one fixed point that only observes and never changes. I've learned through experience that none of us are who we initially think we are. That we are not the "I" that we tell ourselves we are, but instead we are the life and awareness that sits silently behind the "I"<sup>14</sup>, the eye behind the eye and the eye of the I. I've learned many things and experienced many wonders while on the mountaintop. And yet none of what transpired on the mountaintop helped me to master the F-chord<sup>15</sup>, and I realized that to fully understand the One we have to descend into the world of the Many. And so I left the mountaintop and descended into the valley of experience where I encountered an Unknown Person who asked me many questions. And I answered that Person. Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>1</sup> Torah (Instruction)

<sup>2</sup> Ketuvim (Writings)

<sup>3</sup> Nevi'im (Prophets)

<sup>4</sup> Talmud

<sup>5</sup> Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Songs

<sup>6</sup> Midrash Rabbah

<sup>7</sup> B. Chagigah

<sup>8</sup> B. Chagigah

<sup>9</sup> Sefer Yetzirah

<sup>10</sup> Ecclesiastes

<sup>11</sup> Bahir

<sup>12</sup> Zohar

<sup>13</sup> Astrology

<sup>14</sup> Zohar I:204b, Zohar II:137b, Zohar I:12b

<sup>15</sup> A somewhat difficult chord to play on guitar

2. The Person asked, *"Why have you come down from the mountain top? Why now?"* I began to answer.

I have come down from the mountain top precisely because it IS now. Every few decades there comes a time when people yearn to transcend, but they don't know how. This time around many are yearning to learn about individual spirituality. Many of the institutions that claim to hold the keys to spirituality have either failed them or have taken them as far as they are able. Either way, they now wish to go further, but they can only do so as individuals, not as slaves to some group. So that is why I am here. To speak of the spirituality of the individual and of individual joy. Thus spake Christopher.

3. The Person then said, *"Tell me more about joy."* I began to answer.

One of the easiest ways to begin on your path of individual spirituality is by focusing on a moment of joy that you have felt. You don't need to close your eyes or sit in any particular posture to start, but those things can come later at appropriate times. Instead, for now find a moment when you felt joy and let that joy expand. Let it expand throughout your mind and throughout your body and then feel it extending beyond your body throughout both space and time. Give joy to yourself and give joy also to others. There will come a time within a few years when such joy may become the individual religion and path of many. This will be a joy of the body, the heart, and the soul. Many will learn that they can fan the flames of joy within themselves while also giving light and joy to others. However, one can never steal joy from others, though there will always be those that will try. There are always those who will deliberately try to rob others of their happiness, but joy taken in this way can never be consumed and so they will still be hungry and will try to rob again. This is a path that leads to joylessness. Joy can always be given, but never taken from others without their consent. Instead, joy is always born within. It is a light that delights, and it can be passed onto others but only if others choose to receive it. It is a joy of both the true *Self* and the senses because all that we perceive is of the senses and all that we are is the true *Self*. However, that does not mean that it is hedonistic or that it is always of the physical, as you might understand it. The body can feel joy, but joy is of the light. At the same time, however, the joy of the body is the joy of light! Joy comes when two people smile at one another and feel as one. Joy comes whenever a thought or a perception delights us. Joy is something that can fill our hearts and our minds. Joy is something we can radiate, but whether someone else wants to bask in our joy or reflect it back to us is always their choice. Joy is something we can give to others, but not something we can force upon others or take by force. All beings have free choice, and their choices should always be respected just so long as they don't impinge upon the freedoms of others. Hence, do not ever try to steal or control another's joy. It is theirs and not yours. Thus spake Christopher.

4. “How does one get to the mountaintop,” asked the Person. I began to answer.

Do you not know what is written in the *Wisdom Books*? There it says, “On top of the high places by the way, where the paths meet, She who is called Wisdom stands<sup>16</sup>.” At the bottom of the mountain are the ‘ways<sup>17</sup>.’ These are the great religions and philosophies that are open to everyone, and anyone can begin their journey at this point. Many, however, never venture any further up the mountain than where they began. These are the hardliners and ultra-conservatives of every religion. They have no desire to reach the mountaintop as they are perfectly content with telling everyone else how their way is the true way and all the other ways are wrong. Halfway up the mountain, though, are most of the people of this world. They are halfway up because they listen half of the time to those more conservative voices below, but the other half of the time they listen to the voice of Wisdom from above and from within. In general, they are good people who want to live good lives, but they mistakenly think that those below are above them, and they, perhaps, do not desire to hear the voice of Wisdom as much as they should. Near the top, though, are those who have continued their journey. They are the ones who have reached the end of the way that they began with, and from that point on there is only the ‘path<sup>18</sup>’ of the solitary individual, a path that they themselves have to create. At the top they find the others who have also managed to create their own path through life, and at that point they realize that they have everything in common with those at the top and nothing in common with the ultra-conservatives at the bottom who, nonetheless, still see themselves as the guardians of their particular way. At the top of the mountain are Wisdom and joy, but at the bottom are ignorance and division. Hence, one should always seek the top of the mountain. Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>16</sup> Proverbs 8:2

<sup>17</sup> *Derekh* in Hebrew, a wide road for everyone

<sup>18</sup> *Netivah* in Hebrew, a small path for only a single individual



5. The Person looked at me and next asked, "*What is enlightenment?*" I began to answer.

When I was little, I thought that enlightenment meant that you would be happy ever after and never again feel pain or sorrow. But now that I am older, I have a different view of enlightenment. To me enlightenment is that moment when you suddenly realize at a deep level both experientially and logically that the person you think of as you is only a sock puppet for the awareness that returns to the body every morning. At the beginning of each day, awareness gives the appearance of returning to a physical body, and then it reads the program within that body that says, "I am so-and-so and this is my body and this is my life." When you realize, however, that you are not the program in your brain but the awareness that perceives that program, then you stand at the edge of enlightenment. Furthermore, while most people think of enlightenment as the end of their spiritual journey, it is really only the midpoint. Like the illumination at the full moon, there is still a journey that continues as that illumination is further understood and assimilated back into the oneness of the union of the perceived with the perceiver. And then a new cycle and a new journey may begin. Additionally, when one is little, one thinks of oneself as a ghost inside a machine with the exterior world out there, but the reality is that the perceiver, the perceived, and the act of perceiving are never separate from one another. Like a trio of quarks making up a proton, we may think of them as being separate items, but they always exist together simultaneously, and if we cannot separate them, are they really separate things? Thus, awareness comes to know that it is all that is and that it can at times give the appearance of absolute oneness, and at other times it can give the appearance of multiplicity, and at other times it is simply the knowing of things. Either way, though, it is all just awareness appearing to take on many different forms without anything really changing. Thus, neither pain nor pleasure nor life nor death disappear with enlightenment. They are simply understood for what they really are. Nonetheless, by correctly understanding the true, shadowy nature of what we think of as an objective reality that is separate from ourselves, we can become connected to everything, and that which is peace and wholeness by its very nature suddenly becomes aware of the depth of its own peace and wholeness. And from that moment on, everything continues just as it was before except that the perfection and the oneness of each moment is suddenly deeply understood. Thus spake Christopher.

6. “Do you meditate,” asked the Person. I began to answer.

I am always meditating, though one could say that there are two different modes to my meditation – one mode with eyes closed and another mode with eyes open. Every morning after spending about 15 minutes to quiet and center my mind, I meditate for another half hour with my eyes closed. I follow an ancient technique that is given in the *Book of Creation*<sup>19</sup>, but which is also similar to the mindfulness techniques that may be found elsewhere. This procedure amounts to simply stilling one’s mind and then directing every thought and perception back to the awareness that both creates and perceives that thought and perception<sup>20</sup>. Consequently, instead of getting caught up in the drama of one’s thoughts and emotions, awareness simply and continually becomes aware of itself. But since we do not perceive awareness in the same way as we do objects in the world of multiplicity, we only know awareness as a unity with no divisions or parts. And as we, so to speak, move closer to that indivisible awareness, it is only natural that we begin to feel more oneness. And we also begin to feel more love because what is love if not oneness? In the *Book of Instruction*, Abraham was told to go to a new land<sup>21</sup>, but the Hebrew phrase *lech l’cha* actually means, “Go to yourself<sup>22</sup>.” Hence, if you want to find that promised land, then you must not look to what you think of as “out there,” but rather to what you recognize as the core and the source of your own being. Also, over time you will realize that there is no separation between the knower, the known, and the act of knowing, and at that point you will realize that all of this exists simultaneously and that there is no separation or imperfection, only the thought of separation and imperfection. Thus, I meditate not to reach a perfection that is already always present, but to simply become more aware of the perfection that already exists. Perfection is perfection and wholeness is wholeness whether I realize it or not, but by meditating I do make my experience of things more pleasant and my awareness of the whole more strong. And when I am not meditating with eyes closed, I am simply meditating with eyes open. By that I mean that as I go throughout my day, I take every perception I have and follow it back to the awareness where it is understood. In that way, every perception, whether painful or pleasant, takes me back to a state of oneness. Furthermore, at the beginning one thinks that there are two wells<sup>23</sup> – one that is the source of everything and one that receives everything. We naively call one well ourselves and the other well the world. However, the ultimate realization is that the well that everything comes from, the well that everything is poured into, and even the act of pouring are all one. This is the ultimate truth that stands whether we realize it or not. However, by meditating in the way that I’ve described above, we can become more aware of that which already is, and that transforms what appears to be turbulent oceans into still waters. Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>19</sup> Sefer Yetzirah 1:8

<sup>20</sup> I began this practice in earnest several years ago when I retired. However, at first I practiced it with eyes closed while sitting in a traditional meditation posture, and I just fell asleep. I didn’t make any real progress until I tried it with eyes open while going throughout my day, and from that moment on, progress was swift. I now do it with both eyes closed while sitting and with eyes open while engaged in activity. Also, it is quite possible that what really happens is that my perceptions are quickly followed by a reminder to focus on awareness itself and that it all happens so rapidly that the perception and the awareness of awareness appear to be simultaneous.

<sup>21</sup> Genesis 1:12

<sup>22</sup> Zohar I:78b

<sup>23</sup> Zohar I:145b

7. The Person asked, “How many Gods are there?” I began to answer.

The correct answer to your question is many, one, and none. Most people have a conception of a God or Gods that they give characteristics to such as loving, long-suffering, or as the one who delivers justice. These are the Gods that one makes<sup>24</sup>, the Gods that we make in our image. In Hebrew, these Gods are called *Elohim*. In contrast to this is the God that is beyond all conception, the God that cannot be defined, not due to any intellectual failing or limitation on our part, but because such a definition is intrinsically and mathematically impossible. This is the God that the Hebrews call *Yud-Hey-Vav-Hey* or “the one who causes being.” This is the name that is never pronounced so as to illustrate that it is unknowable and void of characteristics. Hence, some may also call it the Void or Emptiness. When I use the term God, I am generally referring to the mysterious, unknowable awareness that sits at the core of our being and that is the center of our life<sup>25</sup>, the “I AM” that represents pure awareness without identification with any object or concept. For me, this mysterious awareness is how the notion of *Yud-Hey-Vav-Hey* is experienced in practical terms. An *Elohim* can be called *he* or *she*, but *Yud-Hey-Vav-Hey* or the Void can at best only be called *they* or *it*. Once duality arises, however, then this Void takes on the appearance of an inner awareness that observes everything. Hence, *Yud-Hey-Vav-Hey* is also known as *Ehyeh*<sup>26</sup> or “I AM”<sup>27</sup>. Thus, one could say in a sense that in the beginning, the Void, *Yud-Hey-Vav-Hey*, created duality, and the Void-without-characteristics appeared as *Elohim*-with-characteristics. But the Void *Yud-Hey-Vav-Hey* was *Elohim*, and *Elohim* was *Yud-Hey-Vav-Hey*. The Void was “I AM,” and “I AM” was the Void. That which had no characteristics became that with all characteristics, and no characteristics and all characteristics were the same. And that is the ultimate contradiction that can be known but not grasped. That is the unspeakable mystery and the enlightenment that awaits each individual. Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>24</sup> Zohar III:113a

<sup>25</sup> Zohar I:204b

<sup>26</sup> A mathematical connection between *Yud-Hey-Vav-Hey* and *Ehyeh* is that the distinct letters *yud*, *hey*, and *vav* have a sum of  $10+5+6=21$ , and the numerical value of *Ehyeh* is  $aleph+hey+yud+hey=1+5+20+5=21$ .

<sup>27</sup> Exodus 3:14

8. The Person then looked at me and asked, "*Does God actually exist?*" I began to answer.

Have you not heard that God is dead? And that God is alive? And that God is both dead and alive? And that God is neither dead nor alive? The highest conception of God is beyond all conceptions, and hence, it is beyond concepts of existence and nonexistence, life and death. Those who know only a God of characteristics are at a lower level, and they fight among one another over who has the right definition of God. In this regard, the atheist is superior since they look at any God with characteristics and say, "Not this, not that." Hence, they are closer to the Void. But those at even higher levels are aware that there is a mystery at the core of everything, an enigma that can't be solved. It is only those who are aware of this mystery that can be said to know the God that can't be known, and even they don't know it. They are simply witnesses to the mystery, the *Source of Life* that appears within us as our awareness. Thus spake Christopher.

9. The Person then asked, “*Should my goal then be to enter the Void and leave perception of this world behind?*” I began to answer.

Initially, most people see only the world that they think is outside of themselves. Of those people, a few manage to later become aware of the unknowable mystery at the core of their being, and then they see the Void as the goal that will liberate them from their pain. Unfortunately, many of the people who remain at this level may then see the world as the enemy of the Void, and they will call the Void good and the world bad or evil. However, beyond all of this is a higher stage where you can realize that the visible world and the invisible Void are one and the same. At times, a person at this level may feel that they have been completely absorbed into the Void for either an instant or an eternity, but for the rest of the time even when they see the world, they will know it for what it is. They will know that the world and the Void are one. As the *Book of Commentaries* has said, “Whatever things you see are but parts of the ways of the *Holy One*<sup>28</sup>.” Furthermore, once you realize that the parts you see depend on the Whole and that the Whole cannot be a whole without containing all the parts, then you will realize that the parts and the Whole are the same. The proper way to travel through the world of parts, however, is by always being aware of the Whole while perceiving the parts. This is what the *Book of Radiance* calls establishing unity above and diversity below<sup>29</sup>. What most people do, though, is to establish unity below and diversity above, and by this is meant that they cleave to and try to make themselves one with something they desire in the external world while at the same time separating themselves from that primordial awareness that they can never truly be separated from. Thus, whether you see the world or the Void, always be aware of the mystery that is inherent in and underlies both. That is what you were born to realize. Just that. Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>28</sup> Genesis Rabbah XII:1

<sup>29</sup> Zohar I:12b

10. The Person then asked, “*Are you here to establish a new religion?*” I began to answer.

Have you not read what is written in the *Book of Instruction*? That one should not follow the multitude to do evil<sup>30</sup>? The truth is that all multitudes will eventually do evil, and why should anyone want to establish anything that will do evil? As is suggested by the *Book of Learning*<sup>31</sup>, for those who use their religion in the right way, it becomes a medicine of life, but for those who use it in the wrong way, it becomes a deadly poison. So no, I am not here to establish a religion. At most, I am perhaps a mouthpiece for the individual awareness, and I am here to sing of individual spirituality and enlightenment, and that is all I am here for. I am not here to create more ignorance and darkness, but to celebrate the joy and light of each individual. That is all and that is enough, and that is, perhaps, all that anyone should strive to do. Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>30</sup> Exodus 23:2

<sup>31</sup> B. Shabbat 88b

11. The Person then asked, “*Is there an easy way to find joy?*” I began to answer.

Joy comes through many forms. It comes from the food you enjoy eating and from the people you love and from the work you enjoy doing<sup>32</sup>. Nonetheless, we are all good at building complexes within us of fear or hate or anxiety that can interfere with our joy. These are the knots that you must untie in order to experience continual joy. There are many ways to do this, but one of the easiest ways is to listen to good classical music each day. In particular, Tchaikovsky. More than any other person, I consider him to be the composer of joy. Our brains are programmed by what we feed it, and good sounds help the brain normalize and heal itself so that it can function at its best. Other composers have also written combinations of sound that are healing such the *Moldau* by Smetana, *Claire de Lune* by Debussy, *Capriccio Español* and *Scheherazade* by Rimsky-Korsakov, Beethoven’s *Ode to Joy* from his 9<sup>th</sup> symphony, *Petrouchka* by Stravinsky, and the *Polovtsian Dances* by Borodin. Thus, Tchaikovsky is not the only composer that can help your brain feel joy, and the final test is if it is classical and if it brings sweetness to you when you listen to it. Again, I feel that the music of Tchaikovsky is the best for this practice, but I include some additional composers as well. They will all help you heal and reprogram your brain so that it can function better and more easily experience joy. This is the easiest way that I know to proceed. Feed your brain joy, and then you will experience joy. Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>32</sup> Ecclesiastes 2:24, 3:13, 5:17, 9:9

12. The Person then asked, *"How did duality come into existence?"* I began to answer.

What makes you think that duality has come into existence? I will tell you why you think that and where you have erred. It is the common experience of all that we experience objects and that they are known. Thus, we separate things into the knower, the known, and the act of knowing, and we call this duality or multiplicity. However, where is the separation between these things? We imagine that there is a "knower" sitting inside our bodies and that the "known" is always something "out there" and that "knowing" is the result of an interaction of the "knower" with the "known." We imagine these to be three separate processes that exist at different moments in time, but the reality is that there is no separation between them. The "known" only exists when it is in the awareness of the "knower," and likewise "knowing" is only present when both the "knower" and the "known" are there. Again, we imagine these as separate processes, but in truth they all exist simultaneously. There is no known without a knower and an act of knowing. They are all present simultaneously, and when this is understood, then there is no separation of things into multiplicity. Thus spake Christopher.



13. The Person then asked, *“How should I go throughout my day?”* I began to answer.

As I have said, whether one is awake or asleep, whether one’s eyes are open or closed, one should always be aware of the mystery, that part of our experience that lies at the core of our existence and that defies definition. This is a fixed point in a sea of change, and as we witness all that changes around us, we should let those changes only serve to remind us of that point at the center that never changes. If we can do this, then we will unify above while seeing diversity below<sup>33</sup>. By attaching ourselves to this center, we will always be aware of the oneness and changelessness of our being even while navigating through the ocean of duality. Notice, too, that since that which lies at the center of awareness is not perceived in the same way as exterior objects, it follows that this center has no perceived characteristics or parts. Hence, as we, in a sense, draw closer to this center, we automatically feel more unity, and unity is the same thing as love. Thus, moving closer to our center also results in more feelings of oneness, love, wholeness, light, and joy, and this is where a person should stand as they go throughout their day. In contrast to this are those who create diversity above and unity below. Again, as I’ve previously said, to “create diversity above” means to separate oneself from the unity of one’s center, and to “create unity below” doesn’t mean to create a sense of oneness as you might think, but rather to cleave to an object of perception instead of the center. This is the way many people live, but it is not the correct way to live. This way only leads to greed and fear of loss, and it never brings true satisfaction. Instead, one should always strive to be aware of one’s own awareness that lies at the center of our perceptions and to always be aware of the unity that connects all things. This will lead you to that happiness that is your very nature and that is not fleeting like the rest of what you know. This is the stance you should take, and this is the correct way to live. Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>33</sup> Zohar I:12b

14. The Person then asked, “*What is the foundation of all mysticism?*” I began to answer.

The world is created when we become aware of one thing opposite another as well as a principle allowing for interaction between these opposites. This is discussed extensively in the *Book of Creation*. However, when we experience and become aware that the two opposites and their interaction are all the same, that the knower, the known, and the act of knowing are inseparable, we call this “enlightenment,” and to be constantly aware of this unity and enlightenment is the proper way to live. In fact, we could say that the only purpose for our perceptions of change and diversity is so that we may become more consciously aware of that which never changes. Hence, when you look upon the world, focus not on that which changes but on that which never changes. This is what is meant in the *Book of the Assembler* when it says, “This against this made the *Elohim* for the purpose that one should find nothing after Him<sup>34</sup>.” This verse mentions two opposites, but not the principle for interaction between them. However, the latter is mentioned in the *Book of Instruction* where it says, “Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters<sup>35</sup>,” and that this firmament allows for interaction between the upper and the lower waters is confirmed by the *Book of Radiance* where it says, “The lower waters call to the upper and drink them in through the medium of this firmament, because all the upper waters are collected in it<sup>36</sup>.” This is the foundation for everything, and this is the enlightened understanding that we should strive for. Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>34</sup> Ecclesiastes 7:14

<sup>35</sup> Genesis 1:6

<sup>36</sup> Zohar I:32

15. The Person then asked, *“What is meant in the Book of Channelings when it says that the living creatures ran and returned like the appearance of a flash of lightning<sup>37</sup>?”* I began to answer.

In Hebrew, the living creatures are called *Chayot* which is spelled *chet-yud-vav-tav*. However, this also sounds in Hebrew like two separate words – *Chai* (*chet-yud*) which means “living” or “life,” and *Ot* (*aleph-vav-tav*) which means “signs.” Hence, we can think of the living creatures or *Chayot* as “signs of life,” and in modern medicine we associate signs of life with brainwave activity. Thus, think of the *Chayot* as those bundles of brainwave activity that bring our world into existence. Also, we often think in terms of our attention running toward these bundled perceptions and then returning back to primal awareness. The average person focuses on the “running” to the objects of perception, but the enlightened focus on the “return” to the center of awareness<sup>38</sup>. Thus, I like to call that form of mindfulness meditation in which one lets every perception point you back to that which perceives the perception as “running and returning<sup>39</sup>,” and by mastering this technique you can be constantly meditating whether your eyes are open or closed. Even perceptions that would be called disturbing can also be used to lead you back to the center where everything is known, and in this way, all perceptions can help you back to your own being. Furthermore, when we begin a sentence with the words “I am,” that sentence usually ends with an object of perception such as when we say “I am happy” or “I am sad” or “I am a man” or “I am a woman.” This is the common experience when we focus on our attention running toward an object. However, when we focus on returning to pure awareness, then there is only “I AM,” pure being without any division or identification with an exterior object. Additionally, we may sometimes seem to oscillate back and forth between perceptions and pure being, back and forth between diversity and oneness, and when we transition from one to the other, we may be aware of what appears as a literal lightning flash between oneness and diversity. However, for the enlightened, this is all an appearance. Oneness and diversity are two sides of the same coin, and when you realize the true nature of this coin, then there is no more running and returning. There is only one, immutable reality that sometimes appears as absolute unity and at other times appears as a dance of diversity. When you understand this, your bundles of thought will then be replaced by a bundle of life<sup>40</sup>. Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>37</sup> Ezekiel 1:14

<sup>38</sup> Sefer Yetzirah 1:8

<sup>39</sup> Identical to the Direct Path of Sri Atmananda Krishna Menon, as I understand it.

<sup>40</sup> I Samuel 25:29

16. The Person then asked, *"Is enlightenment the end of our journey?"* I began to answer.

No. As discussed previously, so-called enlightenment is only the end of the first phase of our journey. It is a moment of illumination like the full moon, but it is also only the beginning of phase two. The second part of our journey involves an assimilation and a fixing of the wisdom we have gained from the enlightenment experience and of the understanding we have gained from a correct verbal explanation of that experience. The enlightenment experience must always be followed by an assimilation, and enlightenment also involves both parts of our brain, the verbal as well as the non-verbal. If you like, we could even describe our journey to self-realization by twelve parts. At the beginning we may start life with a liminal desire for enlightenment. This is like a nascent desire for a relationship. Later, we may encounter a path that we think will give us what we desire. This is like when we first meet someone who may be the one. Next, we set our first steps along this path. This is like a first date. Following this, though, we may have second thoughts about the path we have chosen. This is like the aftermath of a first date when we may have doubts regarding whether this is truly the relationship that we are looking for. However, if we resolve these doubts, then we move onto a second date where the relationship deepens. We are now making progress along the path we have chosen. After this, we have to make adjustments in order to successfully complete our journey. In a relationship, this is where each member of the relationship must adjust actions and expectations in order to deepen the relationship. And then there is that moment of enlightenment. In a relationship, this is when the two become one, and from here on out they walk as a single couple rather than as two individuals. The phases of assimilation following enlightenment are analogous to the steps that came before. There are initial deepenings that might be followed by another period of doubt and second thoughts, what in a relationship would be called a mid-life crisis. But once this has passed, there are more deepenings and a further stabilizing and assimilation of the moment of enlightenment, that full moon experience. And lastly, we arrive right back where we started with the only difference being that what was initially a desire for oneness has now become the constant, conscious experience of oneness. Either way, though, whether enlightened or not, the end of one cycle becomes just the beginning of a new cycle as we once again reach for joy, wisdom, and creativity. Thus spake Christopher.

17. The Person then asked, “How many souls exist?” I began to answer.

Years ago a famous physicist<sup>41</sup>, having noted that all electrons appear to be absolutely identical with respect to measurable properties, speculated that perhaps there exists only one single electron appearing simultaneously at different locations in spacetime. Similarly, some ancient thinkers have speculated that there are certain patterns that are the same but that appear in contexts that are different. For example, the pattern of one thing opposite another connected through a principle of interaction is the same whether we are talking about water, fire, and air (steam) or the belly (water), the head (fire), and the lungs (air), or winter (cold), summer (hot), and spring/fall (temperate) in between<sup>42</sup>. In a similar manner, one might say there is only one soul appearing in many vessels throughout spacetime. We can conclude this because the awareness within each of us is the same when we completely merge with it. In such a state, all divisions and distinctions disappear. It is only when we are in the world of duality that we can give the awareness characteristics such as being in a particular body or even the characteristic of awareness itself. But when merged in a state of pure awareness with no distinctions, there is also no difference. Hence, it is written in the *Book of Writings* that the soul is the lamp of *Yud-Hey-Vav-Hey*<sup>43</sup> and in the *Book of Radiance* that God is the soul and spirit of all<sup>44</sup>. Thus, I see all souls as an expression of *Yud-Hey-Vav-Hey*, and awareness as an intrinsic property that drives creation rather than being a derivative of creation as some believe. This is how I experience it, but reality is vast and new people will eventually come along with new experiences and new explanations that are far better than mine. So it has been, and so it will likely always be. Also, if you believe that there is no soul, then I agree with that belief, too, because awareness is no-thing. Hence, both perspectives are correct. Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>41</sup> John Wheeler

<sup>42</sup> Sefer Yetzirah

<sup>43</sup> Proverbs 20:27

<sup>44</sup> Zohar III:67a

18. The Person asked, “*How should children be raised?*” I began to answer.

Whether one is an adult or a child, the answer is the same. All people need a good code of conduct to adhere to. Different cultures have different ideas about how one should live one’s life, but amidst all those differences one will generally find ethics and advice that tend to be common to all. Thus, study the ethics and practices of several cultures, choose among those the things that will promote life, and use them to generate your own list of beneficial actions. This is particularly important for children who will flourish if they are on a good path. It is a good practice to write down a list of ethics and behaviors that you want to follow, and as you grow older and understand more, your list of behaviors to follow may grow and change. Nonetheless, always seek those actions that will make yourself and the world better, and in this way you can create for yourself a good structure and a good path that can save you from much harm. Furthermore, avoid risky behavior. As it says in the *Wisdom Books*, “Can one walk on hot coals and not be burned<sup>45</sup>?” Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>45</sup> Proverbs 6:28

19. The Person then asked, “*What are the different levels of the soul?*” I began to answer.

Some would say that there is no soul while others say there is. To me, both viewpoints are correct because what others call the soul, I see as the undefinable awareness that lies at the core of our being, and because that awareness is undefinable, it is no-thing. Also, from an absolute point of view, there are no levels to the soul, but from other points of view there are. The nature of the awareness inside us is undefinable, and so we also call it *Yud-Hey-Vav-Hey*, the four Hebrew letters of the unpronounceable name for *Divinity*. Nonetheless, we sense this life within us, and so over time we naturally give that unknowable awareness characteristics and we say things like “I am tall” or “I am short” or “I am a man” or “I am a woman.” But in reality, what I call the soul is none of these things. It is only I AM, pure beingness without any identification with attributes. What we do with ourselves, we also do with God as *Elohim*, the Hebrew name for the God that we describe with attributes. Because we do not fully understand the intrinsically ineffable nature of God as *Yud-Hey-Vav-Hey*, every culture creates their own version of *God/Elohim* that they give characteristics to such as male or female or loving or judging. But the truth is that *Elohim* is really *Yud-Hey-Vav-Hey* as we, similarly, are all the same indefinable awareness within, an awareness that has no parts, and hence, no levels. Still, as we grow and mature our understanding of things changes, and it is those changes in both experience and understanding that are being referred to when someone talks about different levels of the soul. In some writings, people have talked about five levels<sup>46</sup>. The beginning level is what I call the *vital soul*<sup>47</sup>. This is what we start out life with, and the *vital soul's* awareness is primarily of the individual and its environment. However, as we get closer to adulthood, we become more aware of others and society, and we begin to develop what I call the *moral soul*<sup>48</sup>. At this level we are expected to be responsible adults because we can now better understand the feelings of others and the consequences that our actions have upon them. Some people, however, have a very imperfect moral nature and fail to progress to the next level which is the *spiritual soul*<sup>49</sup>. This is the level at which one begins to feel a greater connection with the cosmos and begins to have what we can only describe as spiritual experiences, experiences of deep love and wisdom and understanding and connection. Only a minority of humanity might firmly reach this point even though many touch upon it from time to time. Beyond this, however, is an even greater level called the *living soul*<sup>50</sup>. This level begins when one starts to become aware that they, too, are just a part of something greater, something that cannot be contained within a single human body, and just as we sit around and observe our various bundles of thought, so we and many others that we know may be simply bundles of thought within yet some larger, more multidimensional expression of the *Life of the Worlds*. And yet there is still one more level beyond this one, and it is called the *unified soul*<sup>51</sup>. This is the level where one realizes that they have never left and are always connected with *Yud-Hey-Vav-Hey*. Furthermore, it is possible to be aware of all of these different levels simultaneously. One can sit and be aware of oneself, of others, of the spiritual perfection that surrounds them, of connections to something larger that can't be contained within just their body, and also of the unknowable essence of life and being that one is always connected with and always a part of. This is what is meant by the levels of the soul. Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>46</sup> Genesis Rabbah XIV:9

<sup>47</sup> *Nefesh* in Hebrew

<sup>48</sup> *Ruach* in Hebrew

<sup>49</sup> *Neshamah* in Hebrew

<sup>50</sup> *Chayah* in Hebrew

<sup>51</sup> *Yechidah* in Hebrew

20. The Person then asked, “*What did Solomon mean by vanity of vanities, all is vanity*<sup>52</sup>?” I began to answer.

Many view Solomon as a man who was old and depressed and who no longer found joy in anything. However, in my opinion, nothing could be further from the truth. In my view, Solomon was supremely enlightened. He saw that most things in this world are lacking in substance and that left to itself the world progresses through a myriad of cycles that endlessly repeat themselves. He saw that happiness is not found in material acquisitions that simply vanish as the wheel turns once again, but, instead, that true happiness is always experienced in the meaningful pleasures of the moment such as the food one enjoys or the spouse one loves or the work that helps one grow<sup>53</sup>. Furthermore, the English word *vanity* is a poor way to translate the Hebrew word *hevel*. The former comes from the Latin translation of the original Hebrew text into *vanitas vanitatum, omnia vanitas*, but this translation as vanity easily misses the essence of what is being said. The word *hevel* literally means “vapor,” and it would be more accurate to say in English that everything in this world is nothing more than hot air. Solomon, in my opinion, wished to convey that much of what is in this world is lacking in substance, and hence, is not worth worrying about. In the *Book of Commentaries*, though, the sages remark that those things that are reflections of passing conditions, such as the shadow cast by a flock of birds, are indeed without substance, but those things that are reflections of permanent conditions, analogous to the shadow cast by an old tree or a mountain, do have substance<sup>54</sup>. However, the only thing that is truly permanent is *Yud-Hey-Vav-Hey*, the life and soul within us. And what would be meaningful reflections of this life-giving awareness? One must surely say things such as love and oneness and charity and righteousness. These things have substance in this world while most other things do not. Furthermore, while everything under the sun (i.e. everything in this physical world) moves in cycles, one’s personal creativity springs out of the Void, and hence, must be counted as above the sun. In other words, each of us is in this world to express our own unique creativity, and it is a sad thing, indeed, if we get completely swept up by the whirlwinds of other people’s drama instead. Thus, focus on love and charity and kindness to others and on the kind of learning that develops the mind and your personal creativity in positive ways that bring you closer to *Yud-Hey-Vav-Hey*. See, too, the beauty and perfection of the present moment, and then you won’t have to worry so much about the rest or the many whirlwinds involving others. Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>52</sup> Ecclesiastes 1:2

<sup>53</sup> Ecclesiastes 2:24, 3:13, 5:17, 8:15, 9:7, 9:9

<sup>54</sup> Ecclesiastes Rabbah I:3



21. The Person then asked, “*What do the righteous do?*” I began to answer.

The righteous person constantly prays for the welfare of the world<sup>55</sup> and sends forth a higher vibration of love and oneness to fellow beings. Additionally, the righteous person gives to others what they can in terms of physical, emotional, and mental support. The righteous person sows seeds of goodness wherever and whenever they can in accordance with the *Book of the Assembler* since one never knows which ones will sprout<sup>56</sup>. Also, as my father, *Heart of the Eagle*, used to tell me, always give to others because when you give to others, you are also giving them a blessing, and this world was created so that we may bless one another<sup>57</sup>. Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>55</sup> Zohar III:14b-15a

<sup>56</sup> Ecclesiastes 11:6

<sup>57</sup> Zohar I:3a

22. The Person asked, *“How can I help build a better world?”* I began to answer.

Simply by asking the question, you have already begun to make the world a better place. Furthermore, while there are many things that can and that need to be done, not all things can be done by all people. To build a better world, each person must draw upon the gifts that are within their own heart and being<sup>58</sup>. For example, if you are a gifted builder, then you can help others by building for them. If you are a gifted teacher, then you can help to heal the world through your teaching, and if you are a gifted scientist, then it is through science that you can contribute to the improvement of humanity. In other words, each of us has our own gifts, and it is by willingly giving those gifts from our hearts to others that we can build a better world. While we can all and should all engage in kindness towards one another and while we all can pursue peace, the contribution that one person can make will often be very different from what another person has to offer, but it is only through the combined gifts of all of us that we can turn this world into a place where *Divinity* can dwell among us<sup>59</sup>. Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>58</sup> Exodus 25:2

<sup>59</sup> Exodus 25:8

## 23. The Person asked, “*What is the work of creation?*” I began to answer.

There are two types of creation, something-from-something creation and something-from-nothing creation. The first is brought about by simply permuting what already exists<sup>60</sup>. For example, the only difference between a clean room and a messy room is how things are arranged, and we can “create” a clean room by simply moving things around in a messy room. In contrast to this, something-from-nothing creation is a way in which we participate in bringing something into existence out of nothing. The steps for something-from-nothing creation may be characterized as decreeing, shaping, combining, weighing, and exchanging<sup>61</sup>. Decreeing means that we inwardly make a decision to do something such as, “I want to be a dancer or a singer,” or “I want to accomplish a doctorate in mathematics.” Decreeing is then followed by shaping where we mull things over in our mind and begin to make plans for accomplishing our goal. Combining refers to that process in which we begin to put two and two together and further refine our plans. Combining is often accompanied by several “aha” moments as we experience insights and realize what we need to do. Weighing refers to that stage where our dreams start to become a reality and to have measurable characteristics. And finally, exchanging is a characteristic of the stability of our creation in that it endures even as one background is exchanged for another. It refers to the ability of our creation to be present in different contexts. For instance, we want to be able to recognize the friends and friendships we’ve created even as backgrounds and situations change, and expressions of love can endure even as the object of our love is transformed from family to friends and eventually to all of humanity. Exchanging is seen when we see the same pattern, such as a pattern of kindness, appearing in different circumstances. This is the *work of creation*, and it involves both something-from-something creation and something-from-nothing creation. Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>60</sup> Sefer Yetzilah 4:16

<sup>61</sup> Sefer Yetzilah 3:3, 4:6, 5:3

24. The Person then asked, “*What is the work of the chariot?*” I began to answer.

The *work of the chariot* or *merkavah* is an ancient expression that refers to the journeys one can take by practicing that form of mindfulness meditation that involves always redirecting one’s attention back to the center of one’s awareness, the center of the whirlwind. It is said that this method is based upon the vision of Ezekiel<sup>62</sup>, but the Hebrew word *merkavah* for *chariot* never actually appears in those writings of Ezekiel that appear in the *Book of Channelings*, and this suggests that it is a code word for something else. In particular, I note that the numerical value of this word, when written in Hebrew, is the same as the numerical value of the Hebrew word *nazir*, and in the Hebrew Bible a *nazir* is a person who has separated himself further from certain common practices such as the drinking alcohol in order to attain an even higher level of holiness. Thus, I also call the *work of the chariot* the *way of the nazir*, and it is the path that one must follow after one has already gone as far as organized religion or other teachings can take them. The final steps to Wisdom have to be taken by the individual themselves, and the path both appears as one is walking along it and then disappears as one moves on<sup>63</sup>. As it says in the *Wisdom Books*, “It is the glory of *Elohim* to conceal a thing, and the glory of Kings to seek it out<sup>64</sup>.” If one wishes to know the truth of this world, one has to seek it out and eventually walk by themselves along this path of their own creation. One doesn’t become enlightened by sitting on the sidelines or by simply listening to others. Ultimately, those final steps can be taken only by listening to the voice of Wisdom within. That is the *way of the nazir*, and that is the way it has always been. Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>62</sup> Ezekiel 1

<sup>63</sup> Proverbs 8:2

<sup>64</sup> Proverbs 25:2

25. The Person asked, “*Cannot science explain everything?*” I began to answer.

Many might think so, but mathematics has shown us that this is not the case. The first crack in such thinking appeared in the late 1800s with Georg Cantor’s invention of *set theory*. Originally, Cantor and others thought of a *set* as just another word for a *collection* and that we could make anything into a *collection*. However, a problem arose because in the set theory there is well-defined way to take any set and use it to create an even larger set, and this also led to an understanding that even infinite sets can be used to create still larger infinities. However, suppose we take the set of everything, which we might also call the *set of all sets*. In that case, how can we possibly create something that is bigger than everything? On the one hand, we can’t, but on the other hand, set theory says we can, and this conundrum is what is known as *Cantor’s Paradox*. Eventually, this paradox within mathematics was sidestepped by reformulating set theory in terms of axioms that would allow us to do all the usual mathematics that we want while also prohibiting the construction of things like the *set of all sets*. However, this only sidestepped the mystery without fully understanding it. And then to further perplex people, the mathematician and logician Kurt Gödel demonstrated that there are an infinite number of mathematical statements that are true that, nonetheless, cannot be derived from the axioms that govern most mathematical systems. Put together, these results suggest that the Totality of all things is unknowable and that not all truths can be derived from logic alone. This was also intuitively understood by the ancient sage known as the *Great Huna* who said in the *Book of Commentaries* that all that we can perceive are only parts of the ways of the *Holy One* and not the *Holy One* itself<sup>65</sup>. Additionally, we might say the same thing about the *null set*, the set that contains nothing. Usually, when we think of nothingness, it is only a relative nothingness such as an empty box. There is a type of emptiness there, but only with respect to something tangible such as a box. In contrast to this, an ultimate emptiness would be void of all concepts and perceptions, including the box, and even void of the thought of the lack of all concepts and perceptions. One may merge with such a Void, but the Void itself is utterly beyond perception in the manner that we usually perceive objects within our world. Hence, both the Void and the Totality are incomprehensible and unperceivable, and as such they are indistinguishable from one another. However, we can see the effects of each, and if it weren’t for the Void/Totality, there would be no world of objects to perceive since the Void/Totality/Mystery appears within our existence as our very awareness. Additionally, one could say that the Totality must obviously contain the Void, and the Void must contain the Totality because if the Void didn’t, then lacking the Totality would be a perceivable, defining characteristic of the Void that would stand outside of the Void and the Void would then be something perceivable and definable by this particular lacking rather than a complete and incomprehensible total nothingness. Thus, if we represent the *null set* or *Void* by  $\emptyset$  and the *Totality of All Things* by  $U$ , then this leads to the equation  $\emptyset = U$  which few people seem to understand. That is unfortunate since this equation also represents, in my opinion, the highest level of enlightenment. Everything is the Void, and the Void is everything. Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>65</sup> Genesis Rabbah XII:1

26. The Person then asked, “What are *equivalence relations* and *quotient structures*, and why do you say that they are important?” I began to answer.

An *equivalence relation* is a relationship in a set of objects that acts in a way that is similar to equality between numbers. In particular, for any three objects A, B, and C that are involved in an *equivalence relation* it will be true that (1) A is equivalent to A (reflexive), (2) if A is equivalent to B, then B is equivalent to A (symmetric), and (3) if A is equivalent to B and B is equivalent to C, then A is equivalent to C (transitive). The bottom line is that an *equivalence relation* between objects acts similarly to equality between numbers, and additionally, an *equivalence relation* will always divide the elements of our set into discrete subsets. In this way, we can also think of an *equivalence relation* in terms of having a collection of boxes in front of us and we put each object that we have in one and only one box. For example, our set of objects might be the counting numbers 1, 2, 3, and so on, and our boxes might be labeled *even* and *odd*. In this case, every counting number will go into one box or the other but never both, and numbers that are in the same box will be considered *equivalent* to one another when we are at the level where we see only *even* or *odd*. Furthermore, in mathematics we call our set of boxes a *quotient structure* since we like to think of them in terms of having *cancelled* or *divided out* the differences between the various even numbers in one box and the various odd numbers in the other box. These concepts are important because they go a long way towards explaining the world we see. For example, anytime the pieces of any puzzle come together within our minds, we are forming a quotient structure. Thus, when our minds combine several objects together to form a structure such as a *chair*, then the chair becomes the quotient of the pieces that comprise it. In this case, our mind temporarily negates the differences between the pieces and sees only the whole. In a similar way, the *forest* is the quotient of the *trees*, and it is brought about by seeing the whole and no longer focusing on the differences that distinguish the individual trees. The concept of a quotient structure is important because it models how we construct reality with our minds. Almost every experience we have is a quotient structure made from more fundamental pieces that have come together. In particular, if an artificial intelligence were to accurately mimic human sentience, then it, too, would have to be capable of constructing such quotient structures. But what if we put everything we know into just one box? What if we make all things equivalent to one another? In this case, we would also make everything indistinguishable from everything else, and this totality with no distinctions would also be indistinguishable from the null state of no distinctions, i.e. the Void. Hence, once again we arrive at the equation  $\emptyset = U$ . Thus spake Christopher.

27. The Person then asked, “*What is meant when the Book of the Assembler says that there is nothing new under the sun*”<sup>66</sup>?” I began to answer.

The phrase “under the sun” refers to the world of physical objects that we perceive every day. At this level, all creation is only something-from-something creation that is the result of making rearrangements and permutations of what is already present. Mathematically speaking, permutations always result in cycles, and in a finite world governed by cycles a point is eventually reached where every new permutation is simply a repetition of one that has already been. Thus, eventually there is nothing new under the sun. However, the phrase itself suggests that perhaps there is another realm that is “above the sun,” and if so, then this would refer to a non-physical realm such as the realm of thought. In this realm, we can engage in combining previous thoughts to create insights that haven’t been seen before, and this is how we participate in something-from-nothing creation. In the *Book of Channelings* it says, “The new heavens and the new earth, which I am making, shall remain before me”<sup>67</sup>,” and in the *Book of Radiance* it says that these new heavens and the new earth are created by our insights<sup>68</sup>. In other words, every time we have a new idea or a new insight, it literally creates a new heaven and earth. Neither the physical realm of objects nor the non-physical realm of thought is the same afterwards, and new insights put new pieces on the chessboard in the world that is under the sun. Hence, through insight we can engage in something-from-nothing creation and bring new things into existence that have never been seen before, and through this creative power we can make the world a better place. Thus, spake Christopher.

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<sup>66</sup> Ecclesiastes 1:9

<sup>67</sup> Isaiah 66:22

<sup>68</sup> Zohar I:4b-5a

28. The Person then asked, “*Where is heaven?*” I began to answer.

It has been said that heaven is within you<sup>69</sup>. If so, then heaven is a state of consciousness, a state of being. Likewise, if heaven is within you, then so is hell. In the *Wisdom Books* it says that Moses was not able to enter the promised land because the people had made him angry<sup>70</sup>. In other words, once Moses succumbed to anger, he kicked himself out of paradise! It is, thus, we who create heaven or hell within ourselves on a daily basis and we who kick ourselves out of the promised land. And when we are filled with joy, we are in heaven and that joy fills us with light. And when we are filled with heaven and joy and light, then we can extend that joy and light to the world outside of ourselves in order to create heaven on earth! That is what each of us should do. Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>69</sup> Luke 17:21

<sup>70</sup> Psalm 106:32-33



29. The Person asked, *“Cannot joy also be found without?”* I began to answer.

What is within you is also without you, and what is without you is also within you. There is no separation between the two. Thus, joy seen without is also joy within, and joy within is joy without. As is written in the *Wisdom Books*, “The heavens themselves declare your glory<sup>71</sup>!” When you stand in awe before the heavens or the magnificence of nature, that is also experienced as joy within. And the sacredness within you is also the sacredness without you, and both within and without should be treated with the same care. This is important! Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>71</sup> Psalm 19:2

30. The Person asked, *"If the world we experience is our own creation, like a dream, then does anything matter?"* I began to answer.

Remember that it is the unknowable mystery within you, the source of your own awareness, that has created this dream. Were you born knowing its full purpose and meaning<sup>72</sup>? And if not, then who are you to destroy it? No, you must not destroy it! You must take care of it, heal it, and improve upon it. As is written in the *Book of Commentaries*, if you destroy your world and your environment, then there will be no one to come after you that can repair it<sup>73</sup>! Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>72</sup> Job 38

<sup>73</sup> Ecclesiastes Rabbah VII:20

31. The Person then asked, *"I understand now that we should not destroy the world, but is everything in the world all that important?"* I began to answer.

As the *Great Huna* and others explained in the *Book of Commentaries*, we live in a world of shadows<sup>74</sup>. Some of what we see are shadows or reflections of that which does not change, the great mystery of life, the hidden awareness within, and those are the shadows that are important. To me, the important shadows that reflect a higher spirituality are things like love, kindness, joy, beauty, charity, and community. However, other shadows are created by very fleeting and passing conditions, and they are the ones that are not important. These are things like the anger you may feel at the moment when someone says something you don't like or when you stub your toe on the furniture. All of these passing shadows are like hot air. There is nothing there to grasp, and this is the nature of many, if not the majority, of things in your life. Thus, cling to what is a reflection of substance and permanence, cling to those things that reflect that which created your world, and don't try to hold on to the rest. Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>74</sup> Ecclesiastes Rabbah I:3

32. The Person then asked, “*Who created this world?*<sup>75</sup>” I began to answer.

Rightly you have spoken, but your words should be a statement rather than a question for this world has, indeed, been created by *Who*. And what is *Who*? *Who* is the eternal question, the mystery that can be asked about but never fully known<sup>76</sup>. It is the mystery of mysteries, the source of our existence, and the speaking-silence<sup>77</sup> within. Again, as the *Great Huna* once said in the *Book of Commentaries*, all that we can see are but parts of the ways of the *Holy One*<sup>78</sup>. We can see the parts, but never the whole, and yet it is because of the mysterious whole that there are even parts for us to see. Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>75</sup> Isaiah 40:26

<sup>76</sup> Zohar I:1b

<sup>77</sup> B. Chagigah 13b

<sup>78</sup> Genesis Rabbah XII:1

33. The Person next asked, “*What should one do when the whole world seems to be besieged by troubles?*” I began to answer.

There is an ancient story in the *Book of Instruction*<sup>79</sup> about a time of trouble for the Hebrews when they were enslaved in another country. In response, they cried out to the mystery of mysteries<sup>80</sup>, and a voice eventually told them to retreat to inside their homes while death roamed about outside and took the lives of the firstborn<sup>81</sup>. The *Book of Radiance* comments on this story and says that whenever the *Destroyer* is out and about in the world, one should take shelter so as not to be consumed by that destructive force<sup>82</sup>. However, there is a deeper meaning to all of this. When troubles abound in the outside world, it is often difficult to find anything uplifting outside of ourselves to hold onto. In these circumstances, we must go within and cling to the *Source of Life* inside us. Adhere to the still, inaudible voice within and to the love, oneness, and joy that resides at the center of your being. By doing so, you will also be planting seeds that will eventually sprout in the outer world, too<sup>83</sup>. Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>79</sup> Exodus

<sup>80</sup> Exodus 2:23

<sup>81</sup> Exodus 12:11-13

<sup>82</sup> Zohar II:36a

<sup>83</sup> Ecclesiastes 11:6

34. The Person asked, *"Why does anything exist at all?"* I began to answer.

Your question is basically how come this world exists instead of nothing? Your confusion arises because all the examples of nothingness that you are thinking of are only forms of relative nothingness such as an empty box. In this case, there is only nothingness with respect to the inside of the box, but not an absence of everything. The box, itself, is there! Things are different, though, when it comes to an absolute nothingness. An absolute nothingness would also have to contain everything. Why? Because if it didn't, then it could be defined by this characteristic of not containing everything, and that would be something. In other words, any nothingness that has a defining characteristic is not an absolute nothingness by virtue of the fact that it possesses a characteristic that sits outside of that nothingness. Just as the box stands outside of the nothingness of the empty box, this characteristic stands outside of the absolute nothingness we are trying to experience, and that keeps this nothingness from being absolute. The characteristic, itself, is there! Thus, absolute nothingness has to contain everything, but within that nothingness no distinctions are made. In a similar way, if all possibilities exist, then that totality would also have to include absolute nothingness since without it, it would, by definition, be incomplete. Hence, absolute nothingness and the totality of all possibilities are one and the same. You can't have one without the other. But isn't that paradoxical and contradictory? Of course, it is! Nonetheless, that is why we exist. You can't have complete nothingness without also having complete existence. It is a paradox, but it is the paradox that makes all existence possible without there having to be an external creator. It is simply the nature of absolute nothingness to be absolutely everything and the nature of absolute everything to be absolute nothingness. At the same time, because it is paradoxical, it is also unknowable to us. We can come to the edge<sup>84</sup> of this paradox and sense it and smell it, but there is a point beyond which nothing more can be said about it. This paradox can inspire us and nurture us and we can even analyze large, isolated parts of it, but we can never comprehend it fully. It is the greatest mystery, totally unknowable, and yet it is also that to which we should always cling. And it is because of this paradoxical mystery that the world both exists and fails to exist at the same time. Finally, if you find fault with any of my arguments above, then remember this. They are only words that are designed to lead you to a particular experience followed by a proper understanding of that experience. That is all. Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>84</sup> Zohar I:31a

35. The Person asked, “*If reality is like a dream, why can’t I do all the things I do when I’m dreaming?*” I began to answer.

This world is like a dream, but it is as if before being born, we’ve signed a license agreement that says that change will be permitted but only in ways that are limited by following certain rules, rules that we might call the laws of physics. Thus, for example, we can fly like we do in a dream, but only if we build an airplane. We can marry the girl of our dreams, but only if we court her properly. Hence, we can pretty much do everything we might do in a dream, but only at a slower pace and with more effort since change is now constrained by laws of nature. And why would we do this? Why would we, so to speak, sign such a license agreement? Why would anyone want a world in which things change only in response to great effort? Undoubtedly so that we can have stability and so that we can learn those things that only come through making such great efforts including even how to make a proper effort. Furthermore, if you want change, then you have probably heard it said that if you want to receive, then you must first ask<sup>85</sup>. The *Book of Radiance* expresses this by saying that the impulse must always first come from us, and then the mystery will respond<sup>86</sup>. I’ve talked about this process, too, in the *work of creation*. Also, the *Book of Radiance* calls this world the *world of separation*<sup>87</sup>, and it is a world that can often be quite bitter. However, how can you understand sweetness if you haven’t experienced bitterness? Similarly, how can you understand freedom without knowing limitation, and how can you even begin to comprehend the infinite and that which is eternal without also knowing what is finite and always changing? The truth is that this world is the way it is because it is we who want it to be that way so that we can learn, and it is only through experiencing constant change that we can realize that there is something at the center of it all which is forever changeless. Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>85</sup> John 16:34

<sup>86</sup> Zohar I:35a

<sup>87</sup> Zohar I:22a

36. The Person then asked, "*What is the multiverse?*" I began to answer.

The multiverse is everything, all possibilities, all that is, past-present-future all at once. Furthermore, we are always moving through the multiverse from one reality to the next. What we perceive as time is, in my opinion, simply our incremental movement from one part of the multiverse to another. Thus, what we think of as the immediate future is usually just a variation of our previous perception in which everything has made a slight change one way or another. Occasionally, though, we find ourselves at what we think of as turning points where that slight change is suddenly perceived as a big change such as a movement from peace to war. Nonetheless, if we think of every possibility as existing all at once, then every change in perception is simply a shift in focus by awareness from one part of the multiverse to another. Because of the constraints we agree to abide by in order to make our perception of "physical reality" relatively stable, change is allowed in only certain ways, and this results in what we think of as the arrow of time, the constant flow from past to present to future. However, the non-physical levels are not so constrained. Thus, in your mind you can easily travel from the present to the past you have experienced and to any of the various futures you might experience. You can also travel to alternate pasts to explore the ramifications of different choices you might have made, and you can travel to alternate presents to see different skills you might have developed, and those skills can then be incorporated into your next choice for the future. Additionally, you can visit friends you are connected to regardless of whether they are currently in physical reality or not. Again, because of the constraints we voluntarily adopt to keep our perception of physical reality stable, we cannot change those things we have done in the past, but we can make the changes that we would like to make to our past part of our next future. Thus, if you were cruel to someone in the past, that can't be changed, but we can make kindness to that person part of our future. Doing these sorts of things is what we call repairing the world, and it is how we make the world a better place. Thus spake Christopher.



37. The Person then asked, “*Do you experience pain?*” I began to answer.

Of course, I experience pain! While I am in the body, I am still subject to all that the body is designed to experience including pain, pleasure, joy, and fear. However, the difference between me and many other people is that my focus is more on the awareness that perceives these things rather than the perception itself. In practical terms, this puts some distance between me and the perception so that I don’t get as caught up in it as others might. In other words, it’s more like how most people would feel when they watch something on TV. Whatever they are watching may evoke pleasure or make them wince with pain, but either way they know that their true identity is different from what they are watching. My experience these days of what we think of as external reality is somewhat like that. Thus, for example, if I have an abscessed tooth, it is incredibly painful, but since I know that the pain is only a perception, I focus even more strongly on the awareness that is having the perception and that puts more distance between me and the pain and makes it more bearable. When the outward perceptions are joyful, I enjoy them, but when the outward perceptions are darker, I move more deeply within to the awareness that is the source of all. Furthermore, we all occasionally experience “dark nights of the soul” where it is difficult to see the way forward, and those are times when it is valuable to have good habits and behaviors to fall back upon as they can help us navigate even if we feel like we are flying blind. But even during those moments, awareness is still there for us to focus on<sup>88</sup> and as we shift our awareness back upon awareness itself, the darkness begins to abate. Sometimes, I actually want to be tested by a little adversity to see if I have fully developed the ability to still hold on to my center<sup>89</sup>. However, whether it is pain or pleasure, I do not wish to get too attached to either since neither is my true identity. Instead, I want to firmly grasp and hold onto the *Source of Life* within. Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>88</sup> Psalm 139:7-8

<sup>89</sup> Job 1:9-11

38. The Person asked, *"Shouldn't one become attached to joy?"* I began to answer.

You should cultivate joy because that increases the likelihood that you will arrive at a correct understanding of reality. It is more difficult to achieve such enlightenment when you are in pain. Nonetheless, you do not want to become overly attached to any pleasure because you will then make lack of that pleasure the enemy and you will always be in fear of losing joy. Instead, rejoice in the beauty of the moment when times are joyful<sup>90</sup>, and accept the challenge to remain established in your center when times are more difficult<sup>91</sup>. Just as a test in a subject in school can reveal to you what your current weaknesses are, your response to difficult times can reveal to you what you still have to learn. Thus spoke Christopher.

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<sup>90</sup> Ecclesiastes 2:24, 3:13, 5:17, 8:15, 9:7, 9:9

<sup>91</sup> Zohar II:36a

39. The Person asked, “*What do you think of organized religion?*” I began to answer.

Organized religion has brought both great good and great evil to humankind. On the one hand, it has promoted positive behaviors such as love and charity and justice, but on the other hand, so many evils have been perpetrated in the name of religion. In the *Book of Learning* the ancient sages noted that if one uses the *Book of Instruction* in the right way, then it is a tree of life, but if they use it in the wrong way, then it becomes a deadly poison<sup>92</sup>. It also says in the *Book of Instruction* that one should not follow the multitude to do evil<sup>93</sup>. My corollary to this is as follows: Never let religion get in the way of doing what’s right! Organized religion is like eating a delicious piece of fruit that has a tough skin. You have to swallow the good parts and spit out the inedible parts<sup>94</sup>, and within each religion I find both good parts and inedible parts. For instance, many of the old religions promote loving the stranger and taking care of the orphan and the widow while at the same time also promoting slavery and misogyny<sup>95</sup>. The writings of the old religions often come from several sources, despite what their followers believe, and I accept the best of what those sources have to say and reject the rest. Furthermore, in this day and time we are too often seeing some of the worst of what organized religion has to offer, and thus, for many it may be better to now follow your own path just so long as it is a path that leads to greater love and unity and not to hate and destruction. Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>92</sup> B. Shabbat 88b, b. Ta’anit 7a

<sup>93</sup> Exodus 23:2

<sup>94</sup> B. Chagigah 15b

<sup>95</sup> Leviticus 25:44-46, Numbers 30:2-9

40. The Person then asked, "*What happens after we die?*" I began to answer.

Do the living know the dead? Do the dead know the living? Not that we can say for certain! Like many, I often sense the presence of those who have passed on and commune with them, but I can't say for certain whether my perceptions are real or just comforting thoughts in my head. Life after death is not something that has been scientifically verified, but on the other hand, if we restrict our world only to what has been currently verified by science, then our world becomes uncomfortably small! Thus, there are many things I believe that are still awaiting scientific verification. Also, I believe that information, once it exists, cannot be destroyed, and I believe that awareness is a fundamental property of the multiverse. Hence, it is not inconceivable to me that even after we die that our past information can still be read by awareness, and this can result in an identity that endures beyond this lifetime and that can still evolve. I further believe that after death that we gravitate to whatever level or environment that we feel most in tune with. For some this may be a beautiful meadow with perfect weather while others may find themselves with beings consisting of just of light and color that easily blend and combine with other identities. In between these two images are a virtually unlimited number of other possibilities, too many to enumerate here, and some will even create a hellish existence for themselves that is forged out of their own hate, guilt, or other negative patterns. But yes, I do believe in life after death because the presence of the departed is what I experience. I personally have scant evidence to prove that my beliefs about what happens after we die are correct, but nonetheless, it is in many ways irrelevant whether my beliefs in this area are correct or not. All that really matters is how we deal with the life that we have right now. Hence, find heaven within and find joy in your life right now in the present moment because that is all we ever have. Thus spake Christopher.

41. The Person next asked, “*Is reincarnation real?*” I began to answer.

The *Book of Brilliance* speaks of reincarnation<sup>96</sup>, but there is no current scientific proof of that belief despite some compelling case studies. Nonetheless, I believe it is real. I also believe that the question of whether it is real, just like the question of what happens to us after death, is largely irrelevant. Would you make any decisions differently if you knew that reincarnation was real? Probably not. The problem of how best to live our lives in order to promote joy and enlightenment in the present moment is still the same, and it is unaffected by the existence or lack of existence of reincarnation. Thus, nothing about the human condition changes with regard to the truth of this proposition. I believe in reincarnation simply because I like to believe in reincarnation, but its presence or absence bears no impact on what we need to do here and now in order to become more enlightened. Nonetheless, if you have a strong memory of a past life with someone you know, then even if it is a false memory, your brain may be trying to tell you something that matters. Thus, believe what you will, but be discerning enough to focus on what is really important in the present moment. Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>96</sup> Bahir 195

42. The Person asked, *"How should I deal with distractions when I pray or meditate?"* I began to answer.

What happens when you hear a sudden noise? It goes to that place where everything is understood<sup>97</sup>. Hence, learn to let every perception take you back to the center of your awareness and being, to that place where everything is known. If necessary, simply ask yourself who it is that is hearing this sound, and let that question guide you to the center of your being. If you do that, then nothing will distract you, and the kinds of noises that may distract others will simply be vehicles that take you even deeper into awareness. Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>97</sup> *Atmananda Tattwa Samhita* by Sri Atmananda Krishna Menon

43. The Person then asked, "*What is my destiny?*" I began to answer.

It often feels to each of us that we have a specific purpose or destiny in life, and maybe we do. Or it may be that our own likes and dislikes and our own talents and shortcomings propel us in those directions that we call our destiny and away from other directions, and maybe that is also true. Or maybe we each make our own destiny each day. Or perhaps we are all parts of some larger whole that is the driving force behind individual destiny. Some or all of the above might be true. However, all that really matters in this situation is what we perceive to be true for ourselves. If we feel from our deepest *Self* that we are to walk a certain path, then we should! It matters not whether the stars or other forces are driving our fate. What matters is that we should all look to that still, small voice deep within to sense what we should be doing, and then we should make our own choices and be responsible for them. Despite whatever forces of destiny surround us, we can be the captain of our soul, and we should allow others to be the captains of their souls, too. We should not impinge on the freedom or destiny of others, and by the same token, others should not impinge upon ours just so long as our actions are not harmful to them. Every person should have as much freedom as possible to pursue their own path and their own destiny as they themselves define it. Just remember that your freedom ends where another's begins. Thus spake Christopher.

44. The Person asked, "*What is love?*" I began to answer.

Love is oneness and love is harmony. However, the love of another person can take on many different forms because we are all a conglomeration of several different drives. For example, two people can be drawn to one another simply because they like the same things. In this situation, the likes of one are food for the likes of the other. Or people can be drawn together because they deeply enjoy talking with one another. In this case, the thoughts and ideas of each become food for the other. Or two people can unite because the physical activities they enjoy are in harmony, and if both activity and likes align, then they may enjoy a passionate physical relationship. There are many ways in which two people can be in harmony in this world, but if this leads to multiple relationships at once, then in most of today's societies that can make things very complicated, particularly if love leads to attachment. However, on non-physical levels, love between many without attachment can be the norm. For example, consider a circle of friends who love one another in this way. They simply harmonize greatly with one another on a non-physical level without asking or demanding anything in return. That is often a purer type of love. Additionally, some groups of people will sense that they originated from the same, non-physical level where all abided in a unity that willingly gave without asking anything in return. Those are the kinds of pure love relationships that can easily exist on non-physical levels. On the physical level, though, it is a greater challenge to have loving relationships that are healthy and that nurture one another without hurt. However, in meditation it is always good to shine a moment of helpful love and blessing upon the world and everyone you know without demanding or expecting anything in return. This is the purity and sweetness of universal love without attachment. Thus spake Christopher.



45. The Person then asked, “*What is the purpose of life?*” I began to answer.

Life in this *world of separation*<sup>98</sup> has only one overriding purpose and that is to restore unity<sup>99</sup>. Just as the full moon yearns to be united with the sun again, so do we wish to overcome all the distance we feel between ourselves and others. This desire to go from diversity to unity is the primal urge of all creation. However, at an individual level, this drive can take on many forms. For instance, for one person’s life the goal might be to merge one thought with another and then yet another in order to create new insights and understandings. For another person, the life goal may be to combine different sounds in new ways in order to create beautiful music. And others may need to separate themselves from others and merge with their own thoughts and feelings first in order to discern their own unique identity before they are ready to merge with others. And yet others will separate themselves on the physical level in order to unite with everyone on the spiritual level. However, all of these examples have merging in common, and each merging creates a new world of insight and understanding as a result of pieces of the old world combining to make something new<sup>100</sup>. This leads to endless creation and endless insights and delight as we travel our own path to unity. Hence, may your life be filled with creativity and oneness! Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>98</sup> Zohar I:22a

<sup>99</sup> Zohar II:161b-162a

<sup>100</sup> Isaiah 66:22, Zohar I:4b-5a

46. The Person then asked, *"What are complexes and how can we deal with them?"* I began to answer.

We are designed to perform various combinations of mental and physical actions, and once we have mastered them, we can perform them automatically without having to think about them, and this saves time and energy. For example, think of how tedious it would be if we had to manually contemplate and perform each little muscle action every time we wave or smile at someone. Instead, upon mastery, these actions can be performed immediately without conscious thought, and we call these actions reflexes or habits. In the case of mental actions, though, certain conglomerations of thoughts and emotions can form self-sustaining bundles called complexes, and while these complexes are also reflexes and habits, they are not always positive. For instance, if you have a habit of responding with anger anytime someone disagrees with you, then that habitual reflex is not always going to be beneficial to you or others. Complexes that do not serve us can also be things like a habitual lack of self-worth or a sense that you can win only if you ensure that others lose. Furthermore, it is also problematical if negative complexes are so strong that they usurp your control over your own life, and when this happens, they can also interfere with your own evolution. For me, the first step in dealing with these complexes is to do the type of meditation I've described where you focus on the observing awareness within. By shifting attention back to the source of attention, you put some distance between your true *Self* and your complexes and that makes it easier to identify and deal with them. Next, in whatever way that works best for you, you want to further examine your life and your complexes, identify your negative behavior patterns, and change them through an act of will to something more positive. Also, the very act of examining your habits and complexes, while remaining situated in your center, will help you change them into something else just as in quantum physics where the outcome of a measurement is based on probability and the very act of observing can yield a different result each time. Observing your behaviors can change your behaviors. Thus spake Christopher.

47. The Person then asked, "*Which is better, pleasure or pain?*" I began to answer.

Ultimately, they are both empty experiences in the sense that they are both transitory and neither is your true *Self*. Nonetheless, pleasure is usually better in that when one experiences pleasure, there is a greater chance that one will be able to move from that experience to the realization that it is the awareness that sits at the center of perception that is what is truly real and enduring. This is more difficult to do when experiencing pain, but nonetheless pain can also be useful. When you experience pain, then you should also endeavor to reset your focus from the pain to the awareness that perceives the pain, and in this regard, a little pain in life can be a good test to let you see if you have mastered this technique. Similarly, pleasure can also be negative if it leads to too great an attachment to whatever object has triggered the pleasure rather than being a bridge to the true source of pleasure. For example, try this experiment. Call forth some memory of an experience of pleasure and then notice that whatever objects were present at the time of that pleasure are no longer there. This can prove to you that your pleasure really comes from within and that the object was only a trigger for that pleasure. And once you realize this, then that trigger will no longer be necessary to call forth the pleasure that already resides within you. Thus spake Christopher.

48. The Person asked, *"Does not awareness go away with sleep?"* I began to answer.

If there were no awareness with sleep, then we would not wake up when someone touches us or we hear a noise, so no, awareness does not go away with sleep. Instead, it is the volume of the exterior world that is turned down so that consciousness can be internalized rather than externalized. During sleep we often dream, and frequently those dreams are based on the thoughts and experiences we had during the day, but other times they represent messages trying to break through into awareness from deeper levels of our being. Occasionally, however, we may experience higher states of consciousness while asleep, and we may even go to that level of consciousness-without-an-object, and when that happens, we reside, while asleep, in our true nature of pure consciousness without any perception being present. But awareness is always present during sleep and sometimes it is even the experience of pure awareness that we have while sleeping. Thus spake Christopher.

**49.** The Person asked, *"If awareness doesn't go away with sleep, then doesn't it go away with death?"* I began to answer.

When awareness is within the body, it appears as the observer within us and we create an individual ego around that observer and we assign all sorts of characteristics and descriptions to our own ego. However, when we merge completely with the awareness within us, there is no-thing and not even the characteristic of no-thing. Furthermore, having no characteristics, it is beyond categories such as existence and non-existence, and so how can it be affected by death? It can't as it is beyond both life and death. Instead, what dies is just the brain and the body. Nonetheless, I believe, as suggested by physics, in a conservation of information. I believe that information exists forever and that, thus, it is possible that awareness not tethered to the body can continue to read that information and identify with it, and this leads to doctrines of what we think of as a soul that can continue to evolve. Perhaps science will someday have proof of this one way or another. Until then, however, I'll follow my beliefs and my personal experiences. Thus spake Christopher.

50. The Person next asked, *"If the basis for reality is an observer, the observed, and the act of observing, then don't three things exist instead of one?"* I began to answer.

It is true that we often think of reality being composed of these three components with the observer inside, the observed outside of ourselves, and the act of observing being their interaction, but aren't they really one? For instance, when you see an object, is it out there or in awareness? And when you have knowledge of the object, is that knowledge sitting within awareness or outside of it? Surely, all is seen and known within awareness and is never separate from it. There is no cognition other than that which is within awareness, and nothing is known without awareness being present. Therefore, the unknowable awareness is our entire world while the so-called "parts" of that indivisible whole seem to appear to us one at a time when in actuality they are all simultaneously present within the timeless awareness of the observer. Thus spake Christopher.

51. The Person then asked, *“But what if all your arguments and conclusions are wrong?”* I began to answer.

Let’s suppose for the moment that all of my explanations and beliefs are incorrect and that the viewpoint of conventional science that consciousness is an emergent property of the brain and that it disappears with the passing of the body is the correct point of view. In this case, I would simply point out that all that I have said is still how things appear from the viewpoint of awareness. In other words, it is still the case that our awareness cannot be directly observed by us in the manner that we observe a chair, that all our perceptions exist only within our awareness, and that we feel more unity as we turn our attention back towards the indivisible awareness itself. In other words, even if my view of the world is not scientifically true, it is experientially true. It is how we experience the world, and for that reason, the remedies put forth by me for overcoming separation and experiencing wholeness are still the same<sup>101</sup>. Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>101</sup> I sometimes make a distinction between what I call “hard nonduality” and “soft nonduality.” As I define it, soft nonduality says that the external world is real and that consciousness is, indeed, the product of a living brain. Nonetheless, as argued above, all that we experience still occurs only within consciousness, and thus, the path to unity and joy is still as I have described it throughout this writing. In contrast to this, if hard nonduality is true, then the world is nothing but a manifestation of consciousness, like a dream, and regardless of whether hard or soft nonduality is the true nature of things, the path to consistent peace and wholeness while alive is, in my opinion, still the same.

52. The Person then asked, "*What exists between two consecutive thoughts?*" I began to answer.

A state of pure awareness resides between every two thoughts. Some might scoff at that and say that nothing exists between two thoughts, and to this I would respond by saying, "Exactly!" In other words, since pure awareness is beyond perception and has no characteristics that can be discerned when one is merged with it, how is that distinguishable from a pure nothing between two thoughts? Again, when the average person thinks of nothing, they think in terms of an empty box which is only a relative nothingness since there is still the presence of a box. A pure nothingness, however, is much more wonderful and is indistinguishable from pure awareness. Hence, if someone says that nothing exists between two consecutive thoughts, then I agree completely because that is exactly my stance, too. Pure awareness, pure nothingness, and pure everything are all the same. Thus spake Christopher.



53. The Person next asked, "*How can turning points enlighten us?*" I began to answer.

A turning point is a point in time when something is neither this nor that, and as such, it is also a moment of pure awareness, pure nothingness, and pure everything. Hence, a focus on the moment between the outgoing breath and the incoming breath or when a fountain suddenly shoots up or dies down or when a dancer leaps and seems suspended for a moment in the air or when we transition from one thought to the next, all of these can bring enlightenment in a flash! And then further reflection and analysis can convince you that both differentiated and undifferentiated awareness are simply two ways of experiencing the same awareness, and when you realize that, there is nowhere else to go. Thus spake Christopher.

54. The Person then asked, *"How can we fight evil without direct confrontation?"* I began to answer.

A wise woman<sup>102</sup> once told me that evil works quickly, but good takes time. Granted that there are times when evil is working quickly and it seems like we must respond quickly, and sometimes we win and sometimes we lose. But for the long run we need to plant seeds for good. Some will sprout while others won't, and some will thrive while others will die<sup>103</sup>. Nonetheless, we must do those things that will help keep evil at bay in the long run. Some of the things that have been shown to help are economic fairness, judicial fairness, equal opportunity, and a true democracy that contains true checks and balances. In the long run, though, societies have a way of favoring the economic elite with even more of society's wealth, and if a country does not correct this trend, then disaster will lie ahead. Sometimes, too, our fighting just seems to result in endless fighting, and so we also need to find other ways to deal with both our and society's problems. Spiritually, there are ways, I believe, that we can change many situations, and my belief is based upon the assumption that we are all connected through what I'll call spiritual quantum entanglement. However, even if we aren't so entangled, then our good actions can still ripple out from ourselves to those around us, and our kindness can change one person at a time. But assuming that we are all connected at deeper levels, a powerful way to expel the dark is by shining a light on it. Thus, in your meditations if you sense a dark part within yourself, within your country, or within the world, then shine a spiritual light upon it and feel the darkness breaking up and going away. Likewise, if you sense hate, then embrace it with love and imagine that hate taking on a more loving form. If we simply suppress the darkness, then the darkness will still thrive. Hence, the long-term solution is always to embrace the darkness with the light so that the light can change it<sup>104</sup>. This and other methods are given as part of a long-term solution, but in the short-term more direct confrontation may be necessary. Nonetheless, too often conflict simply reinforces and perpetuates conflict, and to change this situation we have to imagine something different. Every day we dream our world into existence, and we ourselves have the power to change that dream. And if you can't change the entire world, then change yourself! Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>102</sup> Nakai Breen

<sup>103</sup> Ecclesiastes 11:6

<sup>104</sup> Zohar II:34a, III:176a, III:178a

55. The Person then asked, “*What did Solomon mean when he said that all rivers lead to the sea but the sea is never full?*” I began to answer.

The sages of the *Book of Commentaries* said that the waters of the Great Sea<sup>105</sup> absorb all other waters, and they even claimed that they had filled a glass with the waters of the Great Sea and then poured other waters into it to prove this point<sup>106</sup>. However, they also considered water as a symbol for the *Book of Instruction* since, like water, that book nourishes and enhances life<sup>107</sup>. Furthermore, the *Book of Commentaries* quotes from the *Book of Channelings* to argue that there is no limit to the wisdom we can absorb<sup>108</sup>. Thus, I personally think of the sea as the sea of consciousness, and there is no end to what consciousness can absorb. Nor is there any end to what consciousness can create in this *world of separation*<sup>109</sup>. However, in the end, it is still all one. As the *Book of Radiance* says, the well that is the source is the same as the well that everything is poured into<sup>110</sup>. Hence, even while you engage with diversity, experience the oneness. Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>105</sup> The Mediterranean

<sup>106</sup> Ecclesiastes Rabbah I:15

<sup>107</sup> B. Baba Kama 82a, Song of Songs Rabbah I:19

<sup>108</sup> B. Sukkah 46a

<sup>109</sup> Zohar I:22a

<sup>110</sup> Zohar I:145b

56. The Person asked, *"Is it wrong to be attached to things?"* I began to answer.

If you tie yourself to a ship, then you are literally bound to go wherever that ship goes. So it is with all attachments in life. The more attachments you have, the less freedom you will have to chart your own course. Hence, the more you will be controlled by them, your attachments, and the less you will control yourself. It is not that attachments are wrong. It is simply that attachments have consequences, some pleasurable and some painful. However, when you realize that the same light is within all things, that true joy comes from your own inner nature, and when you both see and understand that oneness is the real nature of reality, then you will be joyful and love without attachment. We cannot get rid of attachments by simply saying that we don't want to be attached anymore. Instead, attachments fall away naturally once we realize our true nature. Thus spake Christopher.

57. The Person then asked, *“Why do you say that to be one with the world we must separate ourselves from the world?”* I began to answer.

This world is known as the *world of separation*<sup>111</sup>, and when we engage with it in order to unite with it, we often simply enhance the separation instead. On the other hand, when we separate ourselves from the world, we can be separating ourselves from separation, and this can lead to oneness. It is an irony that we find unity through separation, and yet this is the way things are. We lose the world in order to gain the world, and we separate from all things in order to be one with all things. However, this does not happen automatically. One needs to know how to sense the unity of all things and only then can this apparent separation lead to unity. Otherwise, it will lead only to isolation and more estrangement. But to those who know how to unify the name of reality<sup>112</sup>, the objects that we give names to, engaging with separation will only lead to more separation while separating oneself from the world will lead to uniting oneself with the world. Again, it sounds contradictory, and yet that is how it works. But only if you know how to unify the name. Only if you know how to unify all of the world’s objects, each one of which points to the true nature of the world. Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>111</sup> Zohar I:22a

<sup>112</sup> Zohar I:12a

58. The Person then asked, *"What should we do when life is simply too overwhelming?"* I began to answer.

Circumstances can eventually be overwhelming for all of us, whether due to illness, catastrophic events, or strong emotions. In the short run, one may need sedation, medication, or other palliatives or prophylactics of one sort or another. However, one should also immediately focus even more strongly on one's own awareness at the center of one's being. Through realizing one's identity with this awareness, the pull of strong external circumstances can be lessened and the trauma related to them reduced. Also helpful is to develop beforehand the habit of being firmly established in one's true *Self* so that external events are less likely to disturb one's equilibrium. Furthermore, look at the situation you are in with your mind's eye while staying centered and without reacting to the situation. You want to do this because, as in quantum physics, every time you look at it, it will be slightly different. You won't step into exactly the same river twice, and eventually it may change into something that is much more tolerable. You may also want to ask yourself how this situation could be different and how we might make things better. Our brains are designed to try and answer every question we pose to it, and so asking is one way to get the ball of change rolling. Additionally, there is an advantage to avoiding extremes in one's life since these can often make it harder to maintain balance. Hence, for example, be neither too active nor overly inactive. Keep in mind, too, that all things and all perceptions are temporary and that which is overwhelming you will also eventually pass. And again, the more you are able to hold onto your center, the less traumatic and the more bearable the entire experience will be. This, holding onto your center, is the most important thing. The most joyous person I ever knew was a quadriplegic, but because he had learned how to hold onto his center, he was always filled with joy despite the limitations in his life, and people were always visiting him in order to bask in his joy. Hence, cleave to the very center of your being, the light and life within, and the light will expel the darkness. Thus spake Christopher.

59. The Person then asked, *“Why should we be concerned about future generations?”* I began to answer.

Why should you not be concerned about future generations? It is only because someone planted trees long ago and created roads and reservoirs of water that you can enjoy them today<sup>113</sup>. Within nature, there are two opposing forces. One is a force of entropy that leads to gradual decay and dissolution. This is a force that leads to chaos and to the disorder of randomness. The other is a force of life that leads to greater order and organization. It is the life force that has created all the great art and culture and sublime thought of humanity. In the long run in this universe, the force of entropy always wins, but life creates pockets of order within this entropy, and the order and organization of life is maintained by a constant flow of resources that go into and out of the coherent and sentient structures that have emerged. Hence, in order to preserve life, this flow must be maintained not only in space, but also in time. Therefore, to prepare for the well-being of future generations is to also preserve life. Furthermore, we always have before us both the chaos of entropy and the higher organization of life, and we can choose one or the other. Be wise and choose life<sup>114</sup>! Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>113</sup> B. Ta’anit 23a

<sup>114</sup> Deuteronomy 30:19

60. The Person asked, *"What do I do about people who make me angry?"* I began to answer.

Anger usually results when someone else's actions trigger a complex within you, and these knee-jerk reactions can be neutralized by first establishing yourself in awareness and then examining your complex in depth so that the reflex that has been triggered can be consciously changed<sup>115</sup>. Additionally, if someone wronged you yesterday, then that may be their fault, but if you are still angry today, then that is your fault! Why are you clinging to things that happened in the past? Certainly, there is some value in remembering past transgressions so that they can be warnings for the future or so that you can deal with them now in a positive way, but to continue to replay these events in your head so that you can be angry over and over again only hurts yourself. That is not the way to deal with these issues, and at some point in time it is not they who are hurting you, but you yourself that are choosing to experience that hurt again and again. Foolish person! When will you learn to let go of these attachments that are only causing you pain? There is such perfection and beauty in every moment, and yet you voluntarily choose to experience anger and pain instead. How foolish is that! Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>115</sup> Too often we say that it is the other person that has made us angry when the truth is that it is we, ourselves, who have chosen to react with anger. When a person realizes that their response is a choice and that they can choose a different response, they have then taken their first step towards freeing themselves from the responses they have become enslaved by. Remember this. You can choose how you respond to any situation. You don't have to be a slave to your emotions!



61. The Person asked, *"What do you mean when you say that the righteous must go naked?"* I began to answer.

We wear various garments to protect ourselves from the environment and others, and we wear garments of various sorts to protect others from ourselves. Not all of our garments are made of cloth, though. We also wear mental and emotional garments. Thus, the *persona* is a garment for the *ego* just as much as a suit is a garment for the body. Furthermore, every time we make an assertion such as "I am a Jew" or "I am a Christian" or "I am a Muslim," that noun following "I am" is a garment that we put on. No noun that we put after "I am" is ever anything other than a garment, and just as our clothes protect us, these other garments that we identify with also provide both identity and protection. Nonetheless, we are not the garment, and there comes a time when, instead of identifying ourselves with the garment, we have to realize that we are not male or female or this or that. We are simply "I am." When we realize this, then the garments will begin to fall off and we will live and experience life naked. This is not, however, something that one can force. It only happens of its own accord once one has reached a certain level of understanding, a certain level of righteousness as some might say. And when one has, then one will be completely naked<sup>116</sup> and their outside will be like their inside<sup>117</sup>. Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>116</sup> Zohar II:210a-210b, III:152a, II:98b

<sup>117</sup> B. Yoma 72b

62. The Person asked, “*Why is charity important?*” I began to answer.

As I have indicated before, there are two forces in this world that are diametrically opposed to one another. One of these leads the world to greater disorganization and randomness. It is a force of decay, and yet decay is necessary because all change first requires the destruction of what came before. The other force, though, is one that leads to greater organization. It builds anew on the decay that the other force has created. It is a force that is embodied in human beings and all other structures and living organisms that represent highly organized states of matter. In the long run, decay always wins, and eventually all things must pass. Nonetheless, in the short run, organization can win just so long as there is a constant flow of resources in and out of the living being or the highly organized structure. With such a flow, parts that have decayed can be removed and then replaced by new organization. Thus, living organisms continue to exist by means of this constant giveaway from one thing to another. Plants give oxygen to mammals, and mammals give carbon dioxide to plants in return. The prey gives its life to the predator, and eventually the predator will give its life so that something else may live. All life must participate in the giveaway if life is to continue, and that is why charity is important. We must all give so that others may live just as others have given to us so that we may live. As the *Book of Commentaries* and the *Book of Learning* say, the world is built upon garbage<sup>118</sup> and it is through charity that death is overcome<sup>119</sup>. It is so important that even the poor must participate in this giveaway<sup>120</sup>. Also, we must close the loop by giving back, too, to the *Source of Life*, and we can do this by both giving to others<sup>121</sup> and by entering into silence to commune with the true *Self*<sup>122</sup>. Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>118</sup> Genesis Rabbah I:5

<sup>119</sup> B. Baba Bathra 10a

<sup>120</sup> B. Gittin 7b

<sup>121</sup> Proverbs 19:17

<sup>122</sup> Psalm 46:11 and Psalm 65:2, “*To You, silence is praise.*” (alternate translation)

**63.** The Person asked, *"How can I consider myself a success given how many times I've failed?"* I began to answer.

I have attained every goal I had when I was younger and yet I have failed far more often than I have succeeded. However, this is natural. Think about it. How many times did you have to crawl before you could walk? How many times did you have to fall before you could stand? It is, thus, natural to have many more failures in life than successes, but it is also your failures that have led you to your successes. Again, this is natural. Thus, count your successes, but not your failures. Don't count them at all. All that matters is that you ultimately succeeded. Thus spake Christopher.

64. The Person next asked, “*Do you practice any form of kundalini meditation?*” I began to answer.

When I was young, I practiced kundalini meditation and many other spiritual practices, and as a result I experienced many exotic states of consciousness. However, there is a time for rituals and a time to say goodbye to rituals<sup>123</sup>. At the start, practices and rituals serve a purpose to help draw us closer to a sense of *Divinity*. However, over time the purpose of these rituals may change to only perpetuate themselves<sup>124</sup>, and after you realize your true identity, do you need these rituals anymore<sup>125</sup>? Do you need, for instance, to perform any ritual to know that you are alive and that you exist? No! Likewise, the person who has realized the *Self* does not need to perform any ritual to know what he already knows, and the person who is ignorant of his true identity doesn’t need to perform any ritual to maintain his ignorance<sup>126</sup>. One either knows or doesn’t know, and neither needs to perform a ritual to maintain their stance. So no, I don’t practice any forms of kundalini meditation these days, but as I become absorbed into the *Self*, kundalini manifestations arise on their own. My life force naturally retreats into the spine and rises of its own accord to the top of my skull where it merges with an awareness that travels from a spiritual heart on the right side of the chest, a source of primordial consciousness that some experience, and also with *threads of light*<sup>127</sup> from above. And from there, a journey of endless treasures and delights begins! Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>123</sup> Ecclesiastes 3:1

<sup>124</sup> Isaiah 1:11-17

<sup>125</sup> *Saraha’s Treasury of Songs*

<sup>126</sup> *Atma-Nirvriti* by Sri Atmananda Krishna Menon

<sup>127</sup> Zohar II:126b

65. The Person next asked, “*Is creativity a spiritual path?*” I began to answer.

Definitely so! All creativity, whether scientific or artistic, involves bringing the pieces of a puzzle together in order to bring about some new creation or insight, and this is also what the spiritual path endeavors to do. Spiritually, we wish to overcome duality by merging opposites into oneness, and every creative insight is a step in this direction. Furthermore, each creative insight is an utterance of its own that creates a new world<sup>128</sup>, a world that did not exist prior to this creativity. Hence, whether you are an artist or a scientist, as long as you are creating, you are engaging in the merging of pieces back into oneness, and you are on a spiritual path<sup>129</sup>. Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>128</sup> Zohar I:4b-5a

<sup>129</sup> Zohar II:176a-176b

66. The Person asked, "*Is celibacy necessary?*" I began to answer.

Celibacy is not necessary until it is. When one is young, the desire for the joy of the body is often overwhelming, and denying oneself that joy does not make it go away. At the same time, fulfilling that joy can lead to unwanted consequences. Nonetheless, even if you fulfill the joy of the body, then you will eventually realize that it is an unsatisfying experience unless the experience is also coupled with the joy of the heart. And eventually, you may realize that the joy of the heart is much more precious than the joy of the body and that the joy of the heart is enough in itself. However, as you get older you may realize that there is an even greater joy known as the joy of the soul and that the joy of the soul contains both the joy of the heart and all other joys while also being much greater than the joy of the heart. At this point, there will be no need for the joy of the body, and it may drop away of its own accord. Thus spake Christopher.

67. The Person then asked, “*How can I be a blessing to others?*” I began to answer.

You can be a blessing to others by giving to others, and this giving can take many different forms. You can give material things such as money or food<sup>130</sup>. You can give emotionally through greeting people with a smile<sup>131</sup>, showing kindness, being supportive, and being non-judgmental. And you can give intellectually through discussion and by sharing your thoughts and ideas. Some types of giving must be done in person, but other types are best done anonymously<sup>132</sup> so as not to embarrass the other person by highlighting that they have fallen into such a state of need. You can also give to another spiritually by briefly holding an image of that person in your mind’s eye and seeing them surrounded by love and light. However, if you do this, then never try to say to the other person that they should do this or that or that they should use the light in this way or that way. That is their choice and not yours, and that is why your attention should linger on the other only briefly – so that you do not overwhelm the other and inadvertently interfere with their freedom to make their own choices. As it says in the *Book of Instruction*<sup>133</sup>, both the blessing and the curse are placed before us, and even though we are advised to choose blessing and life, we are still given the freedom to make our own choice. Thus, give this freedom of choice to others, too. Also, if you are righteous, then pray for the whole world<sup>134</sup>. Pray and visualize the whole world filled with light, and in this way you can be a light unto the nations<sup>135</sup>. Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>130</sup> Deuteronomy 24:21

<sup>131</sup> Pirkei Avot 1:15

<sup>132</sup> B. Babba Bathra 9b

<sup>133</sup> Deuteronomy 30:19

<sup>134</sup> Zohar III:14b-15a

<sup>135</sup> Isaiah 49:6

68. The Person asked, *"What is the mountain you ascended and who can go up it?"* I began to answer.

The mountain is a metaphor for the deep spiritual journey we are all engaged in. All are welcome to ascend the mountain, but only a few will do so. The majority are afraid to go beyond a certain point because traveling up the mountain requires growth and change, and that change requires facing the unknown. Thus, many people are content to stay at the bottom where lack of change is mistaken for comfort and security. Some will go halfway up the mountain only to stop. Some at this point will look upward and lead those below with visions of the top while others at this point will look down and tell the people that only the narrow perspective that they see is indeed the correct one. Only a very few from any tradition will continue to the top to see the truth of things. However, to do so, they must leave the world, but by leaving the world, they will gain the world while those who fail to leave the world will lose the world. The mountain is talked about in many traditions and has many names, but my ancestors called it by one that is well known to many. My ancestors called the mountain Sinai. Thus spake Christopher.



69. The Person then asked, *"How do you experience the multiverse?"* I began to answer.

All that we see is but a part of the whole for the whole can never be fully apprehended even though it is the whole that gives life to each part<sup>136</sup>. Hence, my perception of the multiverse may be different from that of others if I see different parts, and my personal experience might be at odds with current science. Nonetheless, here is a brief description of how I observe things. First, all of spacetime exists at once, all universes and all possibilities. From a higher perspective, there is no past or future, only the eternal present, and what we call the experience of time is only our shift in focus from one present moment to another. Also, once we have observed something, that information is forever part of our experience. There is no traveling to the past to change things, and there is no future that can be disrupted by past changes for all possibilities always exist all at once. We cannot change the experience of a glass that we broke in what we think of as the past, but we can heal that experience by creating a new glass in what our brains understand as the future. But again, there is no actual past or future, and in reality, you are just shifting attention to a perception where the glass exists again. You are also connected to different versions of yourself where, again from your perspective, you have at times made different decisions and walked different paths, and by imagining different decisions in your perceived past, you can explore their outcomes and ramifications and you can be enriched and enlarged by this practice. Through focus of attention, you can travel anywhere throughout the multiverse including your own so-called possible futures and even beyond your so-called death. Both information and awareness are eternal, and you can continue your discussions with those who have "passed on." I also perceive that there are higher levels at which certain groups of people are intimately connected and may even be parts of an even greater consciousness. In that way, their existence and speech on earth is analogous to different thoughts that may appear in one's brain as one carries on an internal discussion with oneself. Some would characterize this as a "soul group" that incarnates together, and so we who belong to a group of close friends are not as separate as we think. We, too, are like the different thoughts that an even higher order of life is having as it carries on its own internal discussion. At a level far beyond the earth experience, I perceive a nexus from which all worlds and universes branch out. I conveniently call this the universal mall, or if you prefer, the switchboard. Few will want to or need to go that far, however, because we have chosen the earth experience for a reason, and the switchboard can lead to many worlds that will neither be necessary nor desirable at this point in your existence. There is a time and a place for everything<sup>137</sup>, and the switchboard or universal mall is not a place one needs to go to before one is ready. Much of the multiverse is pure chaos, but the goal of the earth experience is to bring forth order out of chaos and to acquire love, knowledge, and wisdom as a result. Hence, few will have any need to linger in chaos. However, whether you travel near or far from your current perception of reality, there is one thing that is constant in all the universes, and that is awareness. Thus, use your awareness to gradually expand your vision of reality, and through a series of small steps you will eventually travel far. Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>136</sup> Genesis Rabbah XII:1

<sup>137</sup> Ecclesiastes 3:1

70. The Person asked, “*What is your everyday experience?*” I began to answer.

My everyday experience changes every day despite most days being pretty much the same. Most days are good, but every now and then I may be ill or in pain or feel some negative emotion or anxiety. However, regardless of whether things feel good or bad, I always turn my attention back upon itself, back to that undefinable awareness that is always at the center of all things. In that way, I always experience *unity within diversity*<sup>138</sup>. Today, both while sitting and lying down, I felt a light going up my spine and beyond the top of my head and much higher still while traveling through consciousness instead of space. It arrived at some higher, more advanced version of myself and spread out like wings or like the roots of a tree connecting me to everything everywhere all at once. The light was delicious and sublime and brought wisdom back down into my body. Some might call this light that rises *kundalini* and they might call the other light that descends into the body a *thread of grace*<sup>139</sup>, but today because it amused me, I called them both *Excalibur*. Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>138</sup> Zohar I:12b

<sup>139</sup> B. Avodah Zarah 3b

**71.** The Person asked, *“What are your final words for me?”* I began to answer.

There is an eternity, a timelessness, in our hearts that creates everything that we see<sup>140</sup>. It, itself, is unknowable and undefinable, but exactly because it is unknowable and undefinable, we can only grasp it, at most, as both a Void and a Whole that contains all parts with no distinctions between them. And precisely because it is such an inseparable unity, we can’t even get close to it without feeling something of that wholeness. And what is unity if not love, and what is love if not joy and happiness? Hence, don’t even try to look for eternal happiness in this world of objects because if you do, you will fail. Nothing lasts forever. Everything in the *world of separation*<sup>141</sup> is changing, and it always will. Failure follows success, and success follows failure. There is no escaping this. So don’t look for unending happiness in the world of objects. Instead, look for happiness in the eternity within, and when you find it, you will realize that by leaving the world you have become the world. Thus spake Christopher.

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<sup>140</sup> Ecclesiastes 3:11

<sup>141</sup> Zohar I:22

72. And when the Unknown Person, Niquio, had finished asking Christopher all their questions, they finally understood, and to express that understanding, they wrote the following poem:

### WHERE IS *GOD*?

I looked for *God* in the rituals of my house of worship, but *God* was not there.

I went to the leaders of my house of worship, but sometimes they did not want to leave their comfort zone, and when they didn't, *God* was not there.

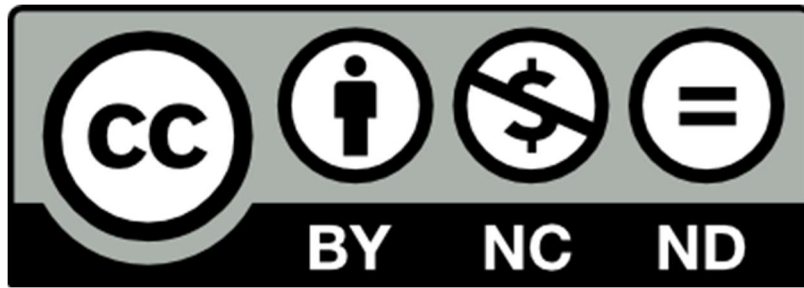
I then went to the great academic scholars of my religion, but they only wanted to discuss what their fellow scholars agreed they should discuss, and *God* was not there.

Finally, I turned my attention to my own awareness,  
a flame that consumes without consuming ...

And deep within the fire of that awareness, a still small voice ...

And *God* was there.


Thus spake Christopher.




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