

The Christian Community

Perspectives

December/2021—February 2022



Light
in the
darkness

Contents

‘The soul is woven out of light and Darkness’	3
<i>Craig Wiggins</i>	
Our angel and the wedding at Cana	5
<i>Douglas Thackray</i>	
Light and darkness—from duality to trinity	9
<i>Michael Bruhn</i>	
Light in the darkness	15
Theology meeting science	
<i>Roger Druitt</i>	
Christ’s light	23
<i>Kevin Street</i>	
The very special fare	27
<i>Georg Dreissig</i>	
Book reviews	31

Cover pictures by Rembrandt van Rijn:

Front: The Return of the Prodigal Son

Back: The Rest on the Flight into Egypt

Deadlines:

March–May 2022 issue: 10 Jan 2022

June–August 2022 issue: 4 April 2022

Perspectives is published quarterly by The Christian Community, a registered UK charity. It appears at the beginning of December, March, June & September.

Editor:

Tom Ravetz

11 Upper Close, Forest Row, RH18 5DS

Editorial Team:

Peter Howe, Deborah Ravetz

Kevin Street

Subscriptions & Advertisements:

Gabriele Kuhn, Tel: +44(1383)821204

subs@perspectives-magazine.co.uk

All correspondence: Perspectives, 21 Napier Road, Edinburgh, EH10 5AZ
editor@perspectives-magazine.co.uk

Lay-Up: Christoph Hänni

Subscriptions:

tinyurl.com/yakwhjgl

UK £15

Europe £18

Rest of World: £22
(not USA, NZ & Australia)

Please send cheque, payable to *Perspectives*, to Subscription Manager (address above), or send for more information.

Subscribe with PayPal on our website:
tinyurl.com/y9qqc9ru

E-Subscriptions are available for £15 per year. You will be sent a link to download the new issue as soon as it is produced. See
tinyurl.com/y9qqc9ru

USA: US\$26

c/o The Christian Community,
906 Divisadero Street

San Francisco, CA 94115

(Cheques payable to: The Christian Community San Francisco)

Australia: Enquire for price at:

Matthew Bond

C/- 319 Auburn Road

Hawthorn East, Victoria 3123

New Zealand: Enquire for price at:
Elizabeth Heybrook, 293 Winterslow
Rd. Staveley RD1, Ashburton 7771
Phone: 03-3030780

Advertisements:

Send ads five weeks prior to publication to the Editor at the above address.

Quarter page £45,

Half page £75, Full page £140

ISSN: 0967 5485

Perspectives

Volume 92 No. 1
December 2021–February 2022

Each time we celebrate the Act of Consecration, we pray that we might perceive Christ's light in our daylight. Kevin Street describes in his review essay, *Christ's Light*, how this phrase resounded in his soul through decades. In the course of the year, we first meet this light in Advent as it dawns out of twilight. Craig Wiggins describes the journey of the light through the festivals of Advent, Christmas and Epiphany in *The soul is woven out of light and darkness*. Two further articles explore vital questions that arise when we think about the light. How do we get beyond binary thinking when thinking about light and darkness? Michael Bruhn addresses this question in his article *Light and darkness—from duality to trinity*. In *Light in the darkness—theology meeting science*, Roger Druitt addresses a question that goes to the very core of the convictions of the founders of The Christian Community. How can we overcome the old experience of a divided world, for which the light of heavenly revelation and inner illumination belong to a different realm than the kind of light that physicists speak of? Such an enquiry asks us to extend our concepts of science as well as theology.

TOM RAVETZ



The Presentation in the Temple in the Dark Manner, Rembrandt van Rijn

‘The soul is woven out of light and Darkness’¹

Craig Wiggins

One of the gifts given to The Christian Community in the course of its founding are the epistles, or seasonal prayers, which we hear at the beginning and end of every Act of Consecration of Man. As one listens attentively to these prayers throughout the liturgical year, over and again, the words, their sounds and rhythms, and the images they call forth, all fill the life of our souls, strengthening it and the life of our communities.

The Act of Consecration of Man is a rich tapestry, woven by high spiritual beings who take a lively interest in humanity. They seek to foster the growth of individual human beings as well as their spiritual and religious communities. In the course of the year, the liturgy weaves ever changing patterns of religious experience in our souls. Light and darkness are engaged in a continuous dialogue.

Advent is a festival of listening in the twilight*. A certain mood is set for us by the deep blue colour on the altar and the vestments. A green tree or trees stand next to the altar, deepening the inner concentration. The epistle directs our attention inward, where all becomes still before the eye of the spirit. The chariot of the sun, the bow of colour, begin to shine before the inner eye. The Divine Might of Worlds speaks in the inner place of the soul: now, in the quiet darkness, the chariot and the bow will lighten our path into the future. One wonders how deeply into human souls these images will penetrate and inspire?

Christmas is traditionally thought to tell the story of the light born in a dark world. Georg Kühlewind's words allow us to experience that 'dark' and 'darkness' do not equate with 'evil', the counterpart to 'light', meaning 'good'. Light and darkness are there to serve each other, even when this 'service' seems to bring nothing other than conflict. The first Christmas epistle, which we hear at midnight on

*Craig Wiggins
is priest in
Chicago and
Lenker
for North
America.*

December 25, places us squarely in the night of earth, in the darkness of the senses. It promises us that the healing light of grace will shine into this darkness. If we are to receive this light, we need to free ourselves from the constraints of the body and wander freely in the land of spirit. Then, our prayerful heart can prepare to receive the light.

We hear the third Christmas epistle in the full light of Christmas Day, and then throughout the Holy Nights. It affirms that Christ has chosen his earthly body to fulfill his mission of liberation. Two powers had us in their grip: a deceptive, illusory light, and the unworthy craving of the senses, hungry for ever new impressions. The dimly dawning light of Advent, which drew closer to us in the darkness of midnight, now appears on the earth alongside the deceptive light that can blind us. In our world, we don't have to search very far to discover 'deceiving false light', even in the context of our spiritual work. This epistle awakens us to the forces that would impede the growth of light-filled spiritual forces in our humanity.

The deep blue of Advent that enables us to listen in the darkness, gently gives way to Christmas with the golden letters shimmering above and on the altar. Epiphany, the next festival season, plunges us into the deep magenta. It directs our gaze to the starry world and its relationship to life on earth. Following the twelve Holy Nights, we pray that the star that shone above the child in Bethlehem might continue to enlighten us. After the introspective weeks of Advent and the brightly shining Holy Nights, the star of grace rises before our inner eye, bringing the element of warmth to join the enlightenment that has been given to us at Christmas. The Epiphany prayers describe a religious path. First, we can receive the gift of warmth to add to the enlightenment we have received at Christmas time. Then, we are called to step into the light of grace that the Christ star radiates. As we keep our gaze on the star, we fulfill the Act of Consecration, echoing the call to the wise of the world that the light is being born: in us, in our community, and in the world around us. As we strive ever more to connect the spirit with the earth, we lift up the heart's light of our prayer, hoping that it will be permeated by the spiritual light of the star of grace.

How will we carry these pictures into the life of the whole year ahead of us?

1. The experiences related to seasonal light and darkness are based on my life in North America, as are the quotations from the Act of Consecration.
2. *Becoming Aware of the Logos*, Georg Kühlewind

Our angel and the wedding at Cana

Douglas Thackray

During the period of the lockdown, the priests of The Christian Community continued to celebrate the Act of Consecration of Man at their altars. Many of the members and friends would accompany them as a congregation, saying the Lord's Prayer, the Creed and reading the relevant gospel at the appropriate times. Later some expressed how much they had appreciated giving support to the Act of Consecration in a way which renewed their experience of prayer and contemplation.

We were not the only ones who were confronted with locked doors at our churches, as we hear from the Archbishop of Westminster. He suggested to his parishioners in his pastoral letter that they ask for the intercession of their guardian angel. 'The idea being,' he said, 'that if we cannot enter into the church then we can ask our guardian angel to go there on our behalf. At the Offertory take me to God and offer him my service.' He continued: 'At the Consecration with your seraphic strength, adore my Saviour truly present.'

We can identify with the guardian angel that helps us with our prayers at Christmas time, as is reflected in the Act of Consecration of Man where it says, in the intercessory prayer, 'We join in the song of sacrifice of the Angels, Archangels, of the Mightys, of the Revealers, of the World Powers, of the World Guides, of the Thrones, of the Cherubim and Seraphim proclaiming: 'Healing is through Thee.' Clearly this, our elevation, and that of humanity, is only possible because there is a special quality of blessing which comes with Christmas during the Holy Nights when the Sacrament is renewed through the birth of Christ. We are humbled by the responsibility and privilege of attending the sacred service and being included in the chorus of the hierarchies, helping to bring about healing

*Douglas Thackray
is a priest emeritus
of The Christian
Community living
in Cornwall.*

not only for ourselves but for the whole of humanity to the end 'that the Good endure.' It may well be that this happens through the special nature of the sacramental setting and, moreover, that our guardian angel gives us the grace to do this.

Our relation to our guardian angel is one that requires continued trust, befriending and warmth. Through their hidden presence they are always with us even when we are not aware of it. Perhaps this is the reason why occasionally, when we feel very lonely, we never feel completely alone thanks to their invisible protecting presence. This relationship may come about as we confide in them as our hidden partner through life. As a sign of this bond we may, before going to sleep, entrust to their hands the key events we have experienced that day.

A story of engagement with the guardian angel can be found in 'Tobias and the Angel', a work that has inspired many artists. In this story the angel not only protects Tobias from evil but also becomes his guide. He points to fresh opportunities as Tobias ventures out into life to fulfill his mission of healing and love. This story is like a precursory tale of how Christ works in the human biography. We can think of Christ as the bearer of love and healing but we sometimes forget that he also was inspired by his angels, as he said to Nathaniel and the other disciples just before the wedding at Cana: 'Yes, I say unto you all, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending above the Son of Man.'

The text continues: 'And on the third day a wedding was celebrated at Cana in Galilee.' The juxtaposition of the two events indicates that the angels would also be present as Christ performs his first miracle.

Jesus and his disciples were invited to the marriage feast and his mother was also there. As the wine ran short, the mother of Jesus said to him, 'They have no more wine,' and Jesus answered her, 'Pay heed, woman, to the power which flows between me and you. My own hour has not yet come.' Then his mother said to the servants, 'Do whatever he tells you.' Six stone jars were standing there for the Jewish ritual of purification. Each of them held two or three measures. Jesus said to the servants, 'Fill the jars with water,' and they filled them up to the brim. Then he said to them, 'Now draw some water and take it to the master of the feast.' And they did so. The master of the feast did not know where it had come from. Only the servants who had drawn the water knew that. And as the master

of the occasion tasted the water which had become wine he called to the bridegroom and said to him, 'Everyone usually serves the good wine first, and then when the guests have drunk much, the poorer kind. But you have kept the good wine for now.' The changing of the water into wine was the very first sign by which Christ manifested the radiating power of his divine being.

Let us return to the scene at the hall where Jesus stood before them... 'He lifted up his eyes on the disciples' (Luke 6:20). They must then have felt his tender gaze fall upon them. Whereupon he saw in their hearts the seed of the spirit of God's kingdom. For them the wedding at Cana was transformational. It was a moment clearly where they resolved to unite with him.

We can imagine that Christ's soul was over-brimming. Around him emanated a shining aura which awoke the guardian angels of those who were present, who sensed something important about to happen. When the Mother of Jesus declared 'They have no wine,' Jesus hesitated because he was still permeated with the influence and power of the Baptism in the River Jordan. As a result he was somewhat detached from everyday worldly matters and thus unprepared for what was being asked of him. But when he felt the presence of the divine all around him, permeating the air, he was ready to act. He summoned power from his cosmic memory and accessed the forces that made this transformation of substances possible. It marks his first cultic act.

As in all great spiritual happenings, what was done outwardly by the individual, has a deeper internal set of possibilities. In the making of this miracle Christ momentarily binds himself to the earth. He learns to become more of a man. At that point he had no foreknowledge of how to be a 'man' as a fully matured individual. It is heartening for us today to know how close we are to Christ in sharing our humanity with him. In this scene he is both the son of Mary and something altogether otherworldly. If ever in the Gospels there was a potent silence between two people, then surely this is such a moment, after which he says to Mary, 'Pay heed, o woman, to the power that flows between me and you. My own hour has not yet come.' It is surprising that he calls his mother 'woman' as though evoking the archetype of the feminine, yet also recognizing her individuality and authority. Through the power of the trust

that flowed between them, their two souls became one in that moment when he accepted her guidance. Mary the mother who brought him into the light of day at birth, would now through the miracle bring to birth the first public sign of his divine mission as the Messiah.

We who try, though falteringly, to follow in the footsteps of the disciples will surely come to realize more intensely how our angel can lead us to the altar of the Act of Consecration of Man. For this alone we should feel an overwhelming sense of gratitude. Our love for The Christian Community opens us out to finding Christ as our guide who shows us what we freely want to do and give to the world. In the Offertory there is a connection with the wedding at Cana when the priest pours the wine and water together into the chalice which is then elevated to the heights as the sign of our unity with Christ. This sacramental act derives its power from Christ's sacrifice and in his deed of redemption on the cross. From this there flowed the blood of the new faith. The holy aims of God are remembered when we, like the disciples before us, drink of the wine of Christ's love, that gives us courage for deeds in the world.

My Cross Is a Trinity

*My cross is a trinity
of paper, thin sticks, and string,
a makeshift, fragile article of faith.*

*I pray for a gentle current.
Sometimes I wait all day,
but the moment does not arrive.*

*Yet when the breeze is full and firm,
my cross becomes a playful communion
of earth, and wind, and sky,
and my heart lifts up with joy.*

MICHAEL FERREL

Light and darkness – from duality to trinity

Michael Bruhn

Should we see the light as good and darkness as evil? It can't be quite that simple: after all, light can blind us and darkness can give us a sense of security. This even applies to the darkness of hell, which was originally the place that received and protected the dead. We can associate either security or fear and anxiety with darkness; light can be knowledge or it can dazzle and blind us. Still, we associate the forces of goodness and divinity far more strongly with the light; whilst all that is threatening and demonic has to do with darkness. This has to do with the vital part that the light of the sun plays in making life possible. This is even the case in arid regions, where people need to protect themselves from heat and sunlight at certain times of the day and the sun is not the unalloyed blessing that it is in temperate climes.

The rhythm of day and night is the most fundamental rhythm of our lives. We live with the basic trust that day is followed by night and night by day. This rhythm of sleeping and waking gives us confidence. Any disturbance of this rhythm can make us ill; or it can be the consequence of an illness.

Countless images in our language have to do with light and darkness, and here too we usually associate light with joy, clarity, knowledge and goodness, darkness with fear, confusion, ignorance and evil.

But if someone we know starts to divide the world too starkly into good and evil, it gives rise to questions. Can there be people who are solely good, or act solely from good motives? Are there others who are entirely evil? Isn't everything in the world far too complicated to judge so starkly? If a religious community believes itself to be 'in the light', completely

*Michael Bruhn
is a priest of
The Christian
Community
and Lenker
for Switzerland,
France, Italy
and Spain.*

on the side of the good, and locates the enemies of the good outside its own community, we see it as a sect. We experience ourselves as mixed beings, full of inner contradictions, on a path of development. Precisely for that reason we are incomplete, still unfinished beings.

In the Act of Consecration of Man there is a moment when the celebrant—who represents the congregation—speaks of themselves as ‘your unworthy creature’. This happens at the beginning of the Offering, as a kind of explanation and justification of all that is to follow. In my experience, hearing this phrase evokes the most diverse reactions from participants, depending on their religious upbringing. Such great stress has been laid on the unworthiness and sinfulness of human beings in some religious traditions that people who have grown up in such traditions can struggle to develop a healthy self-awareness and trust in themselves. Those who had to suffer from such things in their past, whether consciously or unconsciously, can become downright angry about this phrase in the Act of Consecration. Others, on the other hand, tend to shrug their shoulders and say to themselves, ‘no one is perfect, it’s obvious!’ or ‘we just haven’t reached the point yet where we are fully worthy to stand before the divine.’

In the history of religion, the human feeling of unworthiness before the moral demands of a divine authority begins with the transition from a nature-based religion to monotheism, and above all with Judaism. A good part of the Hebrew scriptures—the Torah (the five books of Moses), but also the prophetic books—relates the attempt to educate the ancient Hebrew people to this new way of thinking, admittedly through many setbacks. The surrounding peoples continued to experience the divine in nature and to find it represented by a multitude of gods, and this way of thinking remains attractive. The emerging Jewish people, however, were to take a step into abstraction in their thinking and experience only one God, who created the world but has since allowed it to run according to fixed laws of nature. Only occasionally, for the benefit of his chosen people, does he break these natural laws. This God reveals himself at Mount Sinai in the forces of nature, but at the same time, with the Ten Commandments and all the divine laws, he places moral demands on the people, which they struggle to observe. The effort to keep the law creates community. At

the same time, however, human beings inevitably experience their inadequacy as they fail to keep the law.

In the evolution of consciousness, this represents a step towards individualisation. Much more depends on one's own behaviour than when one experiences oneself as being primarily at the mercy of the forces of nature.

In the Old Testament, the God of Israel is repeatedly associated with light, called the Sun of Righteousness by the prophet Malachi (3:20), and light is associated with wisdom. To depart from God is to 'walk in darkness' (so, for example, in Isaiah, 9:2: 'The people who walk in darkness see a great light...').

At the same time as this new experience of morality was developing in the ancient Jewish people, a completely different religious way of thinking was being cultivated in Persia, with the religion of Zarathustra. Here, people experienced themselves being torn between two opposing divine powers of light and darkness, which are in constant battle with each other. A good god, Ahura Mazdao, and a bad god, Ahriman, are fighting with each other, both at large in the cosmos and in the souls of people. Of course, it is the task of the individual to take the side of the light and fight for the light, but that is not always so easy.

These two ways of thinking met in the time before the beginning of Christianity. The Persian dualism of light and darkness met the individualised Old Testament morality. The Hellenistic cultural space, which was the heritage of Alexander's conquests, made such encounters possible. In this time of upheaval, which marked the turning point of time, a multitude of movements of religious renewal arose. Of all these many movements, we can recognise the Essenes, who form part of the background of the New Testament. For those who wanted to escape the darkness and dedicated themselves to the light, new rituals arose in these renewal movements, initiation rituals, usually with long, intensive preparation and an initiation experience that led to the border of death, sometimes through immersion in water. The life of those who had been baptised was different from before, as they were transformed by the light that they had encountered in an artificially induced near-death experience, which led to a decisive break

with their earlier way of life. Some of these movements, such as the Essenes, who called themselves ‘children of light’, strove to separate themselves from the rest of the world and keep the ‘children of darkness’ out. John the Baptist, who stood apart from any religious group, offered the new initiation ritual of baptism to all interested people individually as a help for reorientation. We read in the Gospels that he attracted a large following,

Some dualistic systems allow for a good God, or a God who transcends good and evil, who is the ultimate source of the world, which in its essence is seen to be good. This seems to have been the case in the older Persian religion. Later—certainly strengthened by contact with Judaism and its linear understanding of history with a beginning and a goal—the belief in a future end time is added, for which the victory of good over evil is expected or hoped for.

But there is another kind of dualism, what we could call ‘pessimistic dualism’, which looks at the world and concludes that it is bad. Being so imperfect and terrible, it must have been created by an evil God. The task then is to gather and unite the good people who still have a spark of the light of the good God within them, to promote their striving for knowledge and to advance the victory of good. These kinds of spiritual movements were later called ‘gnosis’, which means knowledge. They existed within and outside Judaism and also at the beginning of Christianity. Christian gnostics saw Christ as the divine emissary of the good God of light, who tries to gather his faithful in this world that is in the thrall of evil demons.

In the long run, however, it seems as if dualistic thinking creates more problems than it solves. Of course, the world is full of polarities, that of light and darkness being only one of them, though perhaps the one that poses the greatest puzzles for us in connection with the polarity of good and evil. If we are fixated on polarity, images of struggle and confrontation arise; but if one pole is rejected, has the problem been solved, or just pushed away? In a straightforward, more Western understanding of history, one can hope for the victory of one pole over the other. In a cyclical, more Eastern understanding of history, the polarities are eternal and unchanging and their tension keeps the cycle of history in motion.

Christianity, however, took a different path. This path gradually leads away from the concentration on polarities and towards threefold thinking, towards the Trinity. This path is far from complete; understanding the Trinity is not easy, even today. But the polarity of good and evil, for example, shows how redeeming it can be to detach one's gaze from polarity and look at a trinity in which there are always two possibilities of straying away from every good quality. Polar thinking brings clarity but not satisfactory solutions. Trinitarian thinking requires a kind of juggling with the associated terms and is thus less clear but more lively.

At the beginning of this new 'third way' of thinking, the path of threefoldness, is the prologue of John's Gospel. Here, too, there is talk of light and darkness but in a completely new way. The earliest Christians had experienced the Christ themselves as the Risen One; later, they encountered him through their initiation into the church, in baptism. In both cases, they experienced in him the light, the light of the world. They experienced that this light does not remain outside the world, waging war against the dark powers from the outside. The light of the world removes itself from the polarity, enters the darkness and delivers itself up to it, passing through the despair of utter darkness as it dies into the darkness and thereby overcomes it. With this paradoxical thought, we have transcended the logic of light or darkness, good or bad. The polarity is dissolved. The trinity of light, darkness and new life emerges. This does not mean that the whole world has been redeemed and become light. But the first Christians experienced themselves as having died with him, risen with him and as living with him.

They experienced themselves as children of the new light of the world:

[T]he true light that lightens everyone was to come into the world. He was in the world, and the world had come into being through him, but the world did not know him. He came to those who had part of himself in them, but his own did not receive him. But those who did receive him, whose hearts were open to receive his name, he made able to reveal themselves as children of God. (John 1:9–12)

Here and Now

*Like understudies running lines,
itching for their chance at center stage,
they watch us, certain always
they'd improve on the performance.
Practising existence in our choices
and our failures,
the unborns of the world wait.*

*The voiceless dead around them
burn with advice.
Their regrets speckle the air
like gnats on a summer night,
as we plod on,
half-embarrassed to be blessed
here and now with so much life
and so precious little wisdom.*

MAUREEN TOLMAN FLANNERY

Light in the darkness – theology meeting science

Roger Druitt

John's Gospel touches this mystery already in verse 5: 'and the light shines in the darkness but the darkness has not grasped it' (John 1:5). In chapter 9:5 comes 'I AM the Light of the World', then in chapter 11:9–10, 'the light is not in him.'

The first statement is about an activity between light and darkness, the second about the being of light itself—'I AM'. The others are again different: identifying oneself is a 'light' activity. Then Matthew 6:23 brings 'if your eye is not sound, your whole body will be full of the dark. If then the light in you be dark, how great that darkness is?' We influence the world according to our nature, rendering light as light or dark through the way we look on the world.

Is this just theology, or scientific too? John indicates light must be victorious over darkness; but how does this work with those creation models that see the two as an essential polarity for creativity? Light—Dark, Spirit—Matter, Good—Evil. What do 'grasp', 'comprehend', etc. actually mean?

Genesis introduces a dark cosmos, with 'waters', before light was created. So does the Assyrian-Babylonian account, *Enuma Elish*; but here, the dark waters are host to beings inimical to the light; they create with it a polarity intrinsic to the creative process. The powerful William Blake picture, *Elohim Creating Adam*, shows Adam already in the coils of the snake. These serpent beings belong to the 'beginning'. *How can we reconcile John's theology, which seems to present light as good over against evil darkness, with the picture of light and darkness as the primal creative polarity?*

A look into the Babylonian account throws light on the serpent image; but so does a lesser known account, the Australian 'Dreamtime'. It also helps the questions

Roger Druitt
is a priest
emeritus living
in Hereford.



Elohim creates Adam, William Blake

about evil that Babylon throws up by indicating the changes as the Sun and then the Moon separate from the Earth. There are parallels with Genesis and it is more pure than the Babylonian story. The Apocalypse speaks of 'Babylon', referring to this decadent, animalistic element, which still finds outlets today in the darker corners of occultism.

Briefly, Yhi, the sun being, lies sleeping within an isolated, dark Earth. The cosmos awakens her to become world-mother. She arouses the slumbering germs of the lower kingdoms, which then emerge upon the Earth's surface, still in darkness. Then she too emerges as the light of all creation: the *Sun leaves the Earth*, then shines from above.¹

The narrative goes on to describe the failure of the animals to evolve to humanity, until the creator spirit resolves to put his own 'intelligence' into a new being instead of into them. Yhi then creates Man out of

the elements. Chaos envelops the animals, where the ‘intelligence’ is lacking, bringing death and evil. The *Moon leaves the Earth*, to shine down with the Sun.

Here, human intelligence is born out of divine intelligence as a gift to creation *to prepare a partner for God*, following the failure of the animal kingdom to evolve it out of its existing faculties. Evolution can no longer continue out of forces of the past but needs to receive its power from the future. This is what makes Christianity unique: keeping alive in worship a past event that releases forces *from the future*, that pour in as a work of grace, when freely sought.

Light: divine intelligence, bestowed upon humanity as a seed of divinity but from without.

Darkness: primal substance, undifferentiated potency, bearing within itself the power of its own fructifying.

From the Australian clues, the dark of Genesis can be placed when Sun and Moon were still part of the Earth, and the Babylonian account into the period *between* the departure of the Sun and that of the Moon, when chaos of a decadent type (‘Babylon’) held sway due to the negative effect of the Moon. (See: Steiner, *Occult Science, an Outline*).

Rock as the tangible dark—of matter

Merely holding a piece of rock gives rise to many questions. All the complexities of colour, texture, smell and taste: how have they come about—and how might they still change? It is a piece of Earth still evolving.

Think of early times, since when much of Earth’s rock has been eroded, melted, re-surfaced and buckled. Signs point to a long-gone fluid Earth, an older gaseous Earth, conditions that also exist today deep beneath the Earth’s crust. Reversing each stage of hardening, creativity becomes freer; the chemicals that make up the rock can now, as fluids, move around. In an airy state, they can mingle with each other like guests at a party, becoming pairs, groups, or staying single. But we can go a step further and imagine the *individualities* of those guests even before their personalities were developed—and we can think of this as a state of warmth—pre-creation. We are back in imagination to the self-fructifying time of Sun and Earth being one primal body, but we are in the present, not billions of years ago.

Of the ways of dating rock, isotope dating goes back the furthest, before traces of life, comparing relative amounts of two different radioactive elements in the rock to calculate when it was formed. When this is applied to the oldest rocks known (including meteorite samples) the ages of the Earth, Moon and other bodies in the solar system come out at 4,600,000,000 years. The method is foolproof, checked by sceptics.^{2,3}

On the other hand, tracing the evolution of *human culture* brings a very different time scale.² Are these compatible in any way? Where does the human being fit into a time scale with so many noughts? Are we measuring *our* time or that of *matter*? Our fantasy can penetrate into the depths of the Earth and into the past, reaching back to the epoch of pure heat (Sun and Earth as one cosmic body, a time without our time and no isotopes to measure). In this way our soul and spirit, informed by our understanding of history and geology, with their sweeping gestures, rhythms and forces, connect to a process that *outwardly* is expressed in the big numbers for the *material* world but inwardly a more human size for the *human* world. We make an inner perception of an unimaginably ancient past.

The Dreamtime describes serpent beings ('luciferic') at all levels of the hierarchies, from high creators down to genii loci. Some of their sacred sites still have a purer aura than others. Visitors have described how contemplating The Act of Consecration of Man, the atmosphere intensifies when one comes to bread and wine, as though such beings, including Christ himself, have been waiting for millennia for their mysteries to be consummated by something we take for granted. There is a real sense of Communion there: bread, the *cosmic intelligence as visible body* (light); wine, *the hidden potency of human creativity raised in sacrifice* (darkness)—all mediated through our sacramental heart-thinking.

In a sacrament, the future nourishes itself through us in the present. The light in the Bread of Life and the light in the True Vine are at once the Light of the World. 'He who walks with me shall not walk in darkness but have the light of life.' Light, like *thinking*, is that part of a polarity that can rise (through effort of will) to *embrace* that polarity. Thinking is that part of our *observable* world that can rise to observe itself. It becomes a kind of light in the process. In our own heart-think-

ing we become ever freer of the ancient darkness to let light and dark play their own creative role within us. Our 'I' acquires the attribute of heart-knowing (i.e. 'believing') what is approaching us out of the future. It becomes the place where all the 'I' words of Christ in John find their creative home. When we bring the darkness of our will into our contemplation of such things we 'grasp' *darkness working in the light*. John calls this the Word, a creative dynamic. Sacrament and thought find each other within us.

Darkness grasping the light

The first creation came out of light and dark working into one another, whether seen as intelligence and will or as spirit and matter. This applies to the natural world of today as it colours our senses; but standing at the altar before that future flow during the transubstantiation of bread and wine, we glimpse Light and Darkness playing their part through our partnership with the Spirit in a new creation, the second creation of which Paul speaks (2 Cor 5:17)⁴. We thus have nature-light from the first creation and Christ- or Logos-light inaugurating the second. The *Word* creates in *our* creating and we awaken to this new light in natural daylight.

What about the science of this?

As a schoolboy I loved science but I recall the teacher hitting me gently on the head for asserting that my flask of water, spitting all over the bench, was not yet boiling because the thermometer was only reading 98 degrees! This taught me to work with observation, not measuring instruments.

An opposite awakening was the experiment to show that light is 'made up' of the rainbow colours, although the green only appears under limited conditions. Remixing them is never really satisfactory. With the usual light beam and prism it is certainly possible to make 'white'. Here, an abstract 'knowledge' (that mud is really white), flies in the face of the evidence. See brownish, think white. Examples can be multiplied *ad infinitum*—because there is no limit to intellectual explanations for things, just as there is no limit to children's questions or the final ele-

mentary particle. We were told we would ‘narrow down the beam to a single ray’. Here was another mix of abstract thought with reality. One could have said, ‘green requires the yellow edge of the image to mix with the blue’. An ingenious demonstration of this is ‘Newton’s Prism Experiment’⁵. It is enchantingly good, yet quite unconsciously assumes from the outset that light can be investigated as a narrow beam, even though the coloured edges clearly show.

Another creation narrative describes this pictorially, faithful to the phenomena: the Rainbow Snake, striped red and yellow, takes an evening stroll with his blue-clad wife after calming tribal battles: the folk see the rainbow, made by the two beings side by side (narrowing the beam), not one. Steiner was able to describe the supersensible interaction between light and dark before, within and after passing through a prism.⁶ His own researches enhanced the thorough foundations of real science laid down by J. W. von Goethe⁷.



Eve Tempted by the Serpent, from *Speculum Humanae Salvationis*, published in Augsburg (1473)

Although fruitful on a material level—putting equipment on Mars, or using viruses to enable bleached corals to heal themselves—science needs to grow by researching light in the realm of life, soul and spirit before counting as ‘knowledge’.^{6,7}

A recent news item about discovering the first starlight ever to shine stated: ‘Dr Laporte said that obtaining the result was a dream come true. “It is fantastic to think that particles of light [!] have been travelling through space for over 13 billion years and then entered a telescope. ... (We) time travel and witness the distant past.”’ (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-57515422>)

Even if a logical consequence of the method, this is all abstract. Can we distinguish true light (the spirit in our mind) from its false imitation and ‘see the light’, ‘in a flash’? Velocity here is alien to the soul, just assumed, like sound. That light can have no velocity was shown by N.V. Pope in a talk before theoretical physicists entitled ‘A Truly Alternative Natural Philosophy’, concluding that ‘a velocity in vacuo is ... logically untenable, in point of fact pure nonsense.’⁸ Light is a being—‘I’—so when it appears to have velocity, is it light itself being investigated or its effect upon matter? There is usually hidden somewhere the assumption of the narrow beam, rather than the serpent and his wife—two of the seraphim whose being gives us colour.

‘Light years’ also then fall away for human reality and Dr. Laporte’s distant past is only in a ‘there’ that has nothing to do with us. It is correct within its own parameters but not yet knowledge. Light appears directly out of its home-world of spirit, which maintains life in the world of matter, demonstrated mathematically by Nick Thomas.⁹

Science ever challenges our own spirit to distinguish, with Jehovah, the light from the darkness, using the light of the world (God’s all-embracing divine intelligence) with the self-experienced light of our soul, to converse with the primal dark of the material world.

A concluding thought

The prologue of John that introduces the mysterious relationship between light and dark speaks of the Beginning. It is indeed a beginning whenever the Word sounds, a *new beginning*; a new ‘hour’ has come. These are the moments, if made conscious, when we inaugurate some-

thing of the Second Creation, something that God and we ourselves have brought into the world together.

If we practise heart-thinking, in partnership with the Light of the World, as our Light with which to penetrate and transform the world's dark matter and un-being, we shall gradually find that pictures arise out of that darkness that show us the way forward in whatever is our striving. The spiritual world draws into our ken as a reality rather than mere mental representation.

In this sense, thinking with the sacrament that bread *reveals* and wine *reinforces* (the work of Christ), enters the revealing light and the potent dark. Their primal role is invoked—as the second creation, with shining glory and hidden power. They are our creating tools in the kingdom (of peace). 'Light in the Darkness' comes to mean that we have shone our spirit-inspired thinking into the world's darkness, which then 'grasps' the light in such a way that peace ensues.

Much will depend upon whether modern knowledge can be transformed by our human hearts repossessing knowledge from the electro-mechanical-digital world, bringing light out of the darkness through the light of the world within us.

- 1 *Aborigine: Myths and Legends*, William Ramsay Smith (1930). Senate, 1996.
- 2 *Observing Nature's Secret*, R. Druitt, Sophia Books 2018. 'Applying the method to Rocks' (p75)
- 3 *Erdenentwicklung aktuell erfahren* (Cornelis Bockemühl et al), Verlag Freies Geistesleben, 1999.
- 4 Second Creation, 2 Corinthians 5:17, cf R. Druitt, *Festivals of the Year*, Sophia Books 2014 'Introduction', p4.
- 5 'Newton's Prism Experiment', M.I.T. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uu-cYGK_Ymp0
- 6 *First Course in Natural Science*, R. Steiner, GA 320, 24.12.1919, 'The Light Course'. Anthroposophic Press 2001, Lecture 2.
- 7 *Pure Colour—Goethe's Theory of Colour Applied*, Maria Schindler; Painting and Imagination, Eleanor Merry. New Culture Publications 1945
- 8 Delivered at the annual meeting of ANPA, at Wesley House, Cambridge to an audience consisting mostly of theoretical physicists. (Text no longer online but available from RD)
- 9 Nick Thomas, *Science between Space and Counterspace*. Temple Lodge Press, 1999, Chapter 13, 'Light'

Christ's light

Kevin Street

Back in 1985 I experienced the Act of Consecration of Man for the first time. The place was Ilkeston, the priest Rosalind Pecover, and the rest—a bit of a blur, apart from one phrase and gesture:

‘Christ’s light in our daylight.’

Over the years this has lived in me at some level, and has seemed a beacon when times are dark, and a blaze of glorious affirmation when times are lighter. However, it is only in relatively recent years that I have been able to feel the depth of its substance, partly because of meditative work as a result of an application of the Alexander Technique on eye sight (called ‘Eyebody’), and in the last few months because of the book by Jeremy Naydler, *The Struggle for a Human Future* (Temple Lodge 2020). The book is concerned with the growing encroachment of the digital revolution, and the challenge this poses for the wellbeing of humanity.

It is in the last chapter, ‘Bringing light to the world: our deepest human vocation’, that I felt a true resonance and a deepening of all that had been living in me since 1985, and it is from this chapter that I will summarise just how this process has worked for me.

Naydler weaves two parallel paths, that of artificial intelligence (AI) and electricity, and that of thought and light. He succinctly charts the age-old wisdom that intuitively found the divine in light, in sun light, and how this nurtured human thought, up until the mid to late 1800s when James Clerk Maxwell and Heinrich Hertz asserted that light was nothing more than one of the many frequencies of radiant electricity. The electromagnetic field was born, and over the next two centuries more and more applications were found for the electromagnetic spectrum—radio waves, TV, digital wireless communication (including smart phones and 5G), and x-rays and gamma rays.

With this, intelligence has been reduced ever more from a pure thinking, which was bathed in light, to

*Kevin Street is
a member of
The Christian
Community in
Stourbridge and
edits the UK
Newsletter.*

something mechanical, able only to analyse data and make calculations on that basis, and ultimately to something ‘artificial’, that is, devoid of human attributes. Artificial Intelligence cannot function without electricity—the two are interdependent. Indeed, in AI, electricity itself acquires a kind of ‘intelligence’, albeit of a computational type.

Having established this, Naydler turns to examining Rudolf Steiner’s research into the relationship between light and thought, which is mimicked by the relationship of electricity and AI. He quotes from Steiner’s ‘Thought and Will as Light and Darkness’ (December 5, 1920):

We have the light in us. Only it does not appear to us as light because we live within it, and because while we use the light, it becomes thought within us... You take up the light in yourself which otherwise appears outside you. You differentiate in yourself. You work in it. This is precisely your thinking: it is a working in light... Light and thought go together. They are identical but seen from different sides.

For thinkers from Plato to Thomas Aquinas, it was self-evident that thought shed light on the world, and that light and thought were indissolubly mixed. Thus the light in the world was permeated by thought. To quote Steiner again:

Every substance upon earth is condensed light. ...Wherever you reach out and touch a substance, there you have condensed, compressed light. All matter is, in its essence, light.

(Free Will and Karma in the Future of Human Evolution, May 27, 1910)

Finally, Naydler explores the links that are made between light and the etheric, and how through our revitalised thinking we can strengthen our life forces, for the good of ourselves and of the planet.

At a practical level, Naydler makes a number of suggestions as to how we might engage positively in this whole process:

- *Each morning, as we greet the new day, we can allow ourselves to feel the sunlit world illuminating our waking consciousness.*
- *We can become more attentive to the different qualities of light we experience through the day, from dawn to dusk, and how clouds can also give depth to our understanding of the play of light on the natural world.*

- *We can, in a more detailed way on a sunny day, observe how backlit leaves and flowers radiate creative power.*
- *When we engage in creative thinking—thinking freed from stale default settings, and enlivened by the fact we are in the thoughts, and that they don't just arise from our narrow selfhood—then we activate the power of love in ourselves, and direct the light of thinking outwards to the world.*

Naydler ends this chapter—and the book—by referring to all that we can do out of our real understanding of the nature of light and thought:

... by helping us to find the sacred ground on which we can take our stand, they may be thought of as enabling us to place something on the other side of the scales, to counterbalance the negative forces that today assail humanity and menace the living Earth. To take on these forces we need to fortify ourselves inwardly, and find strength to work toward bringing real blessing to the world.

There is no mention in this chapter of 'Christ's light', but frequent references to light as being suffused with the divine and the good. Taking Christ's death and resurrection as deeds that altered the nature of everything that lives on the earth, it is no surprise that the power of this light continues to shine, and that it can be celebrated whenever we gather for an Act of Consecration, or whenever in our own room we remember Christ's deed.

I was greatly heartened to read not only chapter 5, but the whole book, and realise now why, some thirty-six years on, these words had such an impact on me.

Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.' (John 8:12)



Simeon in the temple, Rembrandt van Rijn

The very special fare

Georg Dreissig

A noble king and queen were blessed with the birth of twins, a girl and a boy, bright-eyed and kind-hearted. The children grew up in such a manner that the parents could not have been more content: they played happily together and cared for each other. When the lad learned to ride, then his sister gave no peace until she too sat in the saddle and rode with him. And when she learnt to sew, then he would come and look patiently over her shoulder until he too had learnt to sew and knit and weave as well as she. They came together to the earth and liked nothing better than to be with one another.

This continued until they were fourteen years old. The boy had become a strong, alert young fellow and she a young lady so fair that she had no equal throughout the land. But it happened that sorrow cast its shadow over the happiness of the palace. For one day the girl began to lose her appetite, so that her favourite dishes no longer interested her. Only now and then would she sip a drop of clear water; otherwise, she let nothing pass her lips. She became every day weaker, her colour more pale and her star-like eyes dull. She was too weak to wander in the beautiful parks around the palace, the glare of the sun hurt her eyes and even birdsong became an agony. She lived always behind dark, heavy curtains and

only her mother, father and brother were allowed to visit her. If they asked why she wasn't eating, she shrugged her shoulders, became even more quiet and began to cry, so that her dear ones could only sit there in helpless silence.

As his beloved daughter became ever thinner, the king sent out his messengers to all the best cooks in the kingdom, who were given the task to prepare dishes that a fourteen-year-old girl simply wouldn't be able to resist. All the great masters of rolling pins and mixing spoons began to knuckle down to the task of creating delicious masterpieces. The passages of castles and palaces were filled with the most succulent aromas you can imagine. There was salad wafted with the fragrance of violets embellished with fresh dewdrops, prepared lovingly on a bed of fresh rose petals; then, baked pomegranate sprinkled with coloured sugar and gold shimmering elf-noodles which were wafer-thin and melted on your tongue before you could even taste them; and for dessert, ice-flowers tossed in the blue of heaven and swimming in a glass of glowing twilight. And that is only a tiny example of what was conjured up for her by the great chefs. Some of it didn't quite work out: one chef who tried to make iridescent raindrops filled with the song of a lark, had to go home in a very bad mood, after all his attempts ended in vain.

Is your mouth watering, yet? Well, unfortunately, that was not the case for the king's daughter. When a new dish was brought to tempt her, she sniffed at it, turned to the wall and asked quietly that it be taken away again, as it made her feel quite nauseous.

The brother of the princess understood practically nothing of the art of cooking but was very worried about his sister and pondered how he might help her. Aimlessly he wandered throughout the land, over fields and through forests that he'd never seen before, until he came one day to a river that ran through the meadows. Tired from his wanderings and worries, he sat down beside the river to take a nap. He noticed, a little up-field from where he sat, an old man sitting, who waved to him and called,

'Come and sit with me and we can keep each other company.'

The boy, however, being a king's son, said, 'If you want company, come to me. There's room for two here.'

The old man lifted a walking stick in the air. 'Come to me, for I am lame and can only leave my place with difficulty.'

When the youth heard that, he felt ashamed, sprang to his feet and ran to the old man. They chatted over this and that, and the old man said,

'This river is no ordinary river. It looks peaceful, yet it has a great secret. Once a year, little ships sail past, steered by children; ships that glow like stars in the night. One must let them quietly sail past, and neither call to them nor sigh. If one

is lucky, a child will throw a loaf of the most aromatic bread out—bread that has been baked in heaven, satisfies every hunger and also heals every illness. But one may not beg for it, otherwise the bread loses its power.'

The prince listened carefully to the old man. 'And would it even heal you of your lameness?'

'Of course,' nodded the old man, 'but up until now I was always unlucky.' He paused and seemed ashamed. 'You see, I simply couldn't stay quiet when the boats sailed past but begged for the bread—and they always threw it to me with compassion. But my impatience robbed the bread of its power. If I only had someone who would hold my mouth shut for me, I would be grateful to him my whole life long.'

The prince said, 'If that's all it takes, then I will wait with you for these ships: I have a sister at home who needs healing. God willing, the boats will come in time to help her. And I will gladly help you to keep quiet so that you can be healed.'

The old man was so happy that it seemed almost as if he was healed on the spot and his heart heaved with joy. He composed himself once more and agreed with the prince: 'Yes, God willing, the boats will appear again soon.'

Whether their heartfelt request was heard by those very boats, I do not know, but ere the sun had set, a quiet shimmer began to move in the clear reflection of the waters. The glow grew greater until where there was a bend in the river, they saw the first little boats, gleaming

like stars in the night. They could see children in the boats waving to each other as the current took them downstream.

'Now,' the old man said, 'put your hand on my mouth and don't let go until the boats have gone past.' The prince kneeled behind him and pressed his hand as tightly as he could over his mouth. He could feel how the old man's lips moved as the boats sailed past, but the children did not notice them. Still he did not let go, and so not a sound issued from the old man's mouth.

Soon, the last ship came close. It seemed as if this one too would sail past but just as it was closest, the child looked at them, smiled, and threw a loaf to the bank where they crouched: a little aromatic heavenly loaf of bread. Instantly, the prince sprang up and took the bread—and froze. Whom should he give the bread to? That lame old man, who without his help would never have stopped begging? Did it not rather belong to his darling sister who lay close to death in the castle and who might, through this bread, become well once more? Can you imagine, what a struggle the prince now entered into with himself? But sure enough, his nobility won through—even if it was hard for him to decide so. He had promised his help; he must keep his promise. He turned to the old man, who knew nothing of his struggle and who stretched out his hands desperately to the prince. Hardly had he taken the loaf than he stuffed it into his mouth and greedily devoured it.

And then? Yes, slowly, he stretched himself, stood again on both feet and carefully took first one step, then another, loped slowly in a circle, and suddenly sprang in the air, clapping his hands for joy, dancing and singing—and forgetting completely about the prince.

The youth watched and would have laughed about the old man's joyful galloping if he hadn't felt the acute disappointment of knowing that the bread, that very special fare, might have healed his sister. Indeed, the pain overcame him and he turned sorrowfully from the old man. He noticed that the child who had thrown them the bread, had stepped ashore and was coming towards him.

'I see that you have received my bread and that it has helped your friend. But I also see that you still bear a sorrow. Tell me what it is that pains you.' The youth told him of his sister who lay ill at home. The child listened carefully. Finally he said, 'Whoever does not ask for themselves but for others, those we may help. Climb aboard the boat and row upstream to the river's source. There you will find a ship at anchor, the ship that brought down this night the heavenly loaves. But hurry!— the boat anchors this one night only.'

The prince thanked the child and sprang into the boat, grasped the oars and with all his might rowed upstream as quickly as he could. Whenever he became tired, he needed only to think of his sister, and new strength flowed into his arms. Nonetheless, the night

was almost over as he reached the source of the river where the golden ship was. On the horizon, the first rays of the rising sun appeared and he saw how someone on board began to weigh anchor. With all his strength, he rowed the boat to the foot of the great ship and called out,

‘If you still have one more loaf, then please give it to me, so that I can bring it to my sister and heal her illness.’ A figure looked out over the ship’s railing, a beautiful figure, like a person yet not really a person: something more than that. And as the youth stretched out his hands, two loaves fell down to him.

‘One for you, and one to give as a gift,’ the figure called back, and then the golden ship rose swiftly up and was soon lost in the gold of the rising sun.

The youth noticed now how tired he was. He took in the oars and stretched himself out in the boat. ‘Just a nap,’ he thought. Hardly had he closed his eyes than he fell into a deep and restful sleep. The current of the river took his boat, steering it safely right back to the place where the prince had met the child. There, he awoke, looked around him, no longer sure whether it had all been a dream, but found himself lying in the boat with two loaves of bread in his hands. He thanked God, put the one loaf in his bag, and ate the other with great appetite. Then he hurried with new strength, back to the palace.

There, no one knew how to save the princess’s young life. The brother entered her room with the bread

in his hands. Carefully, he bent over his ailing sister and quietly spoke:

‘Dearest sister, forgive me if I too now bring you fare, and take it not as a further agony—but do you notice how fragrant this bread smells?’ He held it before her. Slowly, her nose began to twitch as she smelt the bread. She breathed it in, deeply. She stretched out her frail hands, took the bread whose origin she knew nothing about, and brought it slowly to her mouth. She ate with appetite, and after she had eaten, raised herself up, embraced her brother, and said,

‘With this bread, you have given back to me my strength. Oh, promise me that you will always obtain this bread for me.’ What else could the youth do in this moment? Of course, he said that he would. When he told his sister that the bread came from a golden ship and that it had been baked in the heavens, she wanted to free him from his promise.

‘What one has promised, one must keep,’ he said firmly.

So, whenever the time came around, the prince made his way once more to the river and waited until the glowing ships appeared. He sat himself in a boat and rowed upstream with all his might to the source, where the golden ship was, so that he might once more receive that which was gladly given out: a loaf for oneself and one to give as a gift. And so his sister lived too, because of that very special fare, which maintained her strength and joy.

Translated by Luke Barr

Book reviews

Eurythmy and Rudolf Steiner, Origins and Development 1912–1939

Tatiana Kisseleff

Floris Books

Reviewed by Kelly Williams

From my position as a 21st century eurythmy teacher, Tatiana Kisseleff's seemingly rarefied position as friend and pupil of Rudolf and Marie Steiner feels sometimes far removed from my daily experiences, but her path was no less challenging and probably much more so. Her biography included war and revolution, an exile experience of sorts and the dissolution of a marriage. We hear a lot about the youthful pioneers of eurythmy such as Lory Maier Smits and Erna Wolfram, but Kisseleff was thirty when she met eurythmy, married, had studied at university and worked in social and psychological therapeutic fields. I feel her more mature perspective of those early days is very relatable and I enjoyed her warm-telling very much.

The book is rich in specific content charting the rise and development of eurythmy, especially regarding the Mystery Dramas and *Faust*, and encompasses the first courses covering the Dionysian, Apollonian and tone eurythmy indications. There are many lecture references and a comprehensive section on the speech indications in various languages and their importance for the future of eurythmy as well as forms, costumes, lighting and staging indications that are of real historical interest and valuable opportunity for detailed study. For me, the lecture references are invaluable in getting to grips with the development of eurythmy directly

out of anthroposophy. I have discovered many more layers of meaning or intent behind things I have been taught, absorbed or read in the various eurythmy books but not always fully penetrated with my own thinking. With more background and biographical information elements that seemed hitherto a little abstract and therefore difficult to understand and teach are starting to make more sense and I am inspired to try things out. Kisseleff herself says that it is more than a lifetime's work to work with all the indications given and I agree.

For its first seven years the development of eurythmy was nurtured within the anthroposophical movement under the dedicated eyes of Rudolf Steiner and especially Marie Steiner to whom we continue to owe so much. It was a vibrant and popular community activity, performances often included children and enthusiastic local members. Kisseleff seemed to have a gift for working with children and there are many joyful descriptions of classes, courses and performances that often took place in Steiner's own home and brought him great joy too. She seems to have worked ceaselessly, training and teaching diverse groups of people, often finding time only to practice her stage work from 10 p.m. into and beyond the midnight hours.

It was Steiner's wish that anthroposophists practise eurythmy as often as they could and I have felt re-inspired by this. Eurythmy is seed or fruit or both of anthroposophy and there is a lot to understand and practise, explore and debate.

After seven years it was deemed time to share eurythmy with the public and Marie Steiner's comments on

its reception when it was finally taken on the road in 1918/1919 are candid and strangely current. The performances engendered strong reactions: 'enthusiastic responses or passionate antagonism'. It was felt that the press was instructed to write against the working of the spirit and anthroposophy in particular. In fact in the beginning agitators would come and physically disrupt performances, leading sometimes to safety concerns for the performers. Fellow artists reported that they were moved by what they experienced but often felt compelled to criticise or denigrate eurythmy and refuse to acknowledge it as comparable to the established art forms of the day. In the midst of all this Marie Steiner stood firm, encouraging the eurythmists and speech artists and sometimes literally facing down the opposition. This is a real aspect of courage and integrity that I respect in my forebears, bearing in mind that the tragedy and horror of the First World War had only just come to some kind of ceasefire and the Russian Revolution was still taking place, yet in Dornach the multinational community of anthroposophists was living and working together in harmony.

The devastating effect of the fire at the first Goetheanum and Steiner's subsequent death are recounted with sparse detail but it is clear that the loss for Kisseleff was immeasurable. I had a real sense of the courage it must have taken for her to leave Dornach thereafter which had been her home and sanctuary for a very long time, and forge a new path alone in Paris. Steiner had long wished for her to take eurythmy to the Russian people and the time finally came, not in Russia per se but through the many émigrés living in Paris. For the next twelve years she lived and worked there, working in the French,

German and Russian languages and the last third of the book details her explorations into speech formation, the planets and zodiac and world clock given to her by Steiner that merit careful attention.

I am so grateful that this book has found its way to me. I know it will remain an important reference book for my work. I thoroughly recommend it for eurythmists and anthroposophists and anyone moved by this wonderful gift we have been bequeathed by our brave and dedicated pioneers.

I would like to end with a quote from Steiner on Goethe in the Pfauen Theatre programme of February 24, 1919:

'The art of movement known as eurythmy, which until now has only been cultivated in intimate circles, has its origin in the Goethean view that all art is the revelation of natural laws that would remain hidden but for art's revelation.'

The Maria Thun Biodynamic Calendar 2022

Floris Books

Reviewed by Jim Pearson

What an achievement! When the sudden death of Matthias Thun was announced in the autumn of 2020, we users of this excellent resource saw the deeply dismaying possibility that production of the Calendar would cease. Titia and Friedrich Thun, of their own free will, decided to continue the invaluable work of their grandmother and of their father. So, we owe these young people our support and gratitude, and as we look into the 2022 edition we see that we also owe them our admiration for a job well,

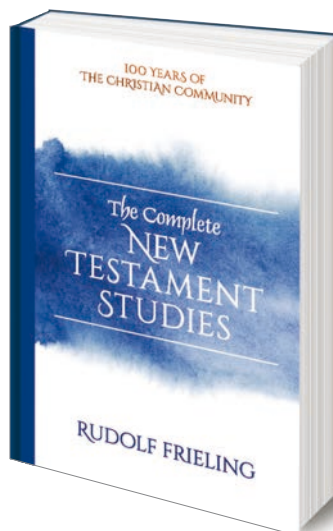
New From Floris Books

A masterful analysis

When faced with the descriptions of miracles and the teachings and parables of Christ as recorded in the New Testament, it can be difficult to know what to make of them.

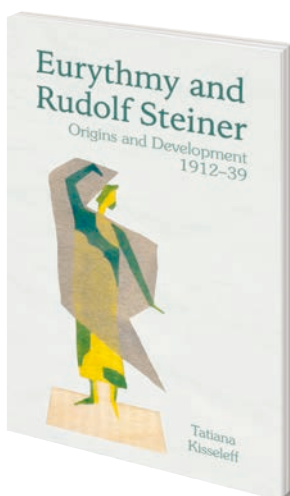
Rudolf Frieling was a master of Biblical studies and this comprehensive collection of his New Testament essays draws on his deep knowledge and insight. He returns to the Greek text to shed new light on the meaning and power of the Bible.

This is a highly-regarded work that will be of value to both scholars and readers of the Bible for years to come.



The Complete New Testament Studies

560 pages | hardback | 978-178250-735-2 | RRP: £20.00 | OFFER: £16.00



A remarkable journey

In this book, available for the first time in English, eurythmy pioneer Tatiana Kisseleff describes the spiritual foundations of eurythmy as they were explored in Rudolf Steiner's lectures and recounts the instruction she received from him.

This is both an eyewitness account of the origins of eurythmy and a record of a deeply personal journey of one person's efforts to master it. It is illustrated throughout with fascinating photographs and drawings.

Eurythmy and Rudolf Steiner: Origins and Development 1912-39 | 212 pages | paperback | 978-178250-738-3
RRP: £16.99 | OFFER: £13.59

Visit florisbooks.co.uk for 20% off these books & free UK postage.
Enter offer code **PRX21** at the checkout.

Sign up to our mailing list for special offers and a FREE BOOK with every order.

Offer code valid until 31/12/2021.

**SAVE
20%**

and boldly, done. A youthful energy shines through, not only in the new layout, but also in the numerous new sections. The plain, practical explanations of processes are especially welcome.

The subjects addressed in the Calendar will always be complex: the interactions of the vast, ever-expanding field of astronomy with the ancient but constantly developing tasks of food production, and with the little understood relationship between humankind, the earth we inhabit and the cosmos of which it is part.

Professional farmers and growers will be able to relate the astronomy and the other aspects to their existing skills and to their deep knowledge of their soils and plants. For them, the Calendar may not contain enough information; they can turn to the Agricultural Course of Rudolf Steiner, to colleagues and other sources in order to conduct their own researches.

For the domestic gardener however, who often has no-one else to turn to or to consult, the wealth of the Calendar can be confusing, sometimes even contradictory. The Calendar has a great potential for education amongst people who are motivated but not expert—people like myself,

gleaning scraps of knowledge from seed packets and from books written by experts (who have often forgotten their own ignorance!). Such gardeners will benefit from a simple method that enables us to put in our diaries the dates for each task. Details of the astronomy and other aspects can follow, if we have the time and inner capacity to absorb the complexities.

Finally, one of the most encouraging things about the Calendar is that it really does represent the dynamism of this approach to growing our food. The movements of the heavenly bodies are predictable but local growing conditions are not. Everything needs to be constantly reappraised, so thank goodness there are people willing to take on that task.

Anomalies and contradictions are identified and focussed upon, even though a resolution may only be reached at some future time. The continuing use of comparative growing trials remains a convincing factor, especially for newcomers to bio-dynamics.

I must not end without acknowledging the essential contributions of the Floris Books editor, Christian Maclean and of the long-serving translator, Bernard Jarman.

*Do you know someone who might be interested in Perspectives?
We would be glad to send a free trial copy to a new subscriber.
Please write to the Subscription Manager
at the address inside the front cover.*

Visit florisbooks.co.uk for 20% off this book & free UK postage.
Enter offer code **PRX21** at the checkout.

**SAVE
20%**

Sign up to our mailing list for special offers and a FREE BOOK with every order.

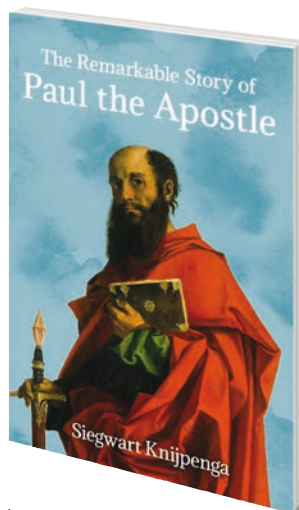
Offer code valid until 31/12/2021.

Bringing a remarkable story to life for younger readers

This unique narrative retelling of the story of Saint Paul is both an engaging day-to-day account of life in the first century as well as a remarkable chronicle of the key events that ultimately laid the foundations for Christianity. It covers his childhood through to his transformation into Paul the apostle, one of Christianity's most significant figures.

Christian Community priest Siegwart Knijpenga draws on his extensive experience of sharing religious lessons with young people to retell the story of Saint Paul in a lively and accessible way, ideal for readers aged 10 and up.

The Remarkable Story of Paul the Apostle | 160 pages | paperback
978-178250-736-9 | RRP: £9.99 | OFFER: £7.99



Dear Friends,

At Floris Books we constantly strive to publish books you want to read.

So we'd like to take this opportunity to ask for your advice:

- What fascinating books would you love to see translated into English?
- What works or essays should we rediscover?
- Have you written a manuscript that we should read?

We're also interested in hearing about books and authors writing on:

- religion and spirituality
- all aspects of anthroposophy
- biodynamics

Please get in touch by email (details below) to share your recommendations with us.
We look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes,

The Floris Books Team

Email: floris@florisbooks.co.uk



Temple Lodge Club

a quiet oasis in the middle of London



Temple Lodge is a Georgian listed building in the centre of Hammersmith and was once home to artist Sir Frank Brangwyn. The house is now a guest house welcoming visitors to London from the four corners of the globe. The large studio he built for his work has been refashioned into a space for worship by *The Christian Community* in London. The mezzanine floor has been kept for its historical associations and has been home to *The Gate* vegetarian restaurant for the last 30 years.

Many visitors have described the peace and tranquillity they experience upon entering the house as an oasis amidst the turmoil they leave outside. An experience of the garden can be gained from most windows, and this will be enhanced as a redesigning and replanting of the garden takes place.

The work in the garden follows work to build three new double-bedded garden suites, each with its own en-suite facilities. Guests now have access to and through the garden on their way to the dining room. A hearty and substantial vegetarian/vegan breakfast provides just what is needed for the new day ahead.

Upon becoming members of the **Temple Lodge Club** (£2.00 annual membership) visitors seeking accommodation may share in all the facilities the house has to offer. There is the Reading Corner with newspapers and the Library for reading, relaxing or quiet conversation, the well-used Conference Room with seating for twelve around the table and the unique Lantern Room taking its name from the large octagonal skylight which provides an exceptional, comfortable and adaptable space for many and varied meetings.

All prices include breakfast:

*from £59 per night single room,
from £93 per night twin room,
from £108 per night double room*

To make a booking:

Tel. **0044 (0) 20 8748 83388**

email: **booking@templelodgeclub.com**

Or please refer to our website:

www.templelodgeclub.com

for full and up to date prices and offers.

For any further information or to make a booking, contact:

Temple Lodge Club
51 Queen Caroline Street
Hammersmith
London W6 9QL

Tel: 020 8748 8388

e-mail:

info@templelodgeclub.com

www.templelodgeclub.com



Guest Rooms

at

The Christian Community
23 Chapel Street
Buckfastleigh
South Devon
TQ11 0AQ

There are four small guest rooms, three single and one double room. Three of the guest rooms have a wash basin; toilets and shower are separate. There is a kitchen for self-catering needs. Local shops and pubs/restaurants are within a couple of minutes walking distance.

Please note that there are steps and stairs inside and outside the building. We ask for your consideration regarding the other guests and our events taking place in the house.

Suggested contribution

£25 per person per night, one night £30.

Weekly rates available for retreats.

For further information and bookings:

Rev Sabine Haus

01364 64 42 72

Email: sabine.christian2003@gmail.com

Centres of The Christian Community

AUSTRALIA

Adelaide (08) 8339 6466

3 Anzac Ridge Road (P.O.B 216)

Bridgewater, S.A. 5155

Canberra (02) 6295 3752

Civic Square P.O. Box 651,

ACT 2608

Melbourne (03) 9029 2769/7812

319 Auburn Road, Hawthorn East,

Victoria 3123

Sydney (02) 9810 6690

PO Box 965, Rozelle, NSW 2039

CANADA

Toronto (905) 709 4544 901

Rutherford Road,

Maple, ON L6A 1S2

Vancouver (604) 415-0600

5050 Hastings Street,

Burnaby, BC V5B 1P6

NAMIBIA

Windhoek +264 (61) 225791

Uhland Street 3, (Box 11359)

Windhoek

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland (09) 525 2305

10 Rawhiti Road, Onehunga

Hawkes Bay (06) 878 4463

617 Heretaunga Street East,

Hastings

SOUTH AFRICA

Campbell Village

(021) 572 5922

PO Box 1451 Dassenberg 7350

Cape Town (021) 762 0793

39 Timour Hall Road, 7800

Plumstead

Johannesburg (011) 789 3083

46 Dover Street,

Randburg 2194

(Box 1065, Ferndale 2160)

KwaZulu Natal (031) 768 1665

148 Kangelani Way, Assagay

Box 1093, Hillcrest 3650

UNITED KINGDOM

Aberdeen

8 Spademill Road,

Aberdeen AB15 4XW

Bottom (01287) 661 312

Danby, Whitby, N. Yorkshire, YO21

2NJ

Bristol c/o Meyer: (0117) 9502

512

20 St. John's Road, Clifton,

Bristol, BS8 2EX

Buckfastleigh (01364) 644 272

23 Chapel Street, Buckfastleigh,

Devon, TQ11 0AQ

Canterbury (01227) 765068

57, Wincheap or 730882

Canterbury, CT1 3RX

Edinburgh (0131) 229 4514

21 Napier Road,

Edinburgh, EH10 5AZ

Forest Row (01342) 323 205

Harfield Road, Forest Row,

E. Sussex, RH18 5DZ

Holywood (028) 9042 4254

3 Stewarts Place, Holywood,

Co. Down, BT18 9DX

Ilkeston 07716229409

Malin House, St. Mary Street,

Ilkeston, Derbyshire, DE7 8AF

Kings Langley (01923) 269523

London

(020) 8748 8388

51 Queen Caroline Street, London

W6 9QL

Malton/York (01653) 694 391

The Croft, Highfield Road,

Old Malton,

N. Yorkshire YO17 9DB

Mourne Grange (028) 4176 0110

Newry Road, Kilkeel, Newry,

Co. Down, BT34 4EX

Stourbridge (01384) 377 190

22 Baylie Street,

Stourbridge

W. Midlands DY8 1AZ

Stroud (01453) 762926

73 Cainscross Road,

Stroud, Glos. GL5 4HB

IRELAND

East Clare +353 (061) 640967

Dewsborough

Tuamgraney

Co. Clare

UNITED STATES

Boston (617) 277 6266

366 Washington Street, Brookline,

MA 02445

Chicago (773) 989 9558

2135 West Wilson

Chicago, IL 60625

Denver (303) 758 7553

2180 South Madison Street,

Denver, CO 80210

Detroit (248) 546 3611

1320 Camden at Wanda,

Ferndale, MI 48220

Los Angeles (818) 762 2251

11030 La Maida Street,

North Hollywood, CA 91601

New York (212) 874 5395

309 West 74th Street,

New York, NY 10023

Philadelphia (610) 647 6869

212 Old Lancaster Road,

Devon, PA 19333

Sacramento (916) 548 4224

10030 Fair Oaks Blvd.

Fair Oaks, CA 95628

San Francisco (415) 928 1715

906 Divisadero Street

San Francisco, CA 94115

Spring Valley (845) 426 3144

15 Margetts Road

Monsey, NY 10952

Taconic-Berkshire Region

christiancommunityhillsdale.com

10 Green River Lane,

Hillsdale, NY 12529

Washington, D.C. Baltimore

Area, also Chapel Hill, NC

(301) 935-2727

The Parish House

4221 Metzert Road

College Park, MD 20740

OTHER CENTRES IN:

Germany, Switzerland, Austria,

Czech Republic, Netherlands,

Belgium, France, Denmark,

Norway, Sweden, Finland, Estonia,

Brazil, Argentina, Peru, Japan

December 2021–February 2022



£ 3.75

ISSN 0967-5485