

*Students of Theosophy  
have a choice of two Paths*



From *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (MISTAKEN NOTIONS IN THE SECRET DOCTRINE) XII pp. 236-37.  
Frontispiece by Sonya Chasey.

**HERE ARE SEVERAL WAYS OF ACQUIRING KNOWLEDGE:**

- (a) By accepting blindly the dicta of the church or modern science;
- (b) By rejecting both and starting to find the truth for oneself.

The first method is easy and leads to social respectability and the praise of men; the other is difficult and requires more than ordinary devotion to truth, a disregard for direct personal benefits and an unwavering perseverance. Thus it was in the days of old and so it is now, except perhaps, that such devotion to truth has been more rare in our own day than it was of yore. Indeed, the modern Eastern student's unwillingness to think for himself is now as great as Western exactions and criticism of other people's thoughts.

He demands and expects that his "Path" shall be engineered with all the selfish craft of modern comfort, macadamized, laid out with swift railways and telegraphs, and even telescopes, through which he may, while sitting at his ease, survey the works of other people; and while criticising them, look out for the easiest, in order to play at the Occultist and Amateur Student of Theosophy. The real "Path" to esoteric knowledge is very different. Its entrance is overgrown with the brambles of neglect, the travesties of truth during long ages block the way, and it is obscured by the proud contempt of self-sufficiency and with every verity distorted out of all focus. To push over the threshold alone, demands an incessant, often unrequited labour of years, and once on the other side of the entrance, the weary pilgrim has to toil up on foot, for the narrow way leads to forbidding mountain heights, unmeasured and unknown, save to those who have reached the cloud-capped summit before. Thus must he mount, step by step, having to conquer every inch of ground before him by his own exertions; moving onward, guided by strange landmarks the nature of which he can ascertain only by deciphering the weather-beaten, half-defaced inscriptions as he treads along, for woe to him, if, instead of studying them, he sits by coolly pronouncing them "indecipherable." The "Doctrine of the Eye" is *māyā*; that of the "Heart" alone, can make of him an elect.

Is it to be wondered that so few reach the goal, that so many are called, but so few are chosen? Is [it] not the reason for this explained in three lines on page 27 of *The Voice of the Silence*? These say that while "The first repeat in pride: 'Behold, *I know*,' the last, they who in humbleness have garnered, low confess, 'thus have I heard'; and hence, become the only "chosen."

## At the threshold of the two Paths

Excerpted from *Compassion: the Spirit of Truth*, 2009, Appendix C, pp. 341-42, the first of our Major Works Series. Modified after *The Voice of the Silence*, Golden Jubilee edition, pp. 92-95. Superscripted numbers correspond to the paragraph numbering of that edition.

1	2
<sup>182</sup> First path	Second path <sup>183</sup>
<sup>111, 119, 127, 147</sup> Eye Doctrine	Heart Doctrine <sup>111, 119, 120, 128, 147</sup>
<sup>143, 180, 181, 186</sup> Open path	Secret path <sup>143, 146, 147, 180, 184, 187</sup>
<sup>106, 111, 113, 115</sup> Head [mind] learning	Soul [heart] wisdom <sup>106, 111, 113, 115</sup>
<sup>119, 122</sup> False learning	True knowledge <sup>122</sup>
<sup>119</sup> Behold I know	Thus have I heard <sup>119</sup>
<sup>298</sup> Dhyana path	Arahat path <sup>299</sup>
<sup>199</sup> Rugged path	Steeper path <sup>200</sup>
<sup>198, 199</sup> Fourfold Dhyana	Paramita Heights <sup>200</sup>
<sup>143, 194</sup> Path of bliss	Path of woe <sup>183, 184, 194</sup>
<sup>128</sup> External, non-existing [fleeting]	Permanent, everlasting <sup>128</sup>
<sup>222</sup> Personal	Impersonal <sup>222</sup>
<sup>143, 191</sup> Selfish bliss	Self-immolation <sup>180</sup>
<sup>179</sup> Bliss immediate	Bliss deferred <sup>179</sup>
<sup>298</sup> Haven of the yogins	Arya path <sup>302, 307</sup>
<sup>142</sup> Destruction	Compassion <sup>142, 191, 301</sup>
[Personal Buddha]	Buddha of Perfection <sup>146, 302</sup>
[Solitary Buddha]	Buddha of Compassion <sup>143, 306</sup>
<sup>191</sup> Pratyeka Buddha	Samyak Sambuddha <sup>188</sup>
<sup>119</sup> Pride	Humbleness <sup>119</sup>
	[Continued overleaf.]

**THEOSOPHY AND THEOSOPHISTS SERIES  
AT THE THRESHOLD OF THE TWO PATHS**

1	2
<sup>119</sup> The crowd	The Elect <sup>119</sup>
[Hoi Polloi]	The Few
[Escape from the world]	Save the world <sup>193</sup>
<sup>190</sup> Sweet rest	Bitter duty <sup>190</sup>
<sup>186</sup> Oblivion of the world of men	Pity for the world of mortals <sup>187</sup>
<sup>142, 186, 306</sup> Sana (Dharmakaya) Robe	Nirmanakaya Robe <sup>145, 306</sup>
<sup>296-298, 306</sup> Srotapanna	Bodhisattva <sup>306, 307</sup>
<sup>305</sup> Nirvana Dharma	Arhan [Buddha] Dharma <sup>314, 315</sup>
<sup>182, 190</sup> Liberation	Renunciation [of Liberation] <sup>145, 183, 190, 192</sup>
<sup>142</sup> Selves sacrificed to self	Self sacrificed to selves <sup>146</sup>
<sup>142</sup> Sacrifice mankind to self	Live to benefit mankind <sup>144</sup>
[Open Eye]	Secret Heart <sup>143</sup>

