

LIGHT

Thoughts to Contemplate
from Students of the
School of the Natural Order
December 2013



For this year's Holiday Resonance letter, we decided to share our perceptions about the light in our lives. Here are our offerings, including one from Vitvan. We hope that you will find something that strikes a chord in you and enlivens your own growth toward the Light.

Lynne Hoffman - editor



December 11, 12, 13, 14 – The Feast of Love LITANY

I. Love is the only King; the only Ruler; the only Creator.

II. Hate and Satan are one; rebel, anarchist, destroyer.

III. Love's action is what men call charity.

IV. The action of hatred is known as malice.

V. Love has only one punishment for the sinner, and that is forgiveness.

VI. To live according to the law of love is a hundred thousand times harder than to live according to the law of hatred; to this great effort I pledge myself. To live according to the law of love means the acceptance of every evil as a good. By that acceptance, if it is done in the spirit of love, the evil becomes good. It is to the conversion of evil into good in our natures, in the nature of others, and in the affairs of life, that we devote ourselves. Henceforth we do not avoid evil, we love it and transform it. By loving it, we make ourselves a part of the creative principle which is love.

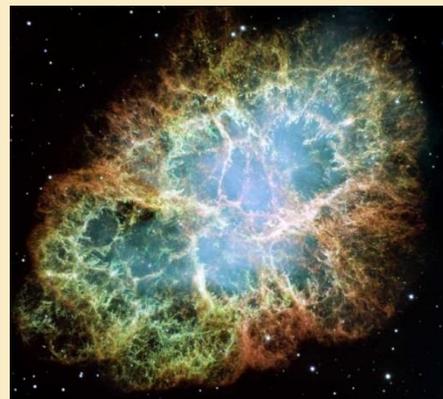
VII. To this great effort the disciples pledge themselves during the Feast of Love, and bind themselves together in it. It cannot be done alone.

from *When the Sun Moves Northward* by Mabel Collins

Vitvan's comments on this selection:

The disciple is pledged now to live according to the law of love. I am going to tell you this, that when you pass this point, no matter what others do to you, you must stand wholly and entirely in such perfect unity with the essence of their being – the Spirit within them – not with the reactions and perturbations going on in their lower bodies, that you can hold a conscious contact with them. There is nothing emotional about this contact, it is just a clear, cold contact that you will not allow anything to break – nor will you allow anything they do to break it.

Do you know what accepting and transmuting evil means? While you are a probationer, you have to learn to protect yourself from the astral vibrations and forces that others throw out, because if you register them your own spontaneity and creative activity will go down under them. Instead of peace, harmony, and happiness, you will experience misery, turmoil, agitation, and discouragement. While you are a probationer, you must learn to keep your own vibrations above the plane of astral disturbances. But when you have passed



the probationary period, or the purification by fire, and you have pledged yourself to live according to the law of love, you can no longer isolate yourself from the forces of destruction, but you must allow these conditions to register fully and completely in you; and then you take these forces and vibrations and transmute them in yourself and ray them back transformed to a higher plane. This is inner alchemical work that only strong disciples can do. You will suffer acutely at first, but you must do this work in order to reach this high state.

Later on in group work you must take on the heavy load of destructive and disintegrating influences precipitated against the little band of workers to which you belong. All groups have to weather one psychic storm after another. On the physical plane, the storms of the astral plane are endured until the group is utterly destroyed and scattered to the winds by the destructive influence, or the individuals of the group are driven together for protection. There is an inner amalgamation of their individual power, and then collectively they turn and fight the enemy. It is a most beautiful and wonderful experience – to witness a whole group unite and do this!

What is there about a teaching or a teacher that such terrific cyclones of destructive force are turned against the teacher, the teaching, and the group? It means that we have the Light! The stronger the Light we carry, the more is the darkness stirred up against us! If it were not for those who can transform the forces of darkness and evil through the force of love, the race would be overwhelmed. Sometimes a great work will go down and be swept away by the forces of evil because the leader lacks support. If the Great Master, Jesus the Christ, could have found even two to support him in group formation when that great world drama was enacted in the Garden of Gethsemane, he could have alchemically transmuted the race hatred of all Jerusalem into love. Go back to the story of Moses, and you will remember that the battle against the Philistines went on successfully so long as the hands of Moses were upheld – he couldn't do it alone.

When you can participate in the Feast of Love, the Feast of Union takes place in your consciousness.



Let Our Light Shine Forth

The first two weeks in October this past fall were difficult ones in our valley. Four of our Snake Valley neighbors died during that time.

One of these was a woman whose circle of friends and influence radiated far out from Baker to White Pine County, to the state of Nevada and beyond, including governments in Carson City and Washington, D.C., and even overseas. During her long life she networked, lobbied, and made her voice heard loud and strong for the preservation of our environment and the protection of our precious water.

Another woman, killed in an automobile accident on her way to work one afternoon, had been born in Mexico, originally arrived here illegally, and over the years got her green card, learned English, became a U. S. citizen, worked as a cook at restaurants in the valley, and raised four successful children. She loved people, and nurtured not only her own family but also a wide circle of relatives and friends who moved to our valley for employment opportunities and the hope of a better life.

The influence of these vibrant women rippled out far beyond themselves, but in such different spheres of activity. We each have our own space and ability to 'let our light shine forth', no matter where or who we are or what we do.

I keep a quotation by Elizabeth Edwards close at hand. She wrote these words after her cancer had progressed and her marriage had ended. Her words shine with gentle encouragement and wisdom.

The days of our lives, for all of us, are numbered. We know that. And yes, there are certainly times when we aren't able to muster as much strength and patience as we would like. It's called being human.

But I have found that in the simple act of living with hope, and in the daily effort to have a positive impact in the world, the days that I do have are made all the more meaningful and precious. And for that I am grateful.

Susan Wetmore



Meditating on Light

In Vitvan's old work he once described two forms of meditation: meditation with seed and meditation without seed. In his later work, he stresses focusing attention at the crown of the head and letting the forces flow there by means of quiet concentration. That, to me, is the simplest and most direct way to reach a meditative state. That would be considered meditation without seed. However, for times when it seems that the "monkey mind" simply will not settle into stillness, "meditation with seed" seems to have a beneficial effect as well.



To practice this form of meditation, one chooses some positive topic (the seed), and then allows thought to bring in various aspects of that topic. Some choices might include light, love, courage, forbearance, empathy, etc. If thoughts stray in another direction, return them to contemplating the chosen topic. The mind can play with everything it knows about that topic and sometimes can discover new aspects that have not been considered before. This can bring inspiration and understanding at times when being quiet seems impossible. That was how I began to work on this little essay on Light.

There is no such 'thing' as darkness. Darkness is only the absence of light. No matter how seemingly intense the darkness we perceive, even a very small light will attract our attention and everything in our world will begin to change. When we live in a state of ignorance (ignore-ance) the case is similar. When we begin to take note of what is happening "the light begins to dawn" and our understanding begins to expand. Each small degree of illumination can bring about great change in what is perceived, and "Once the flame has been kindled, who can put it out?" Consciously or unconsciously, willingly or grudgingly, we grow in understanding as life teaches its lessons. We do not have to *do* anything to achieve awareness. We just have to notice. Of course, if we wish to accelerate the process of growth and development, we can deliberately cultivate more awareness, attuning ourselves in a mindful way to what we are doing and what is going on here and now. No need to ascend a mountain or seek out a master. Life is our great teacher if we focus our attention on this present moment. How simple! No place to go and nothing to do except be here in the here-now simply being aware of what is going on with us. The light has been turned on. As awareness expands, we can join the chorus of those who sing that old hymn, "My yoke is easy; my burden is light. I've found it so, I've found it so ...". Or, remembering a cliché found many places in Vitvan's writings, "The creative forces will flow in the direction *sustained* by attention."

May the light of your understanding expand for you throughout the coming year.

Marj Coffman, 2013

I SEE!

One of the brightest lights may be the light of understanding. To see the truth of something may be one of the greatest gifts one can receive. To be able to say, "Oh, I see!" about anything, may be the first step to greater knowledge about yourself and the private world you inhabit. Occasionally take the time to pause, breathe, look out (or in), and see the world you have been ignoring. See it in a new light, and let that brighten your life.



Knowing – knowing more about yourself, your world, and everything in it can help you comprehend the unity of all, and bring you to a greater peace. Any sense of aloneness one may have can be defeated when we see we are only “*seemingly* separated, one from another.”

One of the most comforting biblical quotes for me is, “You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free.”

Bill Coffman



Within

*A linger at the edge
bird ready for flight
Working up the courage to fly
out there into the night
A darkness, a silence.
A heart beat standing clear
There is only this, only now
I am here.*

*The wind catches my hair
rain, it wets my skin
Outside storms are raging
the refuge lies within
Within the rain is slowing
Within the wind stands still
Within my mind and heart
are finding peace inside my will
Within I hear the heart beat
It echoes in the breast
Within I feel the steady pulse
The rise and fall of chest
Within I sit in darkness
One candle shining bright
And in this way, at darkness' edge
I'll lift off into light*



*And so may it be for you
Happy Solstice!
Love Jenna*

First Light

For many years now, I have raised chickens, enjoying, sharing and selling healthy eggs and meat. So friends and neighbors bring me their empty egg cartons. Most of the cartons just say “One dozen eggs - Large.” I always get a tickle out of the not-so-common ones that say “brown eggs” or “cage free.” A special favorite egg carton that was given to me recently was labeled “First Light.” Wow! How fitting! Let me think about that a bit more...



Yes, my Buff Orrington's lay brown eggs. Yes, my flock is cage free. Long ago when we first got chickens, the city girl in me planned to fence in the large old log cabin that we chose to use for our Hen Haven. My husband said, “Nah, they don't need a fence. They'll come home to roost.” And you know what? They did! They do! Of course, raising poultry just sixty miles south of the middle of nowhere, there are predators to consider. There are coyotes, skunks, weasels, foxes, mountain lions, bobcats and hawks to name a few. But we've lost very few birds to predators over the years. Since most of the predators are nocturnal, the daily routine is to lock the big screen door every evening after the chickens have gone in. We know that animals seem to have built-in clocks. My chickens know when it is time to go in. It is when the sun goes down behind the mountain. It is not actually dark, but the sun is below the horizon. There is little chance of convincing them to go in even ten or fifteen minutes earlier, because they know what 'time' it is. I have to chuckle when I visit the chicken house at night. They may “purr” a bit as they settle in at dusk, but after dark, there is not a sound – nothing to attract the attention of a potential predator. Sometimes when “reading the morning newspaper” (observing the night's activities by looking at the tracks in the snow), I've even seen mountain lion tracks within thirty feet of the chicken house, walking along casually with never a skip in stride. That mountain lion certainly didn't investigate a house full of chickens! Not at all. She poked her nose into the garage looking for mice, but that was long after she had passed up the delicious (but silent) chickens who were safely locked up in the big log cabin.

The flip side of locking the chickens up at night is letting them out in the morning. I will admit that the chickens are always up before I am. How do the chickens know when to wake up? Is it because the sun comes over the horizon? Not exactly. The roosters begin to crow while it still seems very dark, about thirty or forty minutes before dawn begins to creep over the eastern horizon, well before the sun is up. As my Dad said when he visited here, “Don't those darned roosters know how to tell time?” But, you see, they do! The roosters want their girls to be up and about at “First Light” (like the egg carton says), doing what chickens do best – scratching for food, laying eggs, and preparing to bring on more chicks. By the time I open the door in the morning, most of the girls are crowding the door, ready to go for the day. On their own level, the roosters and the hens know that the light is there. They anticipate it every day and knowing that they will soon see the light, they prepare for their daily activities. At “First Light” the chickens are eager to be out and about, to experience that light.

As below, so above. In studying Vitvan's teachings, we often talk of the Light – the Light's Regions at the top of the chart, the Light to which we turn, the Light which we seek to know. As students of the Wisdom, I'd like to think that each of us also anticipates the Light (as do the chickens), knowing that we will soon see the Light as we go about our daily activities – as we deepen our studies and practices. That is the First Light. Let's be eager to experience that Light.

“May the Blessed Ones lead us from darkness into Light.”

Lynne Hoffman

LIGHT IN THE WINDOW

We have recently returned from visiting our son in Maryland. It is a custom there (and in Pennsylvania as well) to burn single candles in the windows at night all year round, making the homes look warm and welcoming. I asked several local residents what the reasons were for the candles, since candles in other parts of the country are usually displayed only at the holidays. I got several responses linking them to Colonial times and the Revolutionary War, to the seafaring history of the area and also to the Underground Railroad. Whatever the original beginnings of the candles, their purpose was to let a traveler know that they were welcome and that there was refuge and shelter inside.



As I was thinking about this year's Home Farm holiday greeting and the theme of Light, I immediately thought of those candles in the windows. On the objective level, for weary travelers to see a candle burning in a window on a dark night must have been a wonderful sight. Warmth, safety and shelter probably awaited them inside.

The house itself has long been a symbol for nourishment, protection and security. It has also been used as a metaphor for the human persona, and an expression of the self or psyche. The exterior of the house represents how the person wants to appear to others. The doors, stairs, kitchen, closets, windows, etc., are seen as aspects of the "inner" self and are explored in psychotherapy via dream interpretation and guided imagery.

The light, or lack thereof, in the "human house" is also explored. A well-lit house often reflects a person's inner awareness and willingness for self-exploration. Dark rooms and cluttered, closed closets often represent a person's unconsciousness or unwillingness to deal with uncomfortable or painful issues.

On still another level, the more "spiritual" level, light represents the Higher Self, which provides "inner" strength, security, guidance and refuge. "Be a light unto yourself" is a well-known adage which reflects this idea. I have been working with this "light in the window" metaphor and applying it to my own "human house." Are there dark rooms I need to explore and closets that need cleaning out? Do I allow darkness to threaten my inner Light and sap my strength and security? Do I carefully choose who I let into "my house"? Do I associate with others whose lights shine brightly from their "windows"? Do I look to others for guidance and strength or do I trust my own inner Light to guide me? Have I strayed from "home" and can I find my way back? Will there be welcoming lights in the windows upon my return?

As Vitvan has said, "And when you turn to come back [home] there is a force that goes out and envelops you. We call it the protective force, the beam of light, the spark, the illumination that takes place. There is a spark, a force, an influence from that Higher Self that comes in, and we know we have returned home." (*Steps in Self Unfoldment*)

I believe that Vitvan's blessing, "May the Blessed ones lead us from darkness into Light," is particularly apt this year. My holiday wish for us all in the coming year is that lights shine brightly in all our "windows," guiding, nurturing and protecting us and that Light fills all our "homes."

Jane Murray



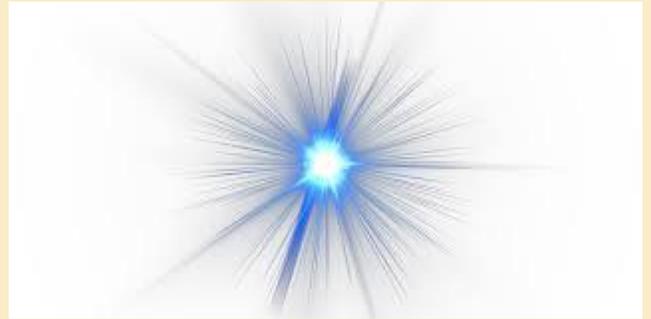
Flash

Where's this flash of 'Inner Light'?
Seems mostly hidden from my 'Sight'.
Poses so many 'rational' questions,
Why can't I get it 'right'?
knowing that it won't shine thru ego's might.
The 'Light' gets muddy when it's filtered
thru hatred, self-righteousness, or judgmental foolishness.
Maybe it shines best when just allowed in without prejudice?
In any case,
May the 'Light' shine on you, through you and in you.
Blessed Be and BFree



Lightening

Light was the theme given. What semantic bridges we can draw with that one! See the light. Be the light for others. Light the way. Light's regions. And helping lighten the load... by lightening up...



Humor and sociability are great teachers. Studying human interaction and how much better things go when humor smooths the way is the Humanities curriculum's subtlest part.

How else can one soften the discovery of one's own true self? Recognize one's mistakes... with a touch of irony if need be, but practice does make the next acknowledgment easier. See the comic side of our efforts, and discern that a genuine laugh is yet another entrance to knowledge and wisdom.

Recognize, discern, acknowledgement, awareness, and seeing are familiar words on the path to realization... and taken far too seriously in the seemingly endless books on the subject. Have we seen a channeler do anything but quote well-meaning paradigms and parables?

Finding humor and its uses within human relationships is a vital tool for an expanding consciousness. Accumulating knowledge without having infinite ways express it, to pass it on, seems too selfish, too narrow, hardly an undertaking for a person truly on the path.

Taking responsibility for one's thoughts, putting what has been learned in one's own voice does expose one to critique, but far more important is the ability to put one's intellectual self at risk, not merely seconding someone else's opinion.

What one learns on the journey as a whole human being connected to the universe is the important thing, not the protection of one's ego. However, humor will certainly diminish personal anxiety and offer a more hospitable ground for repartee than debate.

After all, interpretations vary with culture, education, and the language used to express a conception of natural order; what is true for one culture may not ring true for another even if the underlying truth is the same. How these things are expressed varies wildly, so sleep well, wake up clear, and try once again to do this life journey well. You alone are the judge.

So humor me!

Dan Hathaway

Vitvan's Birthday

Vitvan gave us a couple sentences in *The Natural Order Process, Volume 1* that seem to embody his entire work, yet he went on to elaborate upon this thought in the many lesson courses he gave during his lifetime of teaching, ever striving to give us more clues to growing into the deep understanding of Self-knowing.

From Light all emerges, and unto Light all returns. Or, from the nature of Self-knowing all eventuates, and unto the nature of Self-knowing all returns.

I don't suppose that there will be a "Google Doodle" for Vitvan's 130th birthday on December 25th, but as students who value the great body of literature and teachings that he gave us, we can celebrate his birthday in our hearts. Please consider expressing your appreciation in the form of a tax deductible donation of \$130 to mark Vitvan's 130th birthday. Of course, we are grateful for your kind donation in any amount.

Publishing Fund: This fund provides for the primary objectives of the School. Donations and income from the sale of books, tapes, and CDs go into the Publishing Fund to be used for printing books, lessons, and seminar binders, upgrading software and equipment for all our publishing, converting tapes to digital format, and maintaining the School's official website (<http://www.sno.org>).

Building and Maintenance Fund: Donations to the Building and Maintenance Fund along with staff rental fees provide for maintenance of the facilities at Home Farm. Past projects have included roofing, carpeting, furniture for the common buildings, and repairing sewer lines. Upcoming projects include re-doing the siding on the Meditation Center, upgrading some power lines, improving plumbing, upgrading the facilities for classes and seminars, providing furniture, mattresses and linens in the guest quarters for seminar attendees and other visitors. Other expenses supported by this fund are the vehicles necessary to maintain our roads, and insurance and utilities for the shared buildings, e.g., the Main House and the Centrum.

DONATIONS

I appreciate Vitvan's Teachings! Please apply my tax deductible donation of \$_____ to:

- The Publishing Fund
- The Building and Maintenance Fund
- A particular project or purchase (please specify) _____
- Wherever my donation is needed most.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Thank you for your valued support in this great work!

Please mail your donation to:

School of the Natural Order; PO Box 150; Baker NV 89311
