

When the Soul Awakens

A Bridging Book for an Awakening Humanity

by Nancy Seifer and Martin Vieweg

*When the Soul Awakens*¹ was written for seekers of truth at this turning point in human evolution—a time predicted by the Tibetan Master to be “the most difficult transitional period ... [the world] has ever seen.”² Though DK made this prediction many years ago, only now can we glimpse the full scale of difficulties to which he was alluding. And yet in spite the dangers facing us—and to a great extent because of them—this transition time between the ages has become an extraordinary spiritual opportunity.

Daily headlines bearing news of cataclysmic changes on our planet are forcing people to consider the possibility that our material reality, which once seemed unalterably fixed and permanent, may in fact be fluid and transitory. Intellectuals who once scoffed at anything spiritual, particularly the idea of a “new age,” are finding cause to think again. The deepening aura of uncertainty that marks our time seems to have created a new receptivity to the possibility that an old world era based on material reality is ending as a new era of spirituality is being born.

When the Soul Awakens was written for serious thinkers in this climate of increasing openness. It portrays the new age as a new stage in human consciousness, an outgrowth of the evolutionary processes of our planet. As a bridge to the ageless wisdom teachings, the book taps the “wisdom of the ages”—the legacy of illumined insight into the human soul left by knowers from the Buddha and Plato to Rumi and Ramakrishna, Emerson and Dostoyevsky. Sages and saints of the past are presented as forerunners to an awakening humanity, a growing corps of individuals on the verge of discovering their spiritual origin and destiny. The spiritual path is depicted as the universal “mechanism” by which a seeker of truth is transformed into an active member of the Kingdom of Souls, one who is able, in our time, to play a role in the Earth’s unfolding evolutionary Plan.

While the book draws from many streams of wisdom, its foundation stone is the ageless wisdom presented by the Tibetan Master. The initial aim in writing *When the Soul Awakens* was to “translate” esoteric teachings into language accessible to serious seekers of all backgrounds. The principal audience we had in mind was “the intelligentsia,” those individuals the Tibetan called “advanced humanity”—highly educated people who had long since abandoned the God of traditional religion and felt they knew all they had to know to lead lives of professional success and material comfort.

And then with the sudden turn of events since the start of this new millennium, life presented them with more questions than answers. Deeply impacted by the upheavals of this “most difficult transitional period,” many thinking people have begun to search for that which is true and real beyond the material realm. Propelled by the crises of our

times, members of “the intelligentsia” are becoming spiritual seekers. *When the Soul Awakens* was written as a stepping stone to the wisdom teachings for such individuals.

As the manuscript of the book came together, however, a second audience for the book emerged: people commonly labeled “new-agers.” In the past, stereotypical new-agers were sincerely attracted to the realm of spirituality, but without the commitment needed to tread the path of transformation. There was a tendency among them to pursue spirituality in a way that reinforced a comfortable lifestyle. Often financially well-off, such people have been targets for new-age marketers who sell the spiritual journey as a cruise to tropical isles that happens to feature lectures on spiritual subjects. But comments from many such individuals who have now read the book also indicate a genuine interest in the wisdom teachings. Like the disillusioned materialists mentioned above, they too need a stepping stone.

Finally, a third audience for *When the Soul Awakens* has appeared, one that we did not anticipate. We have found that the book is serving some long-time students of esoteric truth who may not have fully integrated the magnitude of the transformative process. Such individuals are often deeply familiar with the teachings from a mental perspective, knowing, for example, every link in the subtle chain of planetary and systemic life. But that knowledge does not always translate into a full embrace of the metamorphosis that turns a student of truth into a living link in this inner chain of life.

The interworkings of this chain of life were explained vividly in *The Externalization of the Hierarchy*. Written during and after World War II—a dynamic period that the Tibetan master held up to his disciples as a time of unusual spiritual opportunity—the book states that “a great and new movement is proceeding and a tremendously increased interplay and interaction is taking place” between Shamballa, Hierarchy and humanity.³ He describes this movement as involving “the process of substitution and replacement” that occurs as Chohans enter the Council Chamber of the Lord of the World and senior Masters replace them, initiates become Masters, disciples take initiation, and pledged disciples become accepted disciples.

A major goal of the Hierarchy at that time, the Tibetan wrote, was to involve disciples in this “interplay and interaction” in order to serve the unfolding Plan. DK declared that there was an *urgent* need for disciples to raise human consciousness in a way that would stave off the catastrophic consequences of another world war. To achieve that end, he identified three “recognitions” that needed to become rooted in human consciousness so deeply that they would “produce fundamental changes in human thought, awareness and direction.”⁴

The work of spreading these recognitions before the year 2025 (then three-quarters of a century into the future) was deemed so critical that it was said by the Tibetan to be “above everything else required at this time.” The year 2025 is the date of the next General Assembly of the Hierarchy, the meeting at which DK stated that “the date in all probability will be set for the first stage of the externalization of the Hierarchy.”⁵ The words “in all probability,” coupled with other statements made by DK elsewhere, indicate

that the date of the externalization is not carved in stone, but is contingent upon other developments that were supposed to be taking place during this current “Stage of the Forerunner.”

One of these developments was the change in consciousness summed up in “the three recognitions.” What humanity was to learn by the year 2025, in order for the externalization to proceed as the Hierarchy intended, was phrased by the Tibetan as follows:

... a recognition of the world of meaning, a recognition of Those Who implement world affairs and Who engineer those steps which lead mankind onward toward its destined goal, plus a steadily increased recognition of the Plan on the part of the masses. ⁶

Humanity—not just a handful of individuals but *masses* of individuals—would have to recognize these three things with a depth of understanding so profound that it would create fundamental change in their thinking and behavior.

In simple language, the Tibetan asserted the need for humanity to become aware of three facets of the invisible energies and forces governing evolution on Earth:

- (1) the inner world of causality that reveals itself to awakening souls;
- (2) the spiritual Hierarchy or Kingdom of Souls—the Elder Brothers who guide planetary evolution from the inner planes; and
- (3) the divine Plan of evolution, in which humanity is destined to play a major role.

In essence, the assignment given by DK to his disciples was to supplant the prevailing sense that humanity exists in a random, chaotic, lawless and godless universe with the awareness that divine laws and purposes are guiding the unfolding life of our planet toward a higher stage of consciousness.

Sadly, with only a short time remaining before 2025, this knowledge (this threefold recognition) is still not widespread. Until fairly recently, there has been an apparent unwillingness on the part of “advanced humanity,” generally speaking, to consider the possibility of the existence of a spiritual realm of life. In retrospect, it appears that the shock of events such as 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina, plus continual threats associated with terrorism and global warming, may have been necessary to shatter fixed perceptions of material reality. However, the climate of uncertainty produced by these crises—the cycle of testing in which we’re now living—has produced the great spiritual opportunity of our times.

Experience has shown that uncertain minds tend to become open minds. With more fertile ground for spreading spiritual truth, there is a critical need for disciples with esoteric training to plant the seeds. In the chain of life outlined by the Tibetan, disciples with esoteric knowledge are the only ones who can bridge the gap in knowledge between the Hierarchy and advanced humanity, those who have traditionally disseminated new

ideas to humanity as a whole. Despite the delay, there is still time to respond to the need that the Tibetan called “urgent” many years ago. Increasingly, as we move closer to the year 2025, disillusioned materialists are awakening and searching for truth.

In approaching this bridging work, we have found that recent advances in spiritual awareness have made the challenge far easier than it used to be. The concept of reincarnation, for example, has now taken root among people in the mainstream who dismissed it not long ago. From the idea that we have lived before, it is not such a great leap for thinking people to consider the idea that there is a *purpose* for continuous incarnations.

Since it is the soul—the spiritual Self—that reincarnates, there begins to be a certain logic to the premise that purpose of reincarnation is spiritual growth. By further logical extension, it becomes conceivable that upward spiral of spiritual growth eventuates in “membership” in a spiritual kingdom—a kingdom of Souls whose members have preceded us in the process of spiritual evolution and who serve to guide those who follow them.

In the same vein, it is not so far-fetched for people with minds that are opening to consider a related truth: that the way into the next kingdom in nature is what we call *the spiritual path*—the universal path of spiritual evolution at the esoteric heart of all world religions. This inner Path, the glue that binds together seekers of all spiritual and religious traditions, is what leads the awakening soul into the crucible of reorientation, purification, and illumination—the transformative processes that turn a human being into a spiritual being and that culminate in union with the Divine.

In the introduction to *When the Soul Awakens* we address the dangers of these times as well as the central opportunity that has emerged, one that represents a great source of hope and optimism:

The opportunity now facing us is a spiritual one, involving a shift to a higher dimension of awareness. With the daily shattering of illusions about the material world, growing numbers of people around the globe have felt impelled to search for spiritual truth.

For students of esoteric wisdom who read this article, the opportunity has even greater significance. As the year 2025 draws closer—with the Hierarchy’s decision about the externalization process looming large on the horizon—we have the chance to bring spiritual truth to an expanding audience of serious seekers. The Tibetan called us to this work many years ago and suggested the method of achieving it:

[T]he truth must be stepped down and adapted in such a way that the advanced minds, the enquiring minds, and the...masses may have opportunity proffered them, to the measure of their receptivity. Did not the greatest of all the Great Ones do this Himself in the synagogue and with His disciples in Judean days? ⁷

¹ The subtitle of this book is: “*The Path to Spiritual Evolution and a New World Era*”

² Bailey, Alice A., *Education in the New Age*, 99

³ Bailey, Alice A., *The Externalization of the Hierarchy*, 531

⁴ Bailey, Alice A., *Discipleship in the New Age*, vol. II, 164

⁵ Bailey, Alice A., *The Externalization of the Hierarchy*, 531

⁶ Bailey, Alice A., *Discipleship in the New Age*, vol. II, 164

⁷ Bailey, Alice A., *The Externalization of the Hierarchy*, 503

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www.whentheshoulawakens.org

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