

The Path to Enlightenment Changes with the Times



“The path leading to cognition of the supersensible worlds is one which all men [and women] may travel, whatever their position under the present conditions of life may be. And in speaking of such a path it must be borne in mind that, while the goal of cognition and truth is the same at all times of the earth’s development, yet the starting point for Man has varied considerably at different periods. For instance, the man of the present day who wishes to find the way into supersensible worlds, cannot start from the same point as the Egyptian candidate for initiation of old. This is why it is

impossible for modern humanity to apply, without modification, the exercises given to the candidate for initiation in Ancient Egypt. ... The capacities and qualities of souls change. Those who have studied human history only superficially can note that since the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, all life conditions have changed and that opinions, feelings, and even human capacities have become different from what they were before that time. The path for the acquirement of higher knowledge must be one which is suitable for souls in the present.

“From epoch to epoch, progressive evolution leads humanity, in respect to the path of higher cognition, to ever-changing modes , just as outer life likewise changes its form. For at all times, it is necessary that perfect harmony should reign between external life and initiation.”

–[Rudolf Steiner](#)

Supersensible Worlds

What Mr. Steiner calls “Supersensible Worlds” are today known as spiritual worlds or spiritual dimensions. What name we use isn’t important, but Steiner’s term tells us something about what these worlds are. As Supersensible worlds, they are above the sensible, or material world, in terms of frequency, level of consciousness, and evolution.

Present Conditions

The present conditions of life are indeed different than what they were in Ancient Egypt during its spiritual golden age and even different from what it was during the Greek golden age of spiritual development. In one sense, things have gotten worse because people today are much more materialistic than in those ancient periods. On the other hand, we now have the Sun of Righteousness shining down on us, and that makes spiritual development easier. In any case, many things have changed and

that is why the methods of spiritual development must change with the times. While they may remain the same in a general sense, the details change. Today, the idea of having to live in a monastic community to engage in spiritual development appeals to few people, so that has changed. You can now be part of a spiritual community and still have a normal life with a home, a job, a spouse, etc.

Progressive Evolution

While Steiner may be correct in a physical sense, man has actually not been evolving spiritually, but devolving over the centuries. Fortunately, that is finally changing due to the arrival of the Sun of Righteousness in the End Times of the present age, which marks the beginning of a new age of spiritual growth. We don't know how long it will take, but man will evolve into a pure spiritual being, and death, disease, and other problems of having a physical body will be over. We will no longer have to kill and eat other physical beings to survive but will need only God's Light to nourish and sustain us.