

This book has echoes of the Magnificat – "What marvels the Lord has done for me!" Read it.

- "The author's independent discovery of 'harnessing the wind' has become his **vision of hope** in the world in that 'it is always possible to transform destructive negative energy into creative positive energy'. Today, it is his personal spirituality."

- Fr William Heng, CSSR

- "I enjoy reading this book very much. It is a record of a spiritual odyssey, as real and living as what St. Augustine described in his Confessions, as sharp and compelling as what Blaise Pascal wrote in his Testimony. I think that anyone who reads it with heart as well as mind will be moved closer on the personal pilgrimaging journey into God!"

- Fr Robert McCulloch, Columban Fathers

A map of least-explored territories,
this book is your guide into
the mystic world of
unknowing,
and then beyond ...
into the spiritual realm of
GOD!

DUSK TO DAWN



J. P. LEE, BDS

Dusk
to
Dawn

A touching narrative
which takes you on a journey
that never ends!

An intriguing journey,
uniquely presented
and intimately related.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

by

Fr. William Heng, CSsR

- *A husband/father/dental surgeon/friend* – a Colombo Plan scholar, John graduated from the University of Singapore in 1973, married his classmate, went home to Kuching in the East Malaysian State of Sarawak, paid his scholarship bond, left for Singapore in 1974, went into private dental practice in 1975, is blessed with two sons – the first in 1976, and the other when he became a Singapore citizen in 1985, and today, together with his wife, is still practising full-time dentistry.
- His search for meaning in life led to an awakening of his hidden self in 1988, an experience which is commonly referred to as a *“spiritual emergence”*. It was also his personal encounter with God, following which came a series of inner transformations which gradually changed his life.
- By heeding an inner calling to trust his instinct, and by following his inner longing to get in touch with nature, he has developed a remarkable gift: the ability to take the outside into himself, discovering, therefore, what is true in and about himself. With an increased sensitivity to the surroundings, to people and to himself, he has, in this modern era, become a *man of prayer* which nurtures his gift of intuitive insight and foresight into the lives of people, often prompting him to share himself freely and effectively.
- Using his knowledge of science, medicine, dentistry and the scriptures, his understanding of psychiatry, psychology, philosophy, medical and dental hypnosis, and his subsequent training in inner processes, self-awareness exercises, dream works, breath-work and spiritual exercises, he has become a *man with a dream*, sharing his **vision of hope** with people suffering from fear, despair, desolation or some unresolved issues.
- His openness and honesty in his sharing, although often making him vulnerable, give meaning and purpose to others. It is his

ability to trigger off such hidden issues that makes him a prolific writer. Writing regularly for the quarterly magazine of the Ignatian Spirituality Centre, Singapore (the “Magis”), and as a Roman Catholic, he works closely with his fellow parishioners, priests, nuns and brothers. Still finding time after work, he helps conduct private retreats and workshops, journeys with prayer-pilgrims as a prayer-guide for both, laity and religious, christian or non-christian, and today, he is **a man with a mission**.

- John believes in and he advocates moderation and unity in all things, in that everything must eventually come to a stable point of harmony – **a core which is God!**
- Today, John is ready to share himself, his dream, his vision, his works and his God, not only with his fellow Singaporeans, but also with his fellow human beings throughout the world.

DUSK to DAWN

by

J. P. Lee, BDS

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DEDICATION

This book is dedicated

to people who have experienced God in their lives,
and to those who have forgotten about these experiences,

to others who are searching for God,
and to those who are on the verge of giving up,

to the many who do not even know that God exists,
but will eventually find God if they persevere humbly.

IN APPRECIATION

I would like to thank all the people involved in the writing of this book, with special appreciation to those for proof-reading my manuscript, for their prayers, encouragement and support, for offering suggestions and recommendations for improvement, for contributing ideas, for rendering assistance, for connecting me to the right people at the right time, and for making time and effort to help produce this book. My special gratitude to my wife and my two sons for their sacrifice and their understanding.

To all those whose names I do not know, those who do not even know me, but have helped me in various ways on the request of my friends, to all the above, and to God: THANK YOU!

Towards praise, honour and service to God, and for the greater glory of God.

J P Lee

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FOREWORD

I have journeyed with John, the author of this book, over the past eight years. Since his conversion experience he has faithfully persevered in his inner journey. His quest towards the truth about himself, his relationship with God and his relationship with others has been most edifying for me.

Undaunted by his painful discovery of self, owning his past and reconciling with his unresolved issues, he ventured towards God for healing and wholeness. He began with an eight-day Ignatian Spiritual Exercises followed by a thirty-day silent spiritual exercises two years later. His pilgrimage towards his own inner sanctuary was his constant daily prayer as a result of his 30 days at St Beuno's in Wales. His perseverance has led him to this point and time where he can share with you the "MAP" of his journey seeking for truth, seeking for God.

I admire John for sharing his struggles, his limitations and his weaknesses to candidly and accurately. In some sections, he shows a courageous and rigorous honesty about himself and his failings without any trace of self-sympathy.

His writings contain some excellent materials and valuable insights on the inner journey, especially his integration of Jungian analysis into the spiritual journey and his conclusions about the nature of God, a God who is larger than the Church, a God at work in all religions, in all people, a God whom we can only find by "letting go of God".

This book, with his testimony and his understanding of the scripture, is seen by him as a sojourner, a pilgrim like any other blessed by God and graced by his love. I believe that his sharing is his gift to us especially to those searching for a way and those who are affected by his book. It has been a great privilege for me to be his companion. Often his dedication and commitment to his truth has inspired me and strengthened me in my own pilgrimage.

I thank God for gifting me with the person of John and I thank John for the gift of himself and his book. Glory and praise to God forever.

Fr William Heng, CSsR

ABOUT THIS BOOK

This book is about the “sunset and sunrise” of my life. It is about perseverance in the midst of conflict and struggle while searching for true meaning in life. Who am I? Why am I here? These were questions that kept popping up whenever I experienced helplessness, fear, confusion or turmoil.

What happens after I die? Is there life after death? I used to think that I was the only one who felt that way and so somehow these questions were very important to me. I tried looking for answers on the outside, searching, seeking and even scheming but I never found them. I persevered to this end until I discovered that the answers were inside me all along. It was a spiritual emergence, an awakening by the power of the Divine who showed me that the kingdom of God is within me. It was such an overwhelming experience that it changed my life completely.

This book talks about this miracle of change and the transformation that followed thereafter through faith and hope in God in the ordinary daily experiences of my life. It describes my struggle as I learned to cope with personal issues such as childhood traumas and unfulfilled longings. It speaks about the reality of my humanity, my fallacy and my inner conflict and how I learned to deal with them when I realised and acknowledged them in me.

In some sections, I elaborate intently on my personal spiritual encounters and the journey I subsequently undertook along the path that was set out before me to discover the truth about myself, about God, and about the evil one who made unceasing attempts to come between me and God.

The first chapter deals with an era of “first-experiences”. So I call it “The First Epoch”, very much like the beginning of the biblical creation. In many ways it is my own inner “genesis”, going back from my human existence through birth to my spiritual origin through creation, telling me very clearly that there is a mission for me and there is a reason to be.

These experiences led me to explore further avenues to deepen my spirituality and soon, I went on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, tracing

the path that Jesus trod two thousand years ago, then to Medjugorje and later to Lourdes and Taize. Then I was led to and I became interested in the psychology of Carl Jung, Sigmund Freud and others. For two years I went through exercises and processes that helped me to enter more deeply into my unconscious to discover, for myself, my inner truth, separating my true self from my false selves, distinguishing between my spirit and my soul.

This development of self-awareness gave me courage and confidence to retrace the patterning in my life through many such inner processes, and then to explore the reality of the great unknown which Jung called “the collective unconscious”. Then, at the opportune time of God – the *kairos*, God revealed himself to me in such a way that I might know him intimately and have a personal relationship with him.

In my pursuit for truth about God, about his reason in initiating my spiritual emergence and his purpose for me, I attended first a short silent retreat at the Ignatian Spirituality Centre in Singapore. I “graduated” from there by doing the 30-day silent Ignatian Spiritual Exercises at St Beuno’s in Wales to deepen my silent contemplative prayer. Through a study and understanding of the basic principle of the Ignatian Spirituality on “finding God in all things” (which will be further elaborated later in the book), I received a personal affirmation that I was on the right track. I was then able to put to rest many doubts and hesitancy, freeing myself, therefore, from the pressure that arose from the criticism, rejection and persecution that I had received at home. From then on, there was no turning back for me.

My travels led me to the desert experience in the Middle East, to places such as Amman and Petra in Jordan. More recently, I explored and visited monasteries up the high mountains of Chiangmai (Thailand) and Koyasan (Japan) to savour the sweetness of silence and surrender to the softness of solitude, searching to uncover this mysterious calling and to discover, for myself, the mission in my life.

Today, in Lent of 1995, I have finally embarked on this mission by gathering excerpts from the writings I have recorded and accumulated over a seven-year period. The number “seven” bears great significance

for me. It seems such a perfect number, symbolising many authentic revelations. Therefore it is no coincidence that this book covers seven chapters from “The First Epoch” right through to “The Seventh Epoch” although the sequence of events is not necessarily in that order. These have been carefully selected, compiled and arranged so as to present all that which had truly happened.

By God’s grace, I am now able to acknowledge that my struggle, my suffering and my sin are simply the sunset of my life in my life, revealing to me the truth about myself and awakening me to spiritual consciousness so that when I awake, I shall rise in the Dawn of God to experience his compassion, to witness his greatness and to share in his glory!

May the grace of God be with you always.

PROLOGUE

*“Before the world was, I AM;
before you were, I AM.
I breathed into you
the breath of life,
and you became a living soul.”*

Recently, while I was getting this book ready for publication, I had the strangest feeling that something was missing! I set about trying to figure out what that was, but to no avail. Then one day, as I was fetching my 10-year old son home from school, preoccupied with this “missing link” in my book, he suddenly asked me, rather excitedly: Daddy, do you know why babies cry when they are born?”

I was very tempted to tell him the scientific postulations or the medical assumptions I knew, but somehow, my instinct told me he “knew” the answer. So I said: “I don’t really know, David. Do you?”

“Yes, daddy. They cry because they miss God! They leave God, and they meet their father and mother on earth, and then they live on earth, and they forget about God. We are happy again when we die because we go back to God. Daddy, I am not afraid to die anymore!”

That was the inspiration I needed! Having shared myself and my life in such great detail in my book, I felt I had failed to stimulate sufficiently an interest in the truth about my origin.

I was still contemplating on this matter when I overheard my wife saying something to our two boys, as if to confirm my decision. Out of the blue, she said: “Children, do you know that you do not really belong to me? You are only on loan to me from God! When God calls you, I have to let you go. We are all on loan here. God will take us back when the time comes – yes, all of us, including daddy and mummy!”

That was the day I decided to add a “*Prologue*” to my book, to bring people such as you back to the “Womb of God” before arriving at where you are now! Consequently, I also added an “*Epilogue*” in response to “Where do I go from here?” Therefore I would recommend that you read this book with the creative imagination of an innocent child, stretching your mind a little beyond its normal limit. For instance, try creating a scenario for the following presentation:

“Once upon a time before the world was, a long time ago, before even time existed, there was a true eternal living being, omnipresent, all-powerful, and infinitely wise – a sovereignty called ‘GOD’.

And God created the heavens and the earth, the seas and the sky, with the horizon to announce impending dusk and approaching dawn. God created the dry lands and the marshes, the minerals and gases, the plants and animals.

Then one day, God decided to make images of the very being of God, and God called these “human beings”. So out of the earth, God fashioned human beings in the image of God so that they might have a share in God’s life of eternity. But the human being was only of the dust from the earth. It could not last!

Therefore God gave the human being qualities of an eternal being, alive like God, by breathing God’s own Breath into it. God called this Breath ‘spirit’, a free spirit with a free will, and thus the human being became a living being.

Thus the Breath of God became the personal spirit of every human being, each breath representing one aspect of God, an aspect unique to the human being. It was an aspect of God, which the human being could identify with and for the human-self. This personal spirit was a branch of the Parent Vine that IS GOD. It could bear the same good fruits as the True Vine that IS GOD. So God gave a name for this personal spirit.

And God gave the human being a mind so that the human being could be conscious of his spirit. If the human being should become unconscious of it, the spirit would awaken it to consciousness through a spiritual awakening.

One day, God created, in the image of God, among many others, a persevering spirit. Exhaled out of the Breath of God, his spiritual origin was thus by creation, and expelled from the womb of a human mother, his human existence was by birth. This spirit was given the name ‘Perseverance’ and was embodied in a human being named ‘John’.

And God said to Perseverance: *‘Go into the world, spirit into flesh, that you may live and experience life as a human being. Persevere with my strength in you. Be united in spirit, mind and body so that you may live your life to the full even while you are on the earth. Do not be afraid, for I shall effect and complete your incarnation – I will give you a companion: your soul. This is the spouse of your spirit, the bridge between the flesh of you and the spirit in you. At the opportune time, I will call you, and you will respond to my call in accordance to my will!’*

Thus the spirit departed from his home in the spiritual realm to enter the domain of the physical world, dwelling in a human body to experience the fullness of his humanity through human senses, thoughts, feelings and emotions, struggling, at the same time, towards God as a spiritual being, in his unspiritual body, learning to live as a human being in the fullness of his spirit. In communion with the saints and angels of God, he strove to seek the truth about God, persevering to manifest the fullness of God through the unification of all human beings, to restore God’s Kingdom of ever-loving joy and everlasting PEACE!”

The story of *Perseverance*, presented in a narrative style, opens in the 80’s of the twentieth century AD, almost forty years after the birth of

John, his human counterpart, symbolising forty years of exile in the harsh blistering wilderness called “Earth”.

In my book, the distinction between the physical, the ego and the spiritual is often not clearly defined, such as the use of the first person “I”. This is intentional So do not be puzzled. To encourage you to become more involved in the inner spiritual journey, I have deliberately created some mystery between us. A little imagination on your part is often sufficient to unravel whatever mystery that may evolve.

As such, this book must be read with openness and with active imagination. It is not advisable, therefore, to take everything written in this book literally, especially when relating it to your own experiences. To have a greater sense of personal value, you must draw your own conclusions, based on your own experiences, because spiritual experiences are personal experiences. Only you can know the exact depth and the truth of your own spirit. No one else can interpret that for you. In the same way no one can know the Spirit of God except God, unless God so chooses to share it. When we share ourselves freely, it is our gift to others. When God shares the Spirit freely with us, it is God’s grace for us. Grace, therefore, is having a share in God’s own life.

Therefore it would be quite impossible to explain an actual spiritual encounter or to decipher a spiritual revelation in words because it is simply not in our vocabulary. It is like attempting to explain colours to a blind person or to describe “Beethoven” to a deaf person. God speaks to us through people everywhere, through very ordinary things in a very simple way – for example, from watching a movie, listening to some music, reading a book, praying the bible, depicting a dream or simply beholding beauty in nature. It is not speech or sight as we understand it. It is, therefore, nothing complex or intricate. All that is required is openness and generosity of self to God so that God’s life may be deepened in you. As such, you will see it when you believe it!

I wish you happy reading.

May God grant you the grace to find whatever it is you hope to find in reading this book.