

Abbey A monastery headed by an abbot or a convent of nuns headed by an abbess; a church or building belonging to an abbey; cloister. An abbot is a man who is head of an abbey of monks and an abbess is a woman who is head of an abbey of nuns.

Ablution Ceremonial washing of the body, whether a literal washing of uncleanness before participating in a ritual or representing a spiritual purification. Ablution also includes washing of ceremonial objects, such as vessels.

Absolute Consummate qualities of God: perfect, complete, whole, real, definite, eternal (as compared to the relative nature or subjective character of mankind). Absolutism in philosophy is doctrine involving the existence of an absolute -- something existing in and by itself, or focus on the one over the many (monism, oneness, ultimate reality is one). In theology it is predestination.

Absolution Forgiveness and remission of sins; final phase of the sacrament of penance within the Roman Catholic Church by which a priest pardons post-baptismal sins, thereby making reconciliation between the sinner, the Church, and God (John 20:21-23).

Abyss Luke 8:30, Revelation 9:1-11, 11:7, 17:8, 20:1-3

Acrostic Poetical arrangement in which certain letters taken from each line spell out a word when put in order. Various Old Testament writings are acrostic, such as Psalms 9, 10, 25, 34, 37, 111, 112, 119, 145, and Lamentations, in which the first letters of each original verse make up the Hebrew alphabet.

Actual Sin Sin committed by an individual of their own free will, as opposed to the original sin of Adam and Eve that led to the fall of mankind.

A.D. Latin, *Anno Domini*, "In the year of the Lord." In the given year since the beginning of the Christian era. *Anno Mundi* is "in the year of the world," or in the given year since the supposed creation of the world.

Adonai Hebrew, *my Lord*. Used as a substitute for the ineffable or unspeakable name of God (YHWH or JHVH).

Advent Birth of Christ. In Catholicism, the beginning of the ecclesiastical year, including the four Sundays before Christmas, with the first Sunday being Advent Sunday.

Adventism Belief that the Second Coming of Christ and the Last Judgment will soon occur, whereby Christ will bring an end to the world order and establish his own earthly kingdom for a thousand years (Revelation 20:1-6). This includes the Rapture, or first resurrection of the dead, when those who died for Christ are raised from the dead and rule with him (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). It also generally includes seven years of devastation upon the earth as has never before been experienced (Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 21). Postmillennialists believe that Christians will live through the seven years of devastation and that the kingdom of God will be established on earth by his people, ushering in the second coming of Christ after a thousand years. Premillennialists believe that Christians will be raptured before the seven years of devastation, that there is no hope for human reform without Christ, and await his return to establish this thousand-year kingdom himself. Adventist churches are centered in teaching around this subject and include the Seventh Day Adventists.

Aesir The primary gods of Norse Mythology, including Odin, Thor, Balder, Loki, Freya, and Tyr.

Aetherius Society UFO cult founded in 1954 by Dr. George King, encouraging members to be extraterrestrial channels.

Affusion Pouring on of water in baptism.

Afterlife Life after death.

Agape Primarily, God's divine love. Also, love feast -- a meal shared by early Christians.

Aggeus Douay Bible name for the prophet Haggai.

Agnostic Someone who believes that God is unknowable, or believes that it cannot be determined that God or anything exists beyond physical and material reality (coined by Thomas Huxley in 1870). Agnosticism is this kind of belief system.

Agnus Dei Latin, *Lamb of God*.

Agora Israeli coin equal to 1/100 of a shekel.

Agrapha Sayings ascribed to Jesus but not found in the Gospels.

A.H. Latin, *Anno Hegirae*, "In the year of the Hegira."

Alb Long, white linen robe worn by a Catholic priest at Mass.

Albigenses Heretical religious sect in the south of France, circa A.D. 1020 - 1250.

Aliyah Modern Hebrew, "ascent" -- immigration of Jews to Israel.

Allah Arabic, "the God" (*al*, the + *ilah*, god), Muslim name for the Supreme Being (possibly akin to the Hebrew *eloah*). Arabian polytheistic beliefs recognized Allah as a Creator and Supreme Provider before the emergence of Islam. Hanifs, the Middle Eastern ascetic religious sect which influenced Muhammed, worshiped Allah as the one and only God. Muhammed preached strict adherence and unconditional obedience to Allah.

Alleluia Latin form of the Hebrew *hallelujah*, "Praise the Lord!"

All Saints' Day (Allhallows or Allhallomas) Annual festival celebrated by Roman Catholics on the first of November commemorating all Catholic saints (first Sunday after Pentecost for Greek Catholics).

All Souls' Day November 2, Roman Catholic day of services, prayer, and supplication for the souls in Purgatory.

Alms Term used in the *King James Version*, traditionally gifts to the poor, such as money, food or clothing.

Almuce (Amice) Oblong, white linen cloth worn around the neck and shoulders of a Catholic priest during Mass.

Almugwood (Algum) Wood from Ophir (possibly sandalwood), mentioned in 1 Kings 10:11-12, given by the Queen of Sheba to King Solomon and used for the supports for the temple of the LORD and the royal palace. Also, Hebrew *algum*, a tree mentioned in 2 Chronicles 2:8 from Lebanon.

Alpha and Omega First and last letters of the Greek alphabet, used by God to describe himself as "the First and the Last; the Beginning and the End; who was, and is, and is to come" (Revelation 1:8, 21:6, 22:13).

Altar Part of the temple where sacrifices are made to God.

Altarpiece

Ambiguous Having more than one possible meaning, vague, or obscure. Not necessarily a Christian term.

Ambo Pulpit or reading stand.

A.M.D.G. Latin, *ad majorem Dei gloriam*, "To the greater glory of God" (Jesuit motto).

A.M.E. African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Amen Hebrew, *truly or certainly*, "may it be so," often said at the end of prayer as a form of approval. (Some Protestant churches have an amen corner where people lead the responsive amens to the sermon.)

Amethyst A purple or violet variety of quartz or corundum, one of the precious stones used in the breastpiece for making decisions (Exodus 28:19, 39:12) and one of the stones used to decorate the foundation of the golden city of Jerusalem described in the Book of Revelation (21:20).

Amfortas Parsifal, leader of the knights of the Holy Grail (Medieval legend).

Amish Mennonites of a strict sect founded in the seventeenth century by Jacob Ammann.

Amor (Amour) Latin, "love" -- sexual or illicit desire.

Amorite Descendent of Canaan, son of Ham, son of Noah -- after the flood (Genesis 10:15).

Ampula A round bottle used for holy oil or consecrated wine.

Amulet Piece of jewelry or a charm believed to possess magic power and worn to protect against injury or evil. (Not necessarily a Christian term.)

Anabaptist Member of a Protestant sect originating in Switzerland from the sixteenth century Reformation which denied the validity of infant baptism and instead practiced baptism of consenting adults.

Anagogy (Anagoge) Mystical interpretation of scripture intended to reveal a hidden, spiritual meaning.

Ananda Marga Yoga Society Hindu cult founded by Shrii Shrii Anandamurti (A.K.A. Prabhat Ranjan Sarkav), in pursuit of Ananda Marga (joy), and employing yogic principles, mantric meditation, dancing, and chanting in harmony with the cosmic father.

Anathema Someone devoted to evil or something dedicated to evil; accursed or damned; formal condemnation.

Ancient of Days God the Judge (Daniel 7:13).

Angel Messenger of God.

Angelology Theological study of angels.

Angelus Prayer in commemoration of the Incarnation.

Anglican Church of England -- Anglia is an ancient form of England, the people of which were Angles. The Anglican Communion is comprised of churches of Anglican descent. Anglo is a combining word meaning English, such as in Anglo-Saxon or Anglo-Catholic.

Anima Soul. Animism is belief in spiritual forces or that all physical creatures have a soul; doctrine that all life is produced from a spiritual force separate from matter.

Ankh (Ansaté Cross) Ancient Egyptian symbol of life, a cross with a loop at the top.

Annulment Invalidation of a marriage by the Roman Catholic Church.

Annunciation Announcement of the angel Gabriel to the virgin Mary that she would give birth to Jesus (Luke 1:26-38).

Anoint To consecrate with oil or rub oil on someone in a ceremony of healing.

Antependium A screen hanging from the front of an altar or pulpit.

Ankh Ancient Egyptian symbol of life, a cross with a loop at the top.

Anthropocentric (Anthropogenesis) Belief in man as the center of the universe; conceiving of everything in the universe in terms of human values.

Anthropology The study of man -- culture, customs, social relationships, physical characteristics, institutions, myths, religions, etc.

Anthropomorphism Attributing human shape or characteristics to other bodies or entities, such as animals, objects, or a god. Anthropopathy is attributing human feelings and passion to something else, such as to animals or a god.

Anthroposophical Society An occultic organization based on a philosophy called Anthroposophy ("wisdom of man") founded by Rudolph Steiner in Germany around the turn of

the twentieth century. It incorporates mystical traditions, Hindu practices, reincarnation, mythology, communication with the dead, spiritualism, and Christian beliefs. The basic theory is that man and earth are embarked on an evolutionary journey overseen by supersensible spirit beings.

Antichrist A false Christ who is in opposition to Christ (1 John 2:18).

Anticlerical Opposition to the clergy or church hierarchy, especially against its influence in public affairs.

Antinomianism Doctrine that faith alone and not obedience to the moral law is necessary for salvation.

Antiphon A hymn, song, chant, or canticle sung in responsive, alternating parts.

Antipope A pope set up against the one chosen by the Catholic Church, as in a schism.

Anti-Semitic Prejudice, discrimination, or persecution of Jews.

Apocalypse The ultimate destruction of evil and triumph of good; Book of Revelation.

Apocrypha Fourteen books of the Septuagint rejected by Judaism, eleven of which are Roman Catholic canon; any such scriptural writing that is of doubtful authenticity or authorship.

Apollyon "Destroyer" (Hebrew *Abaddon*), the angel of the Abyss who was king of the destructive locusts in Revelation 9:1-11.

Apologetic Formal defense written of a belief or religion; defending in writing or speech, vindicating.

Apologue Short allegorical story with a moral.

Apostasy Abandoning of a faith or belief.

Apostle Any of the twelve disciples originally chosen by Christ to spread the gospel, including Andrew, Bartholomew, James (the younger, son of Alphaeus), James (the elder, son of Zebedee), John (brother of James, son of Zebedee), Jude (Lebbaeus or Thaddaeus), Judas Iscariot, Matthew (Levi), Philip, Simon (Peter), Simon the Canaanite, and Thomas (Didymus). Matthias was chosen to replace Judas after his death. Saul of Tarsis (Paul) was chosen by Christ to be the "Apostle to the Gentiles."

Apostles' Creed "I believe in God, the Father Almighty..."

Apostolic Succession Roman Catholic belief in which the authority that Jesus conferred upon Peter and the other Apostles have been passed down through an unbroken succession of bishops.

Apotheosis Deification; raising someone to the status of godhood; glorification of a person, thing, or ideal.

Aquinas, Thomas 1225-74, theologian the philosopher.

Aram Ancient Syria.

Aramaic The Semitic language spoken in the Palestinian region after Israel's Babylonian captivity, also spoken by Jesus and his disciples.

Ararat 17,000 foot mountain in Turkey near the border of Armenia and Iran where Noah's ark supposedly landed (Genesis 8:4).

Anti-Semetic Prejudice, discrimination, or persecution of Jews.

Archaeology Scientific study of the life and culture of ancient peoples, often by the excavation of cities and the discovery of relics and artifacts.

Archangel Chief angel or angel of high rank, such as Michael.

Archbishop Chief overseer, bishop of highest rank who oversees a church district (archdiocese).

Archdeacon Church official ranking just below a bishop.

Archpriest Chief priest.

ARE Association for Research and Enlightenment, founded in 1932 in Virginia Beach, Virginia, to research and preserve the antidotal readings of Edgar Cayce, best known as a psychic healer. The ARE exists to index and catalog Cayce's thousands of readings intended to cure or explain physical and mental illnesses. There are about 400 physicians associated with ARE. (See Cayce, Edgar)

Arianism Doctrines of Arius (A.D. 256-336), an Alexandrian theologian who taught that Jesus was not of the same substance of God, but a created being exalted above all other creatures.

Arica Institute, Inc. Founded by Bolivian philosophy teacher and mystic Oscar Ichazo and based in Arica, Chile, in South America. Arica ("open door") teaches scientific mysticism and espouses such ideals as unity with emptiness, with the intent of uncovering "the mystical name of the radiant being" (Toham Kum Rah) inside each person. It combines the philosophies of Hinduism, Zen, and Tibetan Lamaism with African dances, Egyptian gymnastics, Hindu mantras, incantations, and breathing techniques to develop a series of exercises called psychocalisthenics designed to awaken vital energy.

Ariel Hebrew *Lion of God*, name applied to David's city, Jerusalem, in Isaiah 29:1-10.

Aristotelian Logic Method of deductive logic characterized by the syllogism, developed by Greek philosopher Aristotle (384-322 B.C.), a pupil of Plato noted for his works on logic, metaphysics, ethics, and politics.

Ark of the Covenant Chest containing the two stone tablets with the ten commandments inscribed by God and given to Moses (Exodus 25:10), kept in the holiest part of the Jewish Tabernacle (Holies of Holies).

Armageddon Greek *Harmagedon*, Hebrew *har meghiddo*, the plain of Megiddo, where the last decisive battle is to be fought between the forces of good and evil before the Day of Judgement

(Revelation 16:16). Revelation chapter 16 describes three unclean spirits of demons that come from the mouth of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet which perform miraculous signs and go out to gather the kings of the whole world for battle on the great day of God Almighty.

Arminianism Doctrines of Jacobus Arminius, Dutch theologian (1560-1609), which stressed man's freewill as opposed to Calvinistic predestination.

A.R.V. American Revised Version Bible, printed in 1901.

Aryan Traditionally the hypothetical parent language of the Indo-European family or a descendant of the prehistoric peoples who spoke this language -- adapted by German Nazis to mean a Caucasian of non-Jewish descent, particularly of Nordic origin.

Asatru Free Assembly Founded by Steve McNallen in Breckenridge, Texas, in 1971. An organization based on Scandinavian mythology, which promotes Norse neopaganism, Viking ceremonies, celebrations of the forces of nature, and the worship of Norse gods and goddesses (also called Odinism). Asatru (Old Norse, "belief in the gods") publishes a newspaper called *Runestone*. Symbols include ancient Norse amulets and objects of war, such as helmets, swords, animal horns, shields, axes, swastikas, and runes.

Asbury, Francis 1745-1816, first Methodist bishop in the U.S.

Ascended Masters Ideology founded by G. W. Ballard (pen name Godfre Ray King) around 1930, in which spiritual beings are rising up as ascended masters amidst mankind in these end times, signifying the Second Coming. A theology based on Eastern mysticism and metaphysics, with belief in astral projection, trance channeling, reincarnation, gnosticism, and Pelagianism. It teaches that God is a father-mother deity defined as a creative force that has negative and positive polarity. Its primary symbol is a winged flame with seven multi-colored rays and the initials "I AM" (arranged AIM, with the I in the center and twice as tall).

Ascension Bodily ascent of Jesus into heaven forty days after the resurrection (Acts 1:9). Ascension Day is the celebration commemorating this on the fortieth day after Easter.

Ascetic One who leads a life of contemplation, meditation, abstinence, and rigorous self-denial for religious purposes. Asceticism is basically the doctrine that one may attain a higher spiritual state through such self disciplines.

Asher The eighth tribe of Israel descended from the eighth son of Jacob.

Ashkenazim German Jews who settled in middle to northern Europe after the Diaspora, or their descendants -- derived from the descendants of Ashkenaz, son of Gomer, son of Japheth, third son of Noah (Genesis 10:1-3). Ashkenaz was also a kingdom mentioned in Jeremiah 51:27 which would combine forces against Babylon.

Ashtoreth Ancient Phoenician and Syrian goddess of love and fertility, identified with Astarte.

Ash Wednesday First day of Lent and seventh Wednesday before Easter, from the practice of putting ashes on the forehead as a sign of penitence.

Asmodeus Hebrew *ashmadai*, an evil spirit or chief demon in Jewish legend.

Asperges Sprinkling of the altar, clergy, and congregation with holy water before High Mass in the Roman Catholic Church; a hymn sung during this ceremony. Aspergillum is a brush or perforated container for sprinkling holy water. Aspersorium is a basin or font for holy water.

Assemblies of Yahweh Begun in the 1930s as the Sacred Name Movement and dedicated to preserving the sacred names of God (Yahweh and Elohim) and Jesus (Yahshua). Several such assemblies exist throughout the U.S. with similar names, all maintaining strict adherence to the laws of the Old Testament and celebration of Jewish festivals. Some of these organizations include: Assembly of YHWH-HOSHUA, founded by Laycher Gonzales in the 1970s; Assemblies of Yahweh in Bethel, Pennsylvania, based on the Sacred Name Broadcast begun in 1966 by Jacob O. Meyer; Assembly of Yavah, founded in 1945 by L. D. Snow and E. B. Adam; Scripture Research Association, founded in the 1940s by A. B. Traina; Assemblies of Yahweh, founded in 1939 by C. O. Dodd in Holt, Michigan; Institute of Divine Metaphysical Research, founded in 1931 by Dr. Henry C. Kinley.

Assisi, Francis

Assoil Archaic term for atonement; to absolve or acquit.

Assumption Catholic dogma of the ascension of the Virgin Mary after death, celebrated on August 15.

Astara From *Astraea*, the Greek goddess of divine justice, Astara ("a place of light") is an occult foundation based in Upland, California, and is a center for psychic healing and spiritual channeling. It promotes correspondence courses comprised of a mixture of spiritualism, mysticism, Theosophy, yoga, Egyptian mystery schools, Rosicrucianism, Masonry, and Christianity. It was founded by Robert and Earlyne Chaney, its symbol being the seven-pointed Star of the West merging inside with the Lotus of the East. Recruitment flyers offer information about achieving spiritual selfhood, astral projection, and the superconscious mind.

Astral Projection Based on the theosophical term astral, designating a universal substance supposedly existing at a level just beyond normal human perception.

Astrology Pseudo-science that claims to foretell the future by studying the supposed influence of the relative positions of the moon, sun, and stars on human affairs. A primitive astronomy developed by the Chaldeans during the time of the Babylonian Empire, which considered the planets to be gods and their movements as having an effect on the destiny of mankind. Astrology is based on a circular map of the universe (zodiac) with the earth as its center and divided into twelve sections (houses), each named for a constellation within one of the twelve houses. Depending on the position of the planets and stars in the present house at the time of birth, an individual's horoscope may be determined, which is supposed to aid in foretelling their destiny.

Athanasius A.D. 296-373, Alexandrian bishop and opponent of Arianism. Athanasian Creed, something about the Trinity, celebrated on May 2.

Atheism Greek *atheos*, without god -- generally, belief that there is no God or denial that God or gods exist. Originally ascribed to those who didn't believe in the official Greek gods of the State, later to be identified with Christians who didn't accept the Roman pagan gods. The basic categories of atheism include the following: explicit denial of God; agnostic disbelief based on a lack of proof; rejection of formal religion; rational freethinking resulting in the unacceptance of

supernatural revelation. The difference between an atheist and an unbeliever is primarily that the atheist philosophically rejects God and religion on qualified principles (such as metaphysics, dialectical materialism, existentialism, etc.), whereas an unbeliever, for whatever reasons, doesn't accept any religious beliefs, although, no matter how skeptical, they may still believe there is a God.

Atman Hinduism, either the individual ego or the universal soul; source of all individual souls.

Atomism Theory that the universe is made up of tiny, simple, indivisible particles that cannot be destroyed.

Atonement The reconciliation of God to man through the sacrifice of Christ's death upon the cross; to make amends, reparation, expiate, or reconcile for sins or wrongdoing.

Attrition An imperfect degree of repentance caused by shame or fear of punishment, distinguished from contrition.

Augur One who interpreted omens in ancient Rome; to foretell or prophesy from omens; a soothsayer, prophet, or fortuneteller. Augury is the practice of divination from omens or signs; a ceremony conducted by an augur. An auspex was an augur who watched for omens in the flight of birds.

Augustine A.D. 354-430, Roman Catholic bishop of Hippo in North Africa and early church father, celebrated August 28.

Aureole Halo; radiance encircling the head or body depicting glory, as in religious paintings.

Auspice Divination; watching for omens in the flight of birds, from which the word auspicious is derived, meaning good fortune

Authorized King James Version A revised English translation of the Bible published in 1611 and historically considered to have been authorized by King James I.

Autocephalous Independent or self-governing, said of certain churches within the communion of the Eastern Orthodox Church.

Autodafé (Autodefe) The public ceremony in which the Inquisition pronounced judgment, passed sentence, and burned a heretic.

Avatar Hinduism, incarnation of a god.

Ave Maria "Hail, Mary" (Luke 1:28), Roman Catholic prayer and song to the Virgin Mary.

Averroism Teachings of Averroës (A.D. 1126-98), Arab philosopher and physician in Spain and Morocco, applying Aristotelian philosophy to religion.

Avesta Sacred writings of the ancient Zoroastrian religion and of the Parsees.

Axiology Branch of philosophy dealing with the nature and types of values, such as morals, aesthetics, religion, and metaphysics.

Ayatollah Arabic, "Sign of God," a leader of the Shiite sect of Islam, serving as teacher, judge, and administrator.

Azan Islamic summons to prayer called five times a day by the muezzin from a minaret on a mosque.

Azazel Hebrew, "removal," a scapegoat sent into the desert for making atonement (Leviticus 16:7-10, 20-26). After sacrificing one goat for atonement, the high priest would lay hands on another goat and confess the sins of the Israelites, which would then carry on itself the sins of the Israelites to a solitary place and be released to wander in the desert, thus removing all of their sins. Also one of the angels who rebelled with Satan in John Milton's *Paradise Lost*.

Azrael Hebrew, "Help of God," the angel who parts the soul from the body at death, according to ancient Jewish and Islamic belief.

Baal One of several ancient, Semitic fertility gods.

Babel Hebrew, "gate of God" -- a city in Shinar where Noah's descendants attempted to build a tower to reach the heavens, of which God put an end to by a confusion of tongues (Genesis 11:1-9).

Babylon Capital city of Babylonia, an ancient empire in SW Asia between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. It flourished circa 2100-689 B.C., and rose again between 625-538 B.C. as Chaldea, the "New Babylonia." The Jews were conquered and deported by King Nebuchadnezzar to Babylon in 597 B.C., then released by King Cyrus of Persia in 538 B.C.

Bahaism (Babism) A universal faith which proclaims religious unity, international government, and planetary interdependence begun in Persia around 1844 by Mirza Ali Muhammed (1819-1850), who claimed to be the Bab (Bab-ud-Din, "Gate of the Faith," formerly Babism), a forerunner to the Promised One of God. A follower of his, Mirza Husayn Ali, claimed to be this messiah in 1863 and came to be known as Baha'u'llah, "the Glory of God." Although he died in 1892, he prophesied a worldwide economic cataclysm which would lead to the Baha'i faith uniting all men as brothers. Bahaism was introduced into the U.S. in 1912 and continues to spread through evangelization, primarily through those who have escaped religious persecution in Iran. The Baha'i faith promotes the following principles: oneness of the human race; unity of all religions; a universal language; independent search for truth; equality of men and women; justice with universal peace; a world court; abolition of extreme wealth and poverty; harmony of science and religion; work as worship; universal education; elimination of all prejudice. It forbids slavery, alcoholic consumption, multiple wives, and begging, among other things. With the dictum, "The earth is but one country and mankind its citizens," it also claims to be the fulfillment of the world's major religions, including Christianity.

Bairam Either of two Islamic festivals following the fast of Ramadan.

Banshee Irish *bean sidhe* (*bean*, woman + *sith*, fairy) -- from Irish and Scottish folklore, a female spirit believed to wail outside a house as a warning that a death in the family would occur soon.

Baptism Greek and Latin *baptisma*, "immersion" or a dipping under -- a symbolic act of a cleansing of sin or spiritual purification by immersion in, pouring on, or sprinkling of water.

(Affusion is the pouring on of water and aspersion is the sprinkling of water.) Matthew 3:11, baptism of fire. A baptismal font is a tub or tank in a church for baptizing, also called a baptistery. A baptist is a member of a Protestant church that believes in full immersion of one who has confessed faith in Christ, an act which is seen as crucial to salvation; in a general sense, one who baptizes.

Barghest A doglike goblin in English folklore whose appearance supposedly foreshadows death or bad luck.

Barmitzvah Hebrew *bar mitzwah*, "son of the commandment" -- the Jewish ceremony celebrating a boy's thirteenth birthday, the age when he becomes religiously responsible.

Barth, Karl (1886-1968) Swiss theologian.

Basil the Great (A.D. 330-379) Bishop of Caesarea, celebrated June 14.

Basilica Greek *basilike*, "royal" -- originally, a royal palace; Christian church built in the style of an ancient Roman building used as a courtroom or public hall: rectangular with a broad nave ending in an apse and flanked by colonnaded aisles.

Batmitzvah Hebrew *bat mitzwah*, "daughter of the commandment" -- a Jewish ceremony of Conservative and Reform Judaism where a young girl undergoes the transition analogous to a bar mitzvah for boys, wherein she becomes a religiously responsible woman.

B.C. Before Christ.

B.C.E. Before the Common Era

Bdellium Hebrew *b'dolah*, a myrrhlike gum resin from a tree of the genus *Commiphora*, mentioned in Genesis 2:12 (aromatic resin, also in Numbers 11:7 and possibly similar to *natap* in Exodus 30:34), from the land of Havilah on the Pishon River near the original garden of Eden. Many rabbinical interpretations render this as a pearl or carbuncle (red garnet).

Beadle A minor parish officer in the Church of England whose responsibility was to keep order in church (similar to a sexton).

Beadroll An archaic term in the Roman Catholic Church for a list of names of the dead for whose souls prayers are to be said. A beadsman is one who is paid to pray for another's soul (same as bedesman or bedeswoman).

Beatification Process in the Roman Catholic Church of determining the sanctity of one who has died and declaring him or her to be among the blessed in heaven. They are then entitled to public veneration and usually canonized as a saint.

Beatitudes First part of the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:3-12): "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted because of

righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you." (NIV)

Beelzebub Hebrew *Ba'al zebub*, "god of flies," and Ugaritic *Ba'al zebul*, "lord of the lofty dwelling" -- the chief devil among Satan's horde, often associated with Satan himself. In Matthew 9:34 and 12:24, the Pharisees accuse Jesus of driving out demons by the power of Beelzebub (Greek *Beezeboul* or *Beelezeboul*), the prince of demons. Satan's chief lieutenant among the fallen angels in Milton's *Paradise Lost*.

Beget Procreate; father or sire; bring into being.

Behemoth Job 40:15-24, "Look at the behemoth, which I made along with you and which feeds on grass like an ox. What strength he has in his loins, what power in the muscles of his belly! His tail sways like a cedar; the sinews of his thighs are close-knit. His bones are tubes of bronze, his limbs like rods of iron. He ranks first among the works of God, yet his Maker can approach him with his sword. The hills bring him their produce, and all the wild animals play nearby. Under the lotus plants he lies, hidden among the reeds in the marsh. The lotuses conceal him in their shadow; the poplars by the stream surround him. When the river rages, he is not alarmed; he is secure, though the Jordan should surge against his mouth. Can anyone capture him by the eyes, or trap him and pierce his nose?" Many have thought this to be a description of an elephant or a hippopotamus, however, the discovery of dinosaur bones reveals this to more accurately describe a brachiosaurus or a diplodocus.

Bel Akkadian form of Baal, the Babylonian god of heaven and earth, mentioned in Isaiah 46:1 and Jeremiah 50:2 and 51:44 (also known as Marduk). Akkad was an ancient region in northern Babylonia that flourished circa 2800-1100 B.C. The prophet Daniel was given the name of Belteshazzar ("Bel, protect his life!") by King Nubuchadnezzar (Daniel 1:7, 4:8). The name of the last king of Babylon, Belshazzar (Hebrew *belshatstsar*), means "may Bel protect the king" (Daniel chapter 5).

Belial (Beliar) Hebrew *beliya'al*, "worthlessness" -- wickedness or worthlessness as an evil force (Deuteronomy 13:13), sometimes associated with Satan (2 Corinthians 6:15, Greek *Beliar*).

Ben Hebrew *ben*, "son" or son of.

Benedictine French monastic order founded in A.D. 529, based on the teachings of St. Benedict of Nursia (A.D. 480-543); also an order of nuns.

Benediction Latin *benedictio*, to hallow or bless -- a Roman Catholic devotional service during which a consecrated Host is exposed in a monstrance and a solemn blessing is given with the Host; in general, a blessing or invocation of divine blessing, particularly at the end of a church service. Benedicite (Latin *benedicere*) means "bless you!" and is the invocation of a blessing, such as before meals; more specifically, the canticle which begins *Benedicite, omnia opera Domini, Domino* (Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord). Benedictus is Zecharias' hymn from Luke 1:67-79 about John the Baptist (the first word is Benedictus, "blessed"), sung daily at Lauds; also a short hymn of praise used in Mass, derived from Matthew 21:9, "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord."

Beneficence Charity, derived from the word benefice, an endowed church office providing a living for a vicar or rector. Beneficent is doing good, being kind, or giving generously (variant of benevolence).

Benefit of Clergy The exemption which the medieval clergy had from trial or punishment except in a church court; an administering or sanctioning by the church.

Benjamin The twelfth tribe of Israel, descended from Jacob's youngest son.

Bergsonism Teaching of French philosopher Henri Bergson (1859-1941), which maintains that there is an original life force (*élan vital*) carried through all successive generations, that time or duration is being, and that reality is apprehended by intuition.

Berkeleianism The philosophy of Irish bishop George Berkeley (1685-1753), which holds that physical objects exist only in being perceived by a mind.

Bernardine French order of Cistercian monks founded in 1115 by St. Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153, celebrated August 20).

Bestiary Type of medieval natural history book with moralistic or religious fables about actual and mythical animals

Bethel Hebrew *beth 'el*, "house of God" -- (Genesis 28:10-22) The place between Beersheba and Haran (formerly the ancient city of Luz, located north of Jerusalem) where Jacob stopped to sleep for the night and had a dream of a stairway reaching from earth to heaven, with the angels of God ascending and descending on it, and the LORD appeared and promised the land to his descendants. When Jacob awoke, he set up a stone pillar on the spot and anointed it with oil, calling it God's house. In a later dream, the Lord addressed himself to Jacob as the God of Bethel (Genesis 31:13). Incidentally, Bethel came to be a city of idol worship (1 Kings chapters 12 and 13, 2 Kings chapter 23, Amos 3:14, 5:5-6). In general, Bethel is a holy place of worship to God, such as for seamen or non-Anglican Protestants.

Beulah Hebrew *be 'ulah*, "married" -- Israel, from Isaiah 62:4. "No longer will they call you Deserted, or name your land Desolate. But you will be called Hephzibah ("my delight is in her"), and your land Beulah; for the LORD will take delight in you, and your land will be married."

Bhagavad-gita Sanskrit, "Song of the Blessed One" (also known as *Gitopanisad*) -- a 700-verse, philosophical dialogue about self-realization between Lord Sri Krsna ("the Supreme Personality of Godhead") and his intimate devotee Arjuna, a soldier on the battlefield of Kuruksetra, which is considered a sacred Hindu text and found in the ancient Vedic epic, the *Mahabharata*. It is considered by many to be the essence of Vedic knowledge and one of the most important *Upanisads* (late Vedic metaphysical treatises dealing with man in relation to the universe).

Bhakti Sanskrit, "a share" -- devotion in Hinduism to one god, with all the tasks and activities of life selflessly directed to its service.

Bible Greek *biblia*, "collection of writings" -- Christian collection of the books, prophecies, and scripture that make up the Old Testament (39 books) and the gospels and letters that make up the New Testament (27 epistles); in Judaism, all the Scripture of the Old Testament, known as the

Torah or Tanach; any translation of the Old Testament from the original Hebrew and Aramaic and of the New Testament from its original Greek.

Bible Belt Term coined in 1925 by H. L. Mencken pertaining to the southern region of the United States where fundamentalist beliefs prevail and the Christian clergy are especially influential.

Bible Code

Bible Paper A thin, strong opaque paper used for mass producing Bibles and other reference sources, such as dictionaries.

Biblicist (Biblist) An expert on the Bible or a specialist in Biblical literature; someone who takes the words of the Bible literally.

Bibliomancy Prediction based on a Bible verse or literary passage chosen at random.

Biddle, John (1615-62) English theologian and founder of English Unitarianism.

Big-Bang A theory of cosmology which holds that the expansion of the universe began with a gigantic explosion.

Biretta Latin *birrus*, hood or cloak -- square cap with three projections and a tassel on top, worn by Roman Catholic clergy.

Bishop Latin *episcopus* and Greek *episkopos*, "overseer" -- a high-ranking Christian clergyman with authority over other clergyman and usually supervising a church district or diocese, known as a bishopric. A coadjutor is an assistant bishop, often a successor.

Black Magic A form of sorcery aimed at harming others (thus the term "black"), it was first introduced into the Americas by slaves from West Africa who practiced supernatural rituals and worshiped the spirits of nature and their ancestors. With the ancient belief that demons dwell in everyone and can be malevolently manipulated through black magic, the spirits are then reached through various means, including necromancy, spells, witchcraft, astrology, potions, charms, Ouija boards, and tarot cards. Along with protection from evil spirits, black magic is often used either for revenge or prosperity, concentrating on inflicting its victims with disease, physical danger, and unfortunate circumstances. It also includes superstitious beliefs in ghosts, vampires, and witches. Specific forms of black magic include Voodoo, Macumba, and Santeria. Black magic is also used by Satanists to summon the power of the Devil and evil spirits to cause harm to others.

Black Mass Requiem Mass in the Roman Catholic Church at which the clergy is dressed in black; a blasphemous parody of the Mass by worshipers of Satan.

Black Muslim Derogatory term for a member of a predominantly black Islamic sect in the United States.

Blasphemy Profane, contemptuous, mocking, irreverent, or disrespectful speech, writing, or actions against God or anything held as divine. Blasphemy against the name of God was punishable by death in Jewish society, according to Leviticus 24:13-16. The Pharisees tried to

stone Jesus when he claimed to be one with the Father, because a mere man claimed to be God (John 10:22-33). Stephen was stoned to death by the Sanhedrin for blasphemy when he said he saw heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God (Acts 7:56-58). According to Numbers 15:30-31, anyone who sins defiantly blasphemes the LORD and must be cut off from the people because a blasphemer despises the commandments of God. Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit was considered the one unpardonable sin by Jesus, who said, "I tell you the truth, all the sins and blasphemies of men will be forgiven them. But whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven; he is guilty of an eternal sin" (Mark 3:28-29, also Matthew 12:31-32 and Luke 12:10).

Blavatsky, Helena Petrovna (Madame Blavatsky) Russian theosophist (1831-91, born Helena Hahn)

Bless (Blessed, Blessing) Old English *bletsian*, right of consecration by sprinkling the altar with blood -- to make or declare holy by spoken formula or a sign; consecrate or hallow; to receive divine favor; to gladden; to become prosperous; to praise or glorify; to favor or endow. Blessed (generally pronounced bless-ed) is holy, sacred, or consecrated; a title applied to someone who has beatified; theologically, those dead whose souls are in heaven. (Blest is past tense or present participle of bless.) Blessing is an invocation or benediction; gift of divine favor; good wishes or approval; grace said at meals.

Blessed Sacrament (see Eucharist)

Blessed Virgin Latin *Beata Virgo Maria*, Blessed Virgin Mary (see Virgin Mary).

Blimey "(God) blind me" -- British exclamation of surprise or wonder.

Bliss From the Old English *blithe*, carefree, cheerful disposition -- great joy or happiness; spiritual joy or heavenly rapture; ecstasy.

Bodhisattva Sanskrit, one enlightened in essence -- a potential Buddha; one who has achieved great moral and spiritual wisdom, usually rejecting nirvana in order to assist in alleviating the suffering of mankind.

Bogy An imaginary evil being or spirit; goblin; anything that is especially or needlessly feared; bugbear. The bogymen is an imaginary being used to frighten children.

Böhme, Jakob (1575-1624) German theosophist and mystic.

Bonaventura Italian theologian and scholastic philosopher (1221-74, born Giovanni Fidanza), celebrated July 14.

Bondservant A slave or one bound to service without pay.

Book of Common Prayer Official book of services and prayers for the Church of England and other Anglican churches.

Book of Mormon

Book of the Dead An ancient Egyptian book of prayers and charms intended to assist the soul in the afterworld.

Born-again

Boxing Day The first weekday after Christmas, marked by the giving of Christmas boxes to employees and civil servants, celebrated in Canada and a legal holiday in England.

Boy Scouts International boys' organization founded in England in 1908, which stresses outdoor life and service to others.

Brahma In Hinduism, the supreme and eternal essence or spirit of the universe, who created the universe and is the chief personage of the trinity (including Vishnu and Siva).

Brahman Sanskrit, worship or prayer -- a member of the high, priestly Hindu caste. Brahmanism is the religious system and doctrines of the brahmins.

Branham, William (Branhamism) William Branham (1909-65), was a native of Kentucky who claimed to have had several angelic visitations and was empowered with the gift of spiritual healing. He also made several end time prophecies that were to come about in the twentieth century, most of which were not fulfilled. He claimed himself to be a fulfillment of Malachi 4:5, "See, I will send you the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes." Although he taught unorthodox Christianity and his scriptural views were often skewed, he developed a devout cult following, generally referred to as Branhamism.

Breastplate (Breastpiece) An embroidered cloth set with twelve jewels representing the twelve tribes of Israel, worn on the breast of the Jewish high priest.

Breviary Latin *breviarium*, an abridgment -- a book containing the prayers and hymns that priests and other clergy of the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Eastern Churches are required to recite daily. Brevier is 8 point type, so called from use in the printing of breviaries.

Brief A papal letter of the Roman Catholic Church less formal than a bull.

Brimstone Old English *brynstan*, burn and stone -- sulfur.

Brith Milah (Bris) Hebrew *berith milah*, "covenant of circumcision" -- the religious rite in Judaism of circumcision on the eighth day after birth, the ceremony of which is known as a bris.

Broad Church Party of the Anglican Church which, in matters of doctrine and communion, holds a position between the ritualism and formality of the High Church and the evangelism of the Low Church.

Bruno Giordano (1548-1600): Italian philosopher burned at the stake by the Inquisition. St. Bruno of Cologne (1030-1101): German monk who founded the Carthusian order, celebrated October 6.

Buber, Martin (1878-1965) Israeli Jewish philosopher and theologian, born in Austria.

Buddha (Buddhism) Sanskrit, the enlightened one -- Siddhartha Gautama (563-483 B.C.), religious philosopher and teacher who lived in India and founded Buddhism in the sixth century B.C., which became a major religious and philosophical system of central and eastern Asia. Buddhism teaches that right thinking and self-denial will enable the soul to reach Nirvana, a divine state of release from misdirected desire. The name Buddha is a title applied by Buddhists to someone regarded as embodying divine wisdom and virtue.

Bugbear An imaginary hobgoblin or terror used to frighten children into good conduct, such as the bogymen; anything causing seemingly needless fear or anxiety.

Bulfinch, Thomas (1796-1867) U.S. writer and mythologist.

Bull (Bulla) Latin *bullā*, a seal -- an official document, edict, or decree from the Pope. A bulla is a round lead seal attached to a bull.

Bull-roarer A flat piece of wood at the end of a string, which makes a roaring noise when whirled, used in religious ceremonies of some peoples.

Burnt Offering An animal or food substance burned at the altar as an offering to God.

Byzantine Of or pertaining to the Eastern Orthodox Church, prevalent during the Byzantine Empire (A.D. 395-1453) in SE Europe and SW Asia, formed by the division of the Roman Empire; of the art and architecture of Byzantium developed between the fourth and fifteenth centuries A.D., characterized, among other traits, by colorful, two-dimensional frescoes and elaborate mosaics, religious symbolism, domes over square areas, and round arches.

Cab Hebrew *qab*, "hollow vessel" -- ancient Hebrew dry measure equal to about two quarts (2 Kings 6:25).

Cabala (Cabbala) Hebrew *qabbalah*, "received lore" or tradition -- esoteric philosophy of certain Jewish rabbis, particularly during the Middle Ages, based on a mystical interpretation of the Scriptures. Cabalism is an occult doctrine based on the cabala.

Cacodemon (Cacodaemon) Greek *kakodaimon*, evil + demon -- an evil spirit or devil.

Cadi Arabic *qadi* -- Minor Muslim magistrate.

Calefactory From the Latin *calefactorius*, producing heat -- a heated common room in a monastery (Medieval Latin *calefactorium*).

Calender Persian *qalandar*, member of an order of wandering dervishes among the Sufis.

Caliph (Calif) Arabic *khalifa*, "successor" -- a supreme Islamic ruler, the title taken by Muhammed's successors as both secular and religious heads of Islam. Caliphate is the region ruled by a caliph, or a general term for the rank or reign of a caliph.

Caloyer Modern Greek *kalogeros* "monk" (*kalos*, beautiful + *geros*, old age) -- a monk of the Orthodox Eastern Church (Italian *caloiero*).

Calvary Latin *calvaria*, "skull" and Greek *kranion*, "cranium" -- used by Christian Evangelists to translate the Aramaic *gulgultha* ("skull"). Golgotha, a hill shaped like a skull outside Jerusalem, was the place where Jesus was crucified (Matthew 27:33 and Luke 23:33); an outdoor representation of the crucifixion of Christ; any experience involving intense pain or anguish.

Calvinism The theological system of French Protestant reformer John Calvin (1509-1564, born Jean Caulvin), emphasizing the doctrines of predestination and salvation solely by God's grace.

Camerlengo Italian *camarlingo*, "chamberlain" -- a Roman Catholic cardinal in charge of the papal treasury and accounts.

Cameron, Richard (1648-1680) Scottish minister and Covenanter whose followers formed the Reformed Presbyterian Church in 1743.

Campbell, Alexander (1788-1866) U.S. clergyman born in Ireland, founder of the Disciples of Christ.

Camp Fire Girls Girls' organization founded in 1910, as a program to promote health and character-building activities.

Camp Meeting A religious revival held at a campground or in a tent, often for several days.

Canaan The "Promised Land" of the Israelites, a region between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea.

Candlemas A church feast on February 2, commemorating by the burning of candles the purification of the Virgin Mary.

Canon Latin, measuring line or rule (Greek *kanon*, rod or bar); Medieval Latin, sacred writings admitted to the catalog according to the rule -- a list of books of the Bible officially accepted by a church or religious body as genuine; part of the Mass, between the Preface and Communion, centering on the consecration of the Host; a list of recognized saints in the Roman Catholic Church; a musical, polyphonic composition in which there are exact repetitions of a preceding part in the same or related keys; established rules, principles, criterion, or decree. Latin *canonicus*, a cleric -- member of a clerical group living by the established canon, but not under an everlasting vow (canonicals are the clothes prescribed for a canon when conducting services); a canon regular is a regular Roman Catholic priest living under the rule of his institute. A canoness is a woman holding a canonry but, unlike a nun, she doesn't take an everlasting vow. Canonry is the benefice or position of a canon. Canon law is a law or body of laws of a Christian church (a canonist is an expert in canon law); Canonic is of a musical canon. Canonical is an adjective pertaining to church canon (of, according to, or ordered by church canon); belonging to the canon of the Bible; of a clergyman; in general, authoritative or accepted. To canonize is to declare in formal church procedure a dead person as a saint; to put in the Bible canon; to give church sanction or authorization to; in general, to glorify.

Canonical Hour Any of the seven periods of the day assigned to prayer and worship by the Roman Catholic Church, including matins (with lauds), prime, terce, sext, none, vespers, and complin.

Cant Among other things, religious phraseology used hypocritically; insincere, pious, or meaningless talk; the special words and phrases (jargon) used by those in a certain sect.

Canticle Latin *canticulum* or *canticum*, "song" (derived from the Latin *cantus*, "chant") -- a song, chant, or hymn, the words of which are taken from Biblical Scripture. Solomon's Song of Songs is also known as Canticles (or Canticle of Canticles). Cantillation (Latin *cantillatus*, to hum or sing low) is a Jewish liturgical chant with the reciting of certain prescribed musical phrases indicated by notations. A cantor is a church choir leader (precentor) or a singer of liturgical solos in a synagogue who leads the congregation in prayer (hazan). Canto is a main division of a long poem, corresponding to the chapter of a book.

Capuchin A monk of the Friars Minor Capuchin, a branch of the Franciscan order that adheres strictly to the original rule. A capuche is a long, pointed hood worn by these monks. (Cappuccino is derived from the brown color of the capuchin's habit.)

Carbon-date To establish the approximate age of fossil or archaeological remains by measuring the amount of radioactive carbon 14 remaining in them.

Cardinal Latin *cardinalis*, chief or principal -- the chief presbyter; one of the Roman Catholic officials appointed by the Pope to his council, the College of Cardinals; bright red, like the color of the robe of a cardinal. Cardinalate is the position, dignity, or rank of a cardinal; generally, the Pope's council of cardinals.

Cardinal Virtues The basic virtues of ancient Greek philosophy: justice, prudence, fortitude, and temperance (similar to the theological virtues).

Cargo Cult A quasi-religious cult among some South Sea islanders, based on a belief that the spirits of their ancestors will return with supplies of modern goods and inaugurate a golden age free from poverty and white dominance.

Carmelite A mendicant friar or nun of the order of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, founded in Syria about A.D. 1160.

Carnal Late Latin *carnalis*, "fleshly" -- in or of the flesh, bodily, sexual, material, or worldly, as opposed to spiritual or intellectual; pleasures of the flesh, sensual desires, or lust.

Carol Greek *choraules*, choral dance accompanied by a flute player, Old French *carole*, Christmas song and dance -- traditionally, a Christmas song of joy and praise sung in chorus with others; originally, a circle dance.

Casaubon, Isaac (159-1614) French scholar and theologian, born in Switzerland.

Cassock Persian *kazhaghand*, kind of jacket made from silk -- a long, closefitting vestment, usually black, either worn as an outer garment or under the surplice by clergyman and choristers; in general, a clergyman or his position.

Catacombs Latin *cata tumbas*, "at the graves" -- any of a series of underground vaults or galleries used as a burial place.

Catafalque Italian *catafalco*, funeral canopy -- temporary wooden framework, usually draped, on which the body in a coffin lies during an elaborate funeral; a coffinlike structure used in the Roman Catholic Church to represent the dead in a requiem Mass after the actual burial.

Catechism (Catechumen) A handbook of questions and answers for teaching the principles of religion, from the Greek *katechizein*, to catechize: to teach, particularly the principles of a religion, by a method of question and answers; to question searchingly or fully. Catechumen is a person receiving instruction about the fundamentals of Christianity before baptism (from the Greek *katechoumenos*, a person instructed).

Cathedral Late Latin *cathedralis*, of a bishop's seat -- the main church of a bishop's see, containing the cathedra (Latin for a chair or office of a teacher); generally, any large, imposing church. A cathedra is the throne of a bishop, the episcopal see, or any seat of high authority.

Catherine Wheel A spiked wheel symbolizing the instrument of torture involved in the martyrdom of St. Catherine of Alexandria in the fourth century A.D. (celebrated November 25); a firework like a pinwheel that spins and throws out colorful sparks.

Catholic Latin *catholicus*, universal, general, or orthodox (Greek *katholikos*, completely whole) -- of the Christian church as a whole, specifically, of the ancient, undivided Christian church; any of the orthodox Christian churches or its members, such as the Roman, Greek, Eastern, or Anglo-Catholic, as distinguished from the Protestant or Reformed churches; in general, the Roman Catholic Church headed by the Pope. Catholicism is generally the doctrine, faith, practice, and organization of a Catholic church, especially the Roman Catholic Church. Catholicize is to convert to Catholicism.

Cayce, Edgar Edgar Cayce (1877-1945), a psychic healer and clairvoyant, founded the Association for Research and Enlightenment (ARE) in Virginia Beach, Virginia, in 1932. Over a 43 year period, Cayce proposed thousands of physical and mental healings (called life readings or physical readings) while in a hypnotic state of altered consciousness. His teachings were a mixture of mysticism, occultism, spiritism, reincarnation, and biblical scripture. Cayce also claimed to be a prophet, with about 90% of his prophecies being fulfilled.

Celestial Latin *caelestis*, heaven -- heavenly or divine.

Cella Latin, "small cell" -- inner part of an ancient Greek or Roman temple, housing the statue of a god or goddess.

Celtic Cross Latin cross having a wheellike circle around the intersection of the limbs.

Cenobite Greek *koinobion*, communal life -- member of a religious order living in a monastery, cloister, or convent (distinguished from anchorite -- a hermit or recluse).

Census Latin *censere*, "assess" -- ancient Roman act of counting the people and evaluating their property for taxation.

Chalcedony Greek *chalkedon*, a kind of quartz with a waxy luster with various colors, usually grayish or milky, and comprises agate, sard, cat's-eye, jasper, carnelian, and chrysoprase. Listed in Revelation 21:19 as one of the precious stones decorating the foundations of the Holy City of

Jerusalem that comes down out of heaven from God, his new dwelling place among man after the last days.

Chaldea Ancient province of Babylonia in the lower course of the Euphrates River (Persian Gulf), also known as Babylonia during Chaldean supremacy in the sixth century B.C.

Chamberlain An honorary attendant of the Pope; originally, the bedchamber attendant of a ruler or lord; a steward or an officer in charge of the household of a lord's estate, etc.

Chancel Latin *cancellus*, lattice -- the part of a church around the altar, usually at the east end, reserved for use by the clergy and choir, sometimes set off by a railing or screen.

Chancellor Among other definitions, an archdeacon or lay officer in the Anglican Church for legal affairs of a diocese; a Roman Catholic priest in charge of the diocesan chancery, an office that has custody of certain documents and performs secretarial services for the bishop.

Channeling Means of communication with spirits of the dead.

Chant Latin *cantus*, "song" -- a simple liturgical song in which a string of syllables or words of a canticle or psalm are sung in each monotonous tone, often a cappella.

Chantry An endowment to the Roman Catholic Church to pay for the saying of Masses and prayers for the soul of a specified person, often the endower; a chapel or altar endowed in the Middle Ages for this purpose.

Chanukah (Hannukah) Hebrew, "dedication" -- Jewish festival commemorating the rededication of the Temple by Judas Maccabaeus in 165 B.C. and celebrated for eight days beginning the 25th day of Kislev (see Hannukah).

Chapel Latin *cappa*, "cape" -- originally, the sanctuary in which the cope (or *cappa*, cape) of St. Martin was preserved, later to designate any sanctuary; a place of Christian worship smaller than and subordinate to a church, sometimes having its own altar, or a similar room in some Jewish synagogues; any room or building used as a place of worship; any place of worship in Great Britain for those who are not members of an established church.

Chaplain Originally, a custodian of St. Martin's cloak (see chapel), later to designate the clergyman of a chapel in general; a minister, priest, or rabbi serving in a religious capacity in the armed forces, prisons, hospitals, and other public institutions, often knowledgeable in several religions.

Chaplet Diminutive of chapel, a string of prayer beads one third the length of a full rosary; the prayers said with such beads. Also, a wreath or garland for the head (*chapeau*).

Chapter Latin *capitulum*, "capital" or *caput*, "head" (Medieval Latin, church division) -- a formal meeting of canons headed by a dean, or of the members of a religious order, derived from a meeting at which a chapter of monastic rule was read (Late Latin, division of writing).

Chapter and Verse The exact Scriptural reference: book, chapter, and numerical verse of quoted Scripture.

Charismatic Designating a religious group or movement which stresses direct divine inspiration, which is manifested in speaking in tongues, healing, prophesy, etc. Theologically, charisma is a divinely inspired gift, grace, or talent.

Charity Latin *caritas* costliness, esteem, or affection -- theologically, the love of God for man or of man for his fellow men; an act of goodwill or affection; benevolence; kindness or leniency in judging others; voluntarily giving to those in need, or the money, services, or goods given; a welfare organization.

Charlemagne (Charles the Great, Charles I) (A.D. 742-814) king of the Franks (768-814) and emperor of the Holy Roman Empire (800-814).

Charm Latin *carmen*, song or verse -- originally, an incantation (chanted words supposedly invoking magical powers to either harm or help; an amulet or talisman used with incantations; any action or gesture assumed to have magic power.

Charon The boatman in Greek Mythology who ferried souls of the dead across the River Styx to Hades.

Chartreuse La Grande Chartreuse, a Carthusian monastery in France; a pale, yellowish green liquor made by Carthusian monks.

Chasuble Medieval Latin *casubla*, hooded garment -- a sleeveless outer vestment worn over the alb by priests at Mass.

Cherub (Cherubim) Hebrew *kerubh*, a winged, heavenly being that supports the throne of God or acts as a guardian spirit (Genesis 3:24, Psalm 80:1, Ezekiel 10); theologically, the second order of angels which rank just below the seraphim. Represented in early art as a winged angel clothed in red, later to be depicted as a winged, chubby child.

Childermas Holy Innocents' Day

Children of God (COG) Founded by David "Moses" Berg in the late 1960s as a radical movement called Teens for Christ, which declared war on the contemporary systems of government, education, religion, and parental control. It later became Children of God (COG) in the 1970s and, finally, Family of Love in the early 1980s. This cult consisted of strictly regulated communes, or colonies, in and around Arizona and Texas, all headed by Berg as an autocratic messiah. Members signed a "Revolutionary Contract," turning over all possessions and cutting them off from past relationships. Members raised money for the cause by "listening," or distributing its literature. Female members also brought in income by flirty fishing ("FFing"), by which they basically prostituted themselves for the dual purpose of making money and converting male converts. (Children conceived through FFing were called "Jesus Babes" and the contraction of venereal disease was considered suffering for the cause of Christ.) Other desirable relations, according to Berg's intimate teachings and his official periodical, "MO Letters," included lesbianism, incest, adultery, wife-swapping, child molestation, and sexual intercourse with female spirits (succubae or succubus). Primarily focused on sexual promiscuity and parental rebellion, along with its blatant scriptural perversion, it has gained a bad reputation worldwide. Its international headquarters is in Zurich, Switzerland.

Chimere (Chimer) Arabic *sammur*, "sable" -- a loose, sleeveless robe worn by Anglican bishops.

Chiromancy Palmistry.

Choir Theology, any of the nine orders of angels; group of church singers.

Cholent From the French *chaud*, "hot" -- a beef stew with potatoes, beans, and other vegetables slowly baked for a long time as a traditional Jewish dish prepared on Friday for the Sabbath.

Chrism Latin *chrisma*, an anointing or unction (Greek *chrisma*, oil used for anointing) -- consecrated oil used in baptism and other sacraments in certain churches or the sacramental anointing with this oil. The container or receptacle for the chrism is called a chrismatory. A chrisom was originally a cloth to keep chrism off the face; a white cloth or robe representing innocence, worn by an infant at baptism (used as a shroud if the infant died within one month of birth); an innocent baby or infant.

Christ Greek *christos*, "the anointed" -- originally a Greek title for the Hebrew *Yeshua Moshiach*, "Jesus the Anointed One" (or Jesus the Messiah): Jesus the Christ, later to be used simply as part of his name (Jesus Christ); the Messiah whose appearance is prophesied in the Old Testament, believed by Christians to be Jesus of Nazareth

Christen To baptize (originally, to baptize into a particular Christian church); to give a name at baptism.

Christendom The dominion or kingdom of Christ on earth; those parts of the world where most of the inhabitants profess the Christian faith; Christians collectively.

Christian Greek *christianos*, a person professing belief in Jesus as the Christ. The disciples of Jesus were first called Christians ("Christ-ones") at the church of Antioch in the region of Pisidia in Asia Minor around A.D. 43 (Acts 11:26). Christians here were a mix of Gentiles and Greek and Aramaic-speaking Jews. The term was used by King Agrippa when the Apostle Paul attempted to convert him while imprisoned (Acts 26:28). The term was again used by Peter as a name to bear in suffering for Christ (1 Peter 4:16).

Christian Brothers (Brothers of the Christian Schools) Roman Catholic lay order that undertakes the teaching of youths.

Christian Era The era beginning with the year thought to be the birth of Jesus Christ (circa 8-4 B.C.): B.C. marks the dates before and A.D. marks the dates during this era.

Christianity Christians collectively; Christendom; the Christian religion, based on the Old and New Testaments; a particular Christian religious system or sect.

Christian Name The name of an individual given at baptism, distinguished from the surname or family name.

Christian Science (Church of Christ, Scientist) Pseudo Christian religion founded by Mary Baker Eddy around 1866, upholding the idea that disease, sin, and death are caused by errors in thinking and have no real existence.

Christlike Like Jesus Christ in spirit or character.

Christmas Holiday celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ, generally observed on December 25. The evening before is Christmas Eve. Christmastide is Christmas time from Christmas Eve through New Year's Day (or to Epiphany on January 6).

Christology The study of the work and person of Jesus Christ and of the literature that relates to him.

Christ's-thorn An Old World spiny shrub (*Paliurus spina-christi*) of the buckthorn family, supposed to have been used for Christ's crown of thorns.

Chrysolite Latin and Greek *chrysolithos*, "topaz" -- also known as olivine, an orthorhombic silicate of magnesium and iron, existing usually as green crystals in many highly basic igneous rocks.

Chrysoprase Latin *chrysoprasus* and Greek *chrysoprasos* (*chrysos*, gold + *prason*, leek) -- a light-green, semi-precious stone; variety of chalcedony.

Church Greek *kyriake (oikia)*, Lord's (house) (from *kyriakos*, belonging to the Lord) -- a building for organized, public worship, particularly of the Christian faith; the body of all Christians as a whole; the ecclesiastical government of a religious group as opposed to secular government; profession of the clergy; a congregation or group of worshipers.

Church of England The episcopal church of England; Anglican Church; an established church with the sovereign as its head.

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Latter-day Saints, LDS, Mormons) Mormons

Church of Rome Roman Catholic Church

Church Slavic Old Church Slavic

Churchwarden Either of two lay officers chosen annually in every parish of the Church of England or of the Protestant Episcopal Church to usher at service and attend to certain secular matters.

Ciborium Latin, "cup," from the Greek *kiborion*, seed vessel of the Egyptian water lily -- a manmade canopy that rests on four columns, usually covering an altar; baldachin; a covered cup for holding the wafers of the Eucharist.

Circa Latin, "about" -- used before an approximate date, usually abbreviated as c.

Circuit Rider A traveling minister who preaches in his mapped circuit.

Circumcise (Circumcision) Latin *circumcisus*, to cut around -- to cut off all or part of the foreskin of the genitalia; archaic term for purification or cleansing from sin. The circumcision of Jesus is generally celebrated January 1

Cistercian A monk or nun of the French monastic order founded in 1098, which follows a strict interpretation of the Benedictine rule.

City of God Heaven (Psalm 46:4).

Clairvoyance Having the supposed ability to perceive things that are not seen; keen insight or perception.

Classical (Classic) Latin *classicus*, relating to the highest classes of the Roman people (superior) -- well versed in or devoted to ancient Greek and Roman culture, literature, art, languages, etc. Classicism is the aesthetic principles or qualities regarded as characteristic of ancient Greece and Rome: objectivity, formality, balance, simplicity, restraint, etc. (generally contrasted with Romanticism); knowledge of the literature and art of ancient Greece and Rome; classical scholarship; a Greek or Latin idiom or expression.

Classis A governing body in certain Reformed churches consisting of the ministers and representative elders from the churches in a district, or the district so governed.

Clement of Alexandria Titus Flavius Clemens (circa A.D. 150-215), Greek Christian theologian.

Clergy Persons ordained for religious service (clergymen), such as priests, ministers, rabbis, etc. To collate is to appoint a clergyman to a benefice (an endowed church office providing a living for a vicar or rector).

Cleric Clergyman.

Cloister Latin *claustrum*, shut in place -- portion of a monastery closed off to the laity; in general, a place of religious seclusion, such as a monastery, convent, abbey, or priory; monastic life; seclusion from the outside world; an arched way or covered walk along the inside wall or walls of a monastery, convent, church building, etc., with a columned opening along one side leading to a courtyard or garden.

Cloth The identifying dress of the clergy or the clergy collectively (such as the term "man of the cloth").

Codex Latin, wooden tablet for writing (Late Latin, a book of laws) -- a manuscript volume, such as of classic literature or Scripture; a code or body of laws. For example, Codex Juris Canonici (Code of Canon Law), the official body of laws governing the Roman Catholic Church since 1918.

Coeternal Existing together eternally.

College A clerical group that has been given the legal status of an ecclesiastical corporation, such as the College of Cardinals, the cardinals of the Roman Catholic Church who serve as a privy council to the Pope and for electing his successor. A collegiate church has a chapter of canons (although not a bishop's see); in Scotland, a church with two or more ministers serving jointly; in the U.S., a church associated with others under a joint body of pastors; in general, such an association of churches. Collegiality is the principle that authority is shared by the Pope and the bishops.

Colloquium Latin, "conversation" -- an organized conference or seminar on some subject involving a number of scholars or experts.

Colporteur French, "peddler" -- someone who goes from place to place distributing or selling Bibles or religious tracts.

Comenius, John Amos (1592-1670) Born Jan Amos Komensky, Moravian educational reformer and theologian.

Comity Agreement among cooperating Christian denominations to avoid duplication of churches, missions, or other similar establishments in specific areas.

Commandments (see Ten Commandments)

Commendam Medieval Latin *dare in commendam*, "to give in trust" (commandery) -- temporary holding of a benefice, with the right to its revenues, by a cleric or layman in the absence of proper incumbent.

Common Era Christian Era

Communion (Holy Communion) Latin *communio*, "a sharing" -- any of various Christian rites in which bread and wine are received as symbols in memory of the shed blood and bodily sacrifice of Jesus Christ; a sacrament of the Roman Catholic Eucharist in which the bread and wine are consecrated as the body and blood of Christ, also called the Lord's Supper; in general, a group of Christians professing the same faith and practicing the same rites.

Compunction Latin *compunctus*, to prick (Late Latin *compunctio*, the pricking of conscience) -- sharp feeling of uneasiness brought on by a sense of guilt; twinge of conscience; remorse; penitence.

Concelebrate Latin *concelebratus*, to celebrate a solemnity in large numbers -- prayers said in unison by two or more officiating priests, such as in celebrating the Eucharistic liturgy jointly.

Conceptualism Doctrine, intermediate between nominalism and realism, that universals exist explicitly in the mind as concepts and implicitly in the similarities shared by particular objects.

Conclave Latin, a room that may be locked -- the private meeting of Roman Catholic cardinals to elect a pope; the cardinals collectively; in general, any private or secret meeting.

Concordance Latin *concordans*, to agree (concord) -- an alphabetical list of the important words used in a book, with references to the passages in which they occur.

Concordat Latin *concordatus*, agreement or harmony (concordance) -- an agreement between a pope and a government concerning the regulation of church affairs; in general, a compact, formal agreement, or covenant.

Confession Acknowledgement of sin; admission of guilt; accept fault in a crime; declaration of one's faith or statement of religious belief; tomb or shrine of a martyr or confessor (a Christian who suffered for their faith but was not martyred). A confessional is a small, enclosed place where a priest listens to confessions.

Confirmation Christian ceremony in which a person is admitted to full membership in a church; Jewish ceremony in which a person reaffirms their belief in the basic spiritual and ethical concepts of Judaism. A confirmand is the person confirmed in a religious ceremony. A confiteor is a formal prayer of confession, often said at Mass.

Conform To accept and adhere to the usages of the Established Church.

Confraternity A brotherhood or fraternal association comprised of laymen united in profession or vocation, such as a religious society, with a devotional or charitable purpose.

Confucianism The ethical teachings of Confucius (Latin, "K'ung Fu-tse"), a Chinese philosopher and teacher (circa 551-479 B.C.), introduced into Chinese religion, emphasizing devotion to parents, family and friends, ancestor worship, and the maintenance of justice and peace.

Congregation Latin *congregatio*, an assembling (Medieval Latin, a religious community) -- an assembly or gathering of people, usually for religious worship, teaching, and fellowship; Biblically, the whole body or assembly of Israelites. In the Roman Catholic Church: a religious community bound by a common rule; division of an order made up of a group of monasteries; a committee of cardinals in charge of some department of church affairs.

Congregationalism A Protestant form of church organization established in colonial New England in which each congregation is self-governing -- a congregation being a settlement, town, or parish.

Conjure Latin *conjurare*, to swear together -- originally, to be sworn in a conspiracy; to summon a demon or spirit by magic spell as a primitive, superstitious rite; to practice magic or legerdemain. A conjurer is one who is a magician, sorcerer, or one skilled in legerdemain (trickery, sleight of hand, or stage magic).

Conscience Latin *conscientia*, consciousness, moral sense (noun) -- a knowledge or sense of right and wrong, with a compulsion to do right; moral judgment that opposes the violation of a previously recognized ethical principle, which leads to feelings of guilt if violated; consciousness; inner thoughts or feelings. Conscious (adjective) is awareness or cognizance; ability to feel and think in a normal waking state; having knowledge or feelings of inner sensations or external forces; aware of oneself as a thinking being or knowing what one is doing and why (self-conscious). Consciousness is the totality of one's thoughts, feelings, and impressions (conscious mind).

Consecrate To set apart as holy; make or declare sacred for religious use; to dedicate or devote entirely; to cause to be revered or honored (hallow); to make someone a religious ruler, such as a bishop, by a religious ceremony.

Conservative Tending to preserve established traditions or institutions and to resist or oppose any changes in these; moderate, cautious, or safe; designating the major right-wing political parties of Great Britain (Conservative Party) and Canada (Progressive Conservative Party); descriptive of the Republican Party (Grand Old Party) in the U.S., often upholding Christian values and morals; designating a movement in Judaism that accepts moderate adaptation of religious ritual and traditional forms to the framework of modern life.

Consistory Latin *consistorium*, council or place of assembly -- originally, a meeting place for a council or court; a church council or court, such as the papal senate or a council of deacons; a session of such a body.

Constantine the Great Born Flavius Valerius Aurelius Constantinus (A.D. 280-337), Constantine I was emperor of Rome from A.D. 306-337.

Constellation Latin *constellatus*, "set with stars" -- a number of fixed stars arbitrarily considered as a group, usually named after some object, animal, or mythological being that they supposedly suggest in outline; the grouping of the planets at any particular time, especially at a person's birthday; one's disposition or fate as supposedly influenced by such a grouping.

Consubstantiation Theological doctrine that the substance of the bread and wine of the Eucharist exists, after consecration, side by side with the substance of the body and blood of Christ but is not changed into it. (Transubstantiation is the doctrine that the bread and wine actually become the body and blood of Christ.)

Context Latin *contextus*, a joining together -- the parts of a sentence, paragraph, discourse, etc., immediately next to or surrounding a specified word or passage and determining its exact meaning; the whole situation, background, or environment relevant to a particular event, personality, creation, etc.

Contenance Self-restraint, moderation, or temperance; abstinence in sexual activity.

Contrition Late Latin *contritio*, grief -- a feeling of remorse for sins or wrongdoing (see Penitence).

Convent Latin *conventus*, "assembly" (Medieval Latin, religious house) -- a community of nuns living under strict religious vows; the building or buildings occupied by such a group, such as a cloister.

Conventual, Friars Minor A branch of the Franciscan order under a modified rule that permits the holding of property in common.

Convert Latin *convertere*, to turn together -- to cause to change from one religion, doctrine, or belief to another; a person so converted (convertite). Conversion is generally to change from a lack of faith to accept a religious belief or adoption of a religion.

Convocation An ecclesiastical or academic assembly that has been summoned to convene.

Coptic Arabic *Quft* or *Qift*, the Copts, Greek *Aigyptios*, Egyptian -- of the ancient, Afro-Asiatic inhabitants of Egypt, known as the Copts. The Coptic Church was the native Christian church of Egypt and Ethiopia, Monophysitic in nature (believing that Christ had only one nature, a composite of the physical and spiritual).

Cordelier Old French *cordelle*, cord -- a monk of the Franciscan Observants, so named from the knotted cord worn as a girdle.

Coreligionist A person of the same religion or religious denomination.

Corporal A small linen cloth placed on the center of the altar, on which are placed the bread and the chalice for the Eucharist.

Corporeal Latin *corporeus*, bodily form -- physical, bodily nature; of a material, not spiritual, substance or existence; tangible or perceptible by the human senses.

Corposant Portuguese *corpo santo* and Latin *corpus sanctum*, "holy body" (see St. Elmo's Fire).

Corpus Latin, "body" -- a complete or comprehensive collection of laws or writings of a specified type, such as the Corpus Juris Canonici ("Body of Canon Law"), the body of laws governing the Catholic Church up to 1918 (superseded by the Codex Juris Canonici).

Corpus Christi Latin, "Body of Christ" -- a Roman Catholic festival celebrated on the Thursday after Trinity Sunday, in honor of the Eucharist.

Cosmos Greek *kosmos*, "universe" or "harmony" -- the universe considered as a harmonious and orderly system. Cosmogony is the theory of the origin or generation of the universe. Cosmology is the branch of philosophy and science dealing with the study of the universe as a whole and of its form and nature as a physical system. Cosmic is of the universe, exclusive of the earth.

Cosmic Energy Supernatural energy derived or emanating from the cosmos.

Counter-Reformation The reform movement in the Roman Catholic Church in the 16th century, in answer to the Protestant Reformation.

Coven From the Latin *convenire*, to come together, convene (Middle English *covin*, a group of confederates) -- a gathering or meeting of witches.

Covenant From the Latin *convenire*, convene -- a binding and solemn agreement made by two or more individuals or parties to either do or not do a specified act (compact); an agreement among members of a church to defend and maintain its doctrines, polity, faith, etc.; the promises made by God to man, whereby God swore upon his own name. The National Covenant was an agreement of Presbyterians in Scotland in 1638 to oppose episcopacy. The Solemn League and Covenant was an agreement between the parliaments of Scotland and England in 1643 to extend and preserve Presbyterianism.

Coverdale, Miles (1488-1568) English clergyman who translated the Bible into English in 1535.

Cowl Latin *cucullus*, cap or hood -- a monk's hood or a monk's cloak with a hood.

Cranmer, Thomas (1489-1556) Archbishop of Canterbury from 1533-56.

Creationism The doctrine that ascribes the origin of life to God, as recorded in Genesis; theological doctrine that God creates a new soul for every human being born, as opposed to Traducianism.

Crèche French, "crib" (from the Greek *krippe*) -- a Christmas display of a stable with figures representing a scene at the birth of Jesus.

Credence A small table at the side of the communion table on which the bread and wine are placed before consecration.

Credenda From the Latin *credere*, "creed" -- doctrines to be believed in matters of faith.

Creed Latin *credo*, "I believe" (*credere*, to trust or believe) -- a brief statement of religious belief or a confession of faith, such as the Apostles' Creed or the Nicene Creed.

Crescent Turkish Muslim emblem, symbol of power.

Cross (Cruciform) Latin *crux*, an upright post with a bar across it near the top on which the ancient Romans fastened convicted persons to die; a symbol of this device, representing the crucifixion of Jesus and of Christianity in general.

Crucifix A reproduction of a cross with a figure of Jesus crucified on it as a Christian symbol.

Crucifixion The crucifying of Jesus by the Romans by nailing his hands and feet to a cross, often represented in art. Crucifixion was the capital punishment of ancient Rome, whereby a convicted criminal was either nailed or bound to a cross and left to die of exposure. Crucifixion is also a self-imposed act of mortification of the flesh for ascetic purposes.

Crusades From the Medieval Latin *cruciata*, to mark with a cross -- a series of Christian military expeditions sanctioned by the Catholic Church between the late 11th to the late 13th centuries to recover the Holy Land from the Muslims.

Crystal From the Latin *crystallum*, ice, and Greek *krystallos*, frost -- a solidified form of substance in which the atoms or molecules are arranged in a definite pattern repeated regularly in three dimensions; a clear, transparent quartz, often cut in the form of an ornament. Quartz is a brilliant, hexagonally crystalline mineral, silicon dioxide (SiO₂), made primarily from sand. Crystal gazing is the practice of gazing into a ball of rock crystal (usually glass) and professing to see certain images or future events.

Cubit Latin *cubitum*, "elbow" -- ancient measure of length, about 18-22 inches, approximately the length of the forearm from the elbow to the tip of the middle finger.

Cult Latin *cultus*, cultivation -- a system of religious worship or ritual requiring strict devotion, a term often used by Christians regarding a pseudo-Christian sect that is either apostate or has integrated Christian beliefs into its basic tenants, along with teachings from various other religions.

Cuneiform Latin *cuneus*, wedge -- wedge-shaped form of characters used in the ancient inscriptions of the Akkadians, Assyrians, Babylonians, and Persians.

Curate Medieval Latin *curatus*, one responsible for the care of souls -- originally, any clergyman; a clergyman who assists a vicar or rector. Curé (derived from *curatus*) is a French parish priest.

Curse Old English *curcian* and Old French *corocier*, to call down wrath upon -- a calling on God or the gods to send evil or injury on some person or thing; a person or thing that has been

cursed or damned; a profane, obscene, or blasphemous oath or imprecation expressing hatred, anger, or vexation, often out of revenge.

Cutty Stool A low stool, formerly a seat in a Scottish church in which offenders against chastity had to sit and be publicly rebuked by the minister.

Cyril Greek *Kyrillos*, "lordly" -- (A.D. 376-444) Christian theologian and archbishop of Alexandria from 412-444, saint whose day celebrated February 9; (A.D. 827-869) born Constantine, Greek prelate and missionary, apostle to the Slavs, saint whose day is celebrated July 7 (Cyrillic is the Slavic alphabet attributed to him, still used in Russia and Bulgaria).

Dagan Hebrew "grain" -- Babylonian god of the earth. Dagon, a variant of the Hebrew *dagan*, was a god of agriculture and the main god of the ancient Phillistines and Phoenicians, represented as half man and half fish.

Dalai Lama (Grand Lama) Mongolian *dalai*, "ocean" + Tibetan *blama*, "chief" or "high priest" -- the traditional high priest of Lamaism, a form of Buddhism practiced in Mongolia and Tibet, characterized by elaborate ritual and a strong hierarchal organization.

Daman Arabaic *daman Israil*, "sheep of Israel" -- (see Hyrax).

Daemon (Daimon) Latin, demon or evil spirit (from the Greek *daimon*, divine power, fate, or god) -- any of the secondary divinities in Greek Mythology ranking between the gods and men; guardian, inspiring, or inner spirit; a demon.

Damn Latin *damnare*, to condemn -- originally, to condemn as guilty; doom to an unhappy fate; condemn to endless punishment. Damnation comes from the Late Latin *damnatio*, "the displeasure of God," or condemnation.

Dan Hebrew "a judge" -- the fifth son of Jacob and one of the twelve tribes of Israel, settled in northern Palestine.

Danite A member of the Hebrew tribe of Dan (Judges 13:2); a member of a secret Mormon organization formed in 1838.

Dante Born Durante Alighieri (1265-1321), Italian poet who wrote *The Divine Comedy*.

Dark Ages The Middle Ages, especially the period from about A.D. 476 to the end of the 10th century, so called from the idea that this period in Europe was characterized by intellectual stagnation, widespread ignorance and poverty, and cultural decline.

Darshan Hindi *darsan* and Sanskrit *darsana*, "a seeing" (Greek *derkomai*, "I see") -- in Hindu belief, the virtue, uplifting, or blessing one receives in the presence of a great man.

Darwinian Theory (Natural Selection) Theory of evolution from Charles Robert Darwin (1809-82), which holds that all species of plants and animals developed from ealier forms by hereditary transmission of slight variations in successive generations and that the forms which survive are those that are best adapted to the environment. Also known as Natural Selection or Survival of the Fittest. Darwinism is adherence to this theory.

Datary Latin, to be given away (Medieval Latin *datarius*, official of the Roman chancery) -- the Roman Catholic office of the Curia that examines candidates for papal benefices and handles the claims of those with rights to pensions; the cardinal in charge of this office.

Daven Yiddish *davnen*, to pray -- to recite the prayers of the daily or a holiday liturgy in Judaism.

Davy Jones The spirit of the sea, a humorous name given by sailors. Davy Jones's locker is the bottom of the ocean, which is the grave of those drowned or buried at sea.

Day of Atonement (see Yom Kippur)

Day of Judgment (see Judgment Day)

Deacon Late Latin *diaconus*, a servant of the church (Greek *diakonos*, servant or messenger) -- a Christian elder or church officer who helps the minister, primarily in matters not having to do with worship; a cleric ranking just below a priest in the Roman Catholic and Anglican churches; to read a verse aloud before it is sung by the congregation. A deaconess is a female deacon, usually appointed to assist members of the congregation or parish, such as the sick and poor. Diaconal is of a deacon or deacons (adjective). Diaconate is the rank office, or tenure of a deacon, or a board of deacons.

Deadly Sins The seven capital sins that lead to spiritual death: pride, covetousness, lust, anger, gluttony, envy, and sloth

Dead Sea Inland body of salt water between Israel and Jordan, about 370 square miles and 1,290 feet below sea level.

Dead Sea Scrolls A number of scrolls discovered at various times since 1947, in caves near the Dead Sea, dating between 100 B.C. and A.D. 70 and containing Jewish Scriptural writings and religious writings from an Essenelike community.

Dean Latin *decem*, "ten" (Late Latin *decanus*, chief of ten soldiers, Late Latin Ecclesiastic for monks) -- the presiding official of a cathedral or collegiate church; a Roman Catholic priest chosen by his bishop to supervise a number of parishes within the diocese; the head administrator of a college or university. Deanery is the position, authority, jurisdiction, or official residence of a dean. Decanal is of a dean or deanery.

Decalogue Greek *dekalogos*, "Ten Commandments"

Decretal A decree issued by the Pope on some matter of ecclesiastical discipline; any collection of such decrees, formerly a part of canon law.

Defender of the Faith A title used by English sovereigns, originally conferred upon Henry VIII by Pope Leo X.

Defide Latin term of faith, used to designate Roman Catholic doctrines held to be revealed by God and so requiring the unconditional assent of faith by all.

Defrock (Unfrock) To deprive of the rank or function of priest or minister.

Degradation A punishment whereby a Roman Catholic priest is permanently deprived of the rights of his office.

Deil Scottish variant of *devel*, the devil or a mischievous person.

Deism French *déisme*, from the Latin *deus*, "god" -- belief in the existence of a God on purely rational grounds without reliance on revelation or authority; 17th and 18th century doctrine that God created the world and its natural laws, but takes no further part in its functioning. A deist is a believer in deism (as opposed to an atheist).

Deity Late Latin *deitas*, "divinity" (from the Latin *divinitas*) -- the state of being a god; of divine nature or goodness; a god or goddess. Deific is deifying or making divine; godlike or divine in nature. Deify is to make a god of, or to look upon or worship as a god; to glorify, exalt, or adore in an extreme way (idolize).

Demigod A lesser god of mythology or minor deity; the offspring of a god or goddess and a human; a godlike person.

Demiurge Greek *demiourgos*, one who works for the people, skilled workman, creator -- in Plato's philosophy, the deity as creator of the material world; in Gnosticism, a deity subordinate to the supreme deity, sometimes considered the creator of evil; a ruling force or creative power.

Demogorgon In ancient mythology, a terrifying and mysterious god or demon of the underworld (see Gorgon).

Demon (Daemon) Latin *daemon*, demon or evil spirit (from the Greek *daimon*, divine power, fate, or god) -- a devil or evil spirit. A demoniac (Greek *daimoniakos*) is a person possessed or influenced by a demon. Demonism is belief in the existence and powers of demons. Demonolatry is the worship of demons. Demonology is the study of demons or the beliefs about them. To demonize is to make into a demon or bring under the influence of demons.

Demythologize In theology, to discount mythological elements in the Bible or Christian doctrine in order to facilitate understanding and acceptance.

Denomination Latin *denominatio*, to name -- the name of a class of things; a particular religious sect or body with a specific organization and name. Denominational is of, sponsored by, or under the control of a religious denomination (sectarian). Denominationalism is division into denominations, their system and principles, or acceptance or support of such systems and principles.

Deontology From the Greek *deon*, that which is binding or of necessity -- the theory of duty or moral obligation (ethics).

Deo Volente Late Latin, "God willing" or "if God is willing."

Deprofundis Late Latin, "out of the depths" -- from the opening passage of the Latin version of Psalm 130 ("Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD"), from the deepest sorrow, misery, or despair.

Depth Psychology Any system of psychology dealing with the processes of the unconscious, such as psychoanalysis.

Dervish Turkish (from the Persian *darvesh*, beggar) -- a member of any of various Muslim orders dedicated to a life of poverty and chastity. Some practice whirling and howling as religious acts.

Determinism The doctrine that everything, especially one's choice of action, is determined by a sequence of causes independent of one's will.

Deus Latin, God.

Deuterocanonical From the Greek *deutero*, second -- of or constituting a second or subsequent canon; specifically, designating certain Biblical books accepted by the Roman Catholic Church as canonical but held by Protestants to be apocryphal.

Deva Sanskrit, god -- a god or good spirit in Hindu Mythology.

Devil Greek *diabolos*, "slandering" -- the chief evil spirit, a supernatural being subordinate to, and the foe of, God and the tempter of man; any such subordinate beings who rebelled against God and now reside in hell (demons); referred to in the Septuagint as Satan, in the New Testament as the devil. The devil as an individual, demonic angel is often depicted as a man with horns, a tail, and cloven feet. A devilkin is a small devil, or imp. Devilry is a British term for witchcraft or black magic.

Devil's Advocate Medieval Latin *advocatus diaboli* -- a Roman Catholic official selected to critically examine the facts and make objections in the case of a deceased person named for beatification or canonization; a person who upholds the wrong side or an indefensible cause, perversely or for the sake of argument.

Devolution Medieval Latin *devolutio*, a rolling back -- biologically, evolution of structures toward greater simplicity or disappearance (degeneration).

Devotion Latin *devotio* -- extreme commitment, dedication, loyalty, or consecration; piety or devoutness; private prayers or religious worship (devotional).

Devout Latin *devotus*, devoted -- very religious or pious; showing reverence; earnest, sincere, or heartfelt in faith to one's religion or convictions. ("Pious" suggests scrupulous adherence but may connote hypocrisy. "Religious" stresses constant devotion to religious tenets. "Sanctimonious" implies smugness or haughtiness.)

Dharma Sanskrit, law or custom -- in Hinduism and Buddhism, the cosmic order or law, including the natural and moral principles that apply to all beings and things; dutiful observance of this law in one's life; right conduct.

Diabolic (Diabolical) Late Latin *diabolicus*, derived from the Latin *diabolus*, "devil" -- of the Devil or devils; wicked, cruel, or fiendish. Diabolism is dealings with the Devil or devils by sorcery or witchcraft, or worship of such creatures; the character or condition of such a devilish being. Diablerie is similar, but includes lore about the Devil.

Dialogue Mass A Low Mass in the Roman Catholic Church at which the congregation makes the responses aloud and in unison.

Diaspora Greek, a scattering -- the dispersion of the Jews after the Babylonian exile; the Jews thus dispersed; the places where they settled; any scattering of people with a common origin, background, or beliefs.

Didache Greek, "the teaching" (*didache ton dodeka apostolon*, the teaching of the twelve apostles) -- an anonymous Christian treatise of the early second century A.D. **Didache**, or *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, is a collection of early manuscripts dating back to A.D. 1056 (individually composed as early as the second century), compiled into one volume consisting of 16 chapters of basic Christian teachings, with references to the material of the Gospels. Discovered in a monastery in Constantinople and published by P. Bryennios in 1883, its primitive teachings resemble those in the *Apostolic Constitutions*.

Dies Irae Latin, "Day of Wrath" -- a medieval Latin hymn about Judgment Day and a part of the Requiem Mass.

Diet Scottish, a day's session of an assembly, from the Latin *dies*, "day" -- a formal assembly of royalty and the elect in the Holy Roman Empire. The Diet of Worms was an assembly in the city of Worms on the Rhine River in Hesse, West Germany, where Martin Luther was condemned by the Roman Catholic Church for heresy in 1521.

Dimension Latin *dimensio*, a measuring -- there are four known dimensions, the three space coordinates of length, width, and depth, along with the fourth dimension of time in the theory of relativity. The space-time continuum is a four-dimensional continuum with four coordinates, the three dimensions of space and that of time, in which any event can be located.

Diocese Latin *diocesis*, district, government (Greek *dioikesis*, administration) -- the district under a bishop's jurisdiction. A diocesan is the bishop of a diocese.

Dionysius Exiguus Roman monk and Christian theologian of the sixth century A.D., believed to have introduced the current system of numbering years on the basis of the Christian Era.

Dirge Latin *dirige*, imperative of *dirigere*, "to direct," the first word of an antiphon in the Office for the Burial of the Dead (Psalm 5:8) -- a funeral hymn; a slow, sad song, poem, or musical composition expressing grief, mourning, or lament.

Disanoint To annul the anointing of.

Discalced Latin *discalceatus*, unshod or without shoes -- barefooted, as members of certain religious orders.

Disciple Latin *discipulus*, "learner" -- a pupil or follower of any teacher or school of religion, learning, art, etc.; an early follower of Jesus.

Disciples of Christ A Christian denomination, organized in 1809, that makes the Bible the only basis for faith and practice and baptizes by immersion.

Disciplinant Member of a former Spanish Christian sect who flagellated and otherwise tortured themselves publicly as a means of discipline.

Disembody To free from bodily existence or make incorporeal.

Disjectamembra Latin, scattered parts or fragments, as of an author's writings.

Dispensation Latin *dispensatio*, management or charge -- theologically, the ordering of events under divine authority; an exemption or release from the provisions of a specific Roman Catholic Church law; any religious system.

Dissent Latin *dissentire*, apart from thinking or feeling -- to differ in belief or opinion (disagree); to reject the doctrines and forms of an established church (religious nonconformity). Traditionally, a dissenter is a Protestant who refuses to accept the doctrines and forms of the Established Church in England or Scotland.

Ditheism (Dualism) Belief in two supreme gods (dualism).

Diurnal Latin *diurnalis*, daily -- a service book containing prayers for the daytime canonical hours.

Dives Latin, rich -- parable of the rich man (Luke 16:19-31) from the Latin Vulgate Bible.

Divination Latin *divinatio*, from *divinare* (divine) -- the act or practice of foretelling the future or unknown by occult means; a prophecy or augury. A divining rod is a forked branch or stick alleged to reveal hidden matter, such as water, minerals, treasure, or artifacts, by bending downward toward the desired object buried underground (also known as a dowsing rod).

Divine Latin *divinus*, from *divus* (diety) -- of or like God or a god; given or inspired by God (holy or sacred); devoted to God (religious or sacrosanct); supreme qualities (good, almighty, etc.); having to do with theology or a theologian; a clergyman. The divine right of kings is traditionally the God-given right of kings to rule. Divinity is the quality or condition of being divine; a divine being, god, or deity; a divine power, virtue, trait, or characteristic; theology or the study of religion. To divinize is to deify.

Divine Liturgy The Eucharistic rite of the Eastern Orthodox Church.

Divine Office The prayers assigned to each of the canonical hours.

Docetism Greek *Doketai*, name of an early Christian sect which held that Christ merely seemed to have a human body.

Doctrine Latin *doctrina*, variant of doctor -- teachings or something taught as the principle or creed of a religion, political party, etc.; tenets (maintenance or defense of a theory or principle); dogma (handed down by authority as true and indisputable); a rule or theory of law, based on carefully worked out principles and advanced by its adherents.

Dog Latin Incorrect or ungrammatical Latin.

Dogma Latin and Greek, an opinion or that which one believes (Late Latin, a decree or order) -- a doctrine, tenet, or belief (individually or collectively); a positive, arrogant assertion of opinion; theologically, a doctrine or body of doctrines formally and authoritatively affirmed. Dogmatic is doctrinal; asserted without proof (a priori); stating opinion in an assertive or arrogant manner. Dogmatics is the study of religious dogmas, particularly those of Christianity. Dogmatism (Greek *dogmatizein*, to lay down a decree) is dogmatic assertion of opinion, usually without reference to evidence. To dogmatize is to speak or write dogmatically, or formulate or express as dogma.

Dom Latin *dominus*, a lord or master -- title given to certain monks and clerics; a title of respect formerly given to gentlemen of Brazil and Portugal, used with the given name.

Dominical Late Latin *Dominicus*, "of the Lord" (Latin *dominus*, of a lord) -- having to do with Jesus as the Lord; having to do with the Lord's Day (Sunday). Dominical letter is any of the first seven letters in the alphabet as used in church calendars to indicate Sundays -- the letters are assigned to the first seven days of January, and the letter falling to Sunday is the arbitrary symbol for Sunday the rest of the year.

Dominican Order A mendicant order of friars or nuns founded in 1215 by St. Dominic (1170-1221), a Spanish priest (celebrated August 4).

Dominie From the Latin *dominus*, dominate -- a pastor of the U.S. Dutch Reformed Church; generally, any pastor or clergyman; a Scottish schoolmaster.

Dominus Latin, "the Lord," such as in *Dominus vobiscum*, "the Lord be with you."

Donatist Member of a North African Christian sect formed in the fourth century A.D. by Donatus, Bishop of Casae Nigrae, holding extremely rigorous views concerning purity and sanctity.

Doppelganger Greek *doppel*, double + *ganger*, goer -- the supposed ghostly double or wraith of a living person.

Dossal (Dossel) Medieval Latin *dossale*, variant of *dorsalis*, dorsal -- an ornamental cloth hung behind an altar, at the back of a chancel, etc.; formerly, an ornamental upholstery at the back of a chair or throne.

Douay Bible (Douay Version) English version of the Bible translated from the Latin Vulgate edition for the use of Roman Catholics. The New Testament was originally published at Reims in 1582 and the Old Testament at Douai from 1609-10.

Doubting Thomas A chronic skeptic or a person who habitually doubts, so named after the Apostle Thomas.

Doxology Greek *doxologia*, a praising -- any of several hymns of praise to God, often beginning with "Praise God from whom all blessings flow." The greater doxology begins *Gloria in excelsis Deo* ("glory to God in the highest") and the lesser doxology begins *Gloria Patri* ("glory to the Father").

Doxy Abbreviation of orthodoxy: a doctrine or creed, particularly in religion.

Drachma Greek *drachme*, "a handful" -- an ancient Greek silver coin and a unit of weight approximately equal to this coin.

Dragon Latin and Greek *drakon*, "the seeing one" (dragon or serpent) -- a mythical monster, usually represented as a large, fire-breathing reptile with wings and claws; archaic term for a large serpent or snake; a word used in the King James Bible to translate several Hebrew words describing Satan (such as serpent, Old Serpent, jackal, etc.).

Dragonade The persecution of the French Protestants by the troops of Louis XIV, especially by the use of dragoons (heavily armed cavalymen).

Druid (Druidism) From the Celtic *druí*, "oak-wise" -- a member of a Celtic religious order of priests, soothsayers, judges, poets, etc., in ancient Britain, Ireland, and France. A dryad is a wood nymph from Greek and Roman Mythology.

Druse (Druze) A member of a secret Islamic sect in Syria and Lebanon, founded by Ismail al-Durazi (Arabic *Duruz*, "tailor").

Dualism (Dualistic) The theological doctrine that there are two mutually antagonistic principles in the universe, good and evil; the doctrine that man has two natures, physical and spiritual; the philosophical theory that the world is ultimately composed of, or explicable in terms of, two basic entities, mind and matter.

Duende Spanish, "goblin" or "spirit" -- a special quality or charm that makes one irresistibly attractive.

Dugong A genus of large, whalelike, tropical mammals that live along the shores of the Indian Ocean and feed mostly on seaweed. Biblically, a sea cow.

Dukhobors Russian *dukhobortsy*, "spirit wrestlers" -- a Russian religious sect separated from the Orthodox Church in 1785, many of whom emigrated to Western Canada in the 1890's to escape persecution.

Dulia Greek *douleia*, "service" -- homage paid in the Roman Catholic Church to angels and saints. Hyperdulia is a homage paid to the Virgin Mary as holier than any other created being. Latria is worship due to God alone.

Dunkers (Dunkards) Greek *tunker*, "dipper" -- Church of the Brethren, a sect of German-American Baptists opposed to military service and the taking of oaths, so named from their practice of baptismal immersion.

Duomo Italian, dome -- a cathedral.

Dybbuk Hebrew *dibbuq*, from *dabhaq*, to cleave or hold to -- in Jewish folklore, the spirit of a dead person that enters the body of a living person and possesses it.

Easter From Eastre, the dawn goddess, a pagan vernal festival nearly coincident with the paschal festival of the church, an annual Christian festival celebrating the resurrection of Jesus Christ held on the first Sunday after the date of the first full moon that occurs on or after March

21. Eastertide is the period after Easter, extending in various churches to Ascension Day, Whitsunday, or Trinity Sunday.

Eblis Arabic *Iblis*, Muslim for Satan.

Ecce Homo Latin, "behold the man," Pilate's words when he presented Jesus to the populace before the crucifixion (John 19:5, Latin Vulgate); a picture or statue of Jesus wearing a crown of thorns.

Ecclesia Assembly of Christians; members of a church or a church building;

Ecclesiastes Hebrew *qohleth*, he who calls together an assembly; member of an ecclesia; a book of the Old Testament written by King Solomon (Septuagint). An ecclesiastic is a clergyman. Ecclesiastical is of the church or the clergy, used in early Latin and Greek writings about Christianity.

Ecclesiasticus (Ecclus) Latin *ecclesiasticus liber*, "the church book," an Apocryphal book of proverbs included as canonical in the Douay Bible.

Ecclesiology The study of church architecture.

Ecumenical Latin *oecumenicus*, Greek *oikoumenikos*, of or from the whole world; general or universal; concerning the Christian church as a whole; furthering the unity of Christian churches. Ecuminism is the practice or principles of promoting cooperation or better understanding among differing religious faiths; ecumenical movement among Christian churches.

Eden Hebrew *edhen*, "delight"; the garden where Adam and Eve first lived; paradise.

Edify (Edification) To instruct or improve morally or spiritually; enlighten.

Edom Ancient kingdom in southwest Asia, south of the Dead Sea, the citizens of which were descendants of Esau, son of Isaac and brother of Jacob.

Eleatic Of an ancient Greek school of philosophy centered in Elea, a Greek colony in Italy, during the 5th and 6th centuries B.C., which held that the singular and unchangeable "Being" was the only reality and that plurality, change, and motion were illusory, its outstanding adherents being Parmenides and Zeno.

Elias Elijah -- spelling used in the New Testament of the King James Version and the Douay Version Bibles.

Elohim Plural form of the Hebrew *eloah*, God. Elohist is the unknown author of the parts of the Bible where Elohim is used for God instead of Yahweh.

Elysium (Elysian Plain) Dwelling place of the virtuous after death in Greek Mythology; paradise.

Ember Designation of three days (usually Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday) for prayer and fasting during a specific week out of each of the four seasons of the year, observed primarily in the Roman Catholic Church.

Emir Title given to Mohammed's descendants through his daughter Fatima; a ruler, prince, or commander in certain Islamic countries.

Empyrean (Empyrean) The highest heaven, abode of God, sphere of pure light or fire; sky, firmament, or celestial vault.

Energumen Person supposedly possessed by an evil spirit; fanatic or enthusiast.

Entelechy The actualization of potentiality or of true existence in Aristotelian philosophy; vitalism -- the immanent force which controls and directs life and its development.

Ephah An ancient Hebrew dry measure, estimated from 1/3 bushel to just over one bushel.

Ephod Richly embroidered outer vestment worn by Jewish priests

Ephraim Hebrew *ephrayim*, "very fruitful" -- one of the twelve tribes of Israel descended from the youngest son of Joseph; the kingdom of Israel.

Epicurean Of the philosophy of Epicurus (341-270 B.C.), a Greek philosopher who taught that the goal of man should be a life of calm pleasure regulated by morality, temperance, serenity, and cultural development.

Epigraphy The study of deciphering, interpreting, and classifying ancient inscriptions.

Epiphany An appearance or manifestation of a supernatural being; a yearly festival (also called the Twelfth Day) held in some Christian churches on January 6, commemorating the revealing of Jesus as Christ to the Gentiles in the persons of the Magi, along with his baptism; a moment of sudden intuitive understanding or a flash of insight.

Episcopal (Episcopalian) Designating any church governed by bishops, based on the theory that government of the church rests in a group of bishops and not an individual.

Epistle Greek *epistole*, a letter or message -- a long, formal, instructive letter; any of the letters of the New Testament written by an Apostle.

Equinox When the sun crosses the equator, making night and day of equal length in all parts of the earth. Vernal equinox occurs about March 21, while the Autumnal Equinox occurs about September 22.

Erasmus, Desiderius Born Gerhard Gerhards (1466-1536), Dutch humanist, scholar, and theologian

Erastus, Thomas Born Thomas Liebler (1524-83), German theologian and physician who advocated the supreme authority of the state in church matters.

Erebus Dark place under the earth in Greek Mythology through which the dead passed before entering Hades.

Eremit Hermit or religious recluse.

Erlking A spirit in Germanic folklore who does mischief or evil, especially to children -- from *elverkonge*, king of the elves.

Eros The god of love in Greek Mythology, son of Aphrodite, and identified by the Romans with Cupid; sexual love or desire; libido or the psychic energy associated with it.

Eschatology Branch of theology dealing with death, resurrection, judgment, and immortality; biblical study of the end times surrounding the second coming of Christ.

Esdras Douay Bible name for Ezra.

Esprit French, "spirit."

Essene Member of an ancient Jewish sect of ascetics and mystics existing between the second century B.C. and the second century A.D.

Eternal Without beginning or end; everlasting; unchanging; perpetual; infinite; timeless or beyond time.

Ethereal Heavenly or celestial, from the word "ether," an imaginary substance filling all space beyond earth, or the hypothetical medium in space for transmitting light waves and radiant energy.

Ethics Humanist study of standards of conduct and moral judgment.

Eucharist Holy Communion; the consecrated bread and wine used for holy communion in the Roman Catholic Church. Eulogia is bread blessed but not consecrated, given to the noncommunicants at Mass, particularly in the Eastern Orthodox Church. Another term for Eucharist is Housel, which is the administration of the Eucharist.

Eudaemonia Aristotle's philosophy of happiness derived from a life of activity governed by reason as the universal goal. Eudaemonism is the system of ethics that considers the moral value of actions in terms of their ability to produce personal happiness.

Evangelism Greek *euangelistes*, "bringer of good news" -- preaching or spreading the Gospel; any zealous effort in propagandizing for a cause. Evangel is another word for Gospel. Evangelical is in, of, or according to the Gospels of the New Testament, generally Protestant churches that emphasize salvation by faith in the atonement of Jesus rather than the efficacy of the sacraments and good works alone.

Evensong Evening worship service in the Anglican Church; same as Vespers in the Roman Catholic Church.

Evoke To summon a spirit or demon.

Evolution Theory developed by Charles Darwin that all species of plants and animals developed from primitive biological forms by hereditary transmission of slight variations in successive generations, mutations, and natural selection.

Exalt To raise on high, lift up in praise, glorify, extol.

Excommunicate To exclude, by an act of ecclesiastical authority, from the sacraments, rights, and privileges of a church

Execrate To curse, denounce, or call down evil on.

Exegesis Greek, "explanation" -- explanation, critical analysis, or interpretation of biblical scripture. An exegete is an expert in exegesis.

Existentialism Philosophical movement stemming from Kierkegaard and based on the doctrine that existence takes precedence over essence and holds that man is totally free and responsible for his acts, which is the source of dread and anguish that encompass him.

Exorcism Ritual used to drive out evil spirits.

Expiate Atone for sins; amends or reparation.

Extrasensory Perception either apart from the normal senses or in addition to them.

Exult Rejoice; leap for joy.

Faith Latin *fides*, "confidence" -- complete trust, confidence, reliance; allegiance, loyalty; unquestioning belief that does not require proof or evidence; firm belief in Christianity.

Fakir Hindu or Muslim ascetic who lives by begging.

Faldstool Portable stool or desk used in praying; backless chair used by a bishop when officiating in a church not his own; a desk in an Anglican Church at which the litany is read.

Fall of Man Original sin -- Adam's fall from God's grace as a result of giving into the temptation to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which led to the curses of all mankind.

False Prophet

F.A.M. Free and Accepted Masons

Family Bible Large, oversized Bible with illuminated pages for recording births, marriages, and deaths.

Family of Love (Children of God) Originally called Children of God, a cult founded by David Brandt Berg based on sexual promiscuity, rebellion against established systems of authority, and perverted interpretations of biblical scripture and Christianity. Due to international disrepute, the organization changed its name to Family of Love and its founder went into hiding. (See Children of God.)

Fane Latin *fanum*, sanctuary or temple -- archaic term for a temple or church.

Fanon Capelike vestment worn by the Pope when celebrating a High Mass; manipule.

Fasching Uninhibited revelry celebrated in Austria and Germany prior to Lent.

Fast To abstain from all or certain foods for religious or spiritual purposes; to eat very little or nothing.

Fatalism Belief that all events are inevitable because they are determined by a fate or destiny beyond human control.

Father Confessor Roman Catholic priest who hears confessions.

Fatidic (Fatidical) Latin *fatidicus*, "prophesying" -- of divination or prophecy.

Feast of Lots Purim

Fellowship Companionship; friendly association; company; brotherhood; mutual sharing of activity, experience, or interest.

Feria Ancient Roman holidays or festivals; any day except Saturday, Sunday, or one designated a festival or vigil.

Fideism Belief that faith alone is the basis of knowledge rather than reason.

Fiery Cross A burning cross used by the Ku Klux Klan as an emblem or to inspire terror; wooden cross with charred or bloody ends used by ancient Scottish clans as a signal calling men to battle.

Firmament The sky, viewed poetically as a solid arch or vault.

First Fruits The earliest produce or crops of the season (Exodus 23:16); first products, results, or profits of any activity.

Fisher of Men

Flabellum Large fan carried by the Pope's attendants on ceremonial occasions.

Flagellation To whip or flog oneself with a flagellum (whip) for religious discipline.

Flèche Slender spire over the intersection of the nave and transept on some Gothic churches.

Flock (Fold) Members of a church.

Flood (Great Flood) Genesis 7

Flying Buttress Buttress connected with a wall at some distance by an arch or partial arch which serves to resist outward pressure.

Flying Dutchman Fabled Dutch sailor condemned to sail the seas until Judgment Day, his ghostly ship considered a bad omen by those who think they see it.

Folklore A term for "popular antiquities," coined by W. J. Thomas in 1846; the traditional beliefs, legends, sayings, and customs of a people; the study and scientific investigation of such traditions.

Font A basin for holy water in a church; a bowl, usually made of stone, which holds the water used in baptismal services; a stoup.

Forbidden Fruit Fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, forbidden by God for Adam and Eve to eat (Genesis 2:17); any sinful or forbidden pleasure.

Foreordain Predestine

Forgive To give up resentment against or stop being angry with; pardon or overlook sins, crimes, wrongdoing, offenses, etc.; give up all claim to punish or exact revenge; cancel or remit a debt.

Forsake Give up, renounce; abandon, leave.

Fra Brother; title given to an Italian friar or monk.

Francis of Assisi Born Giovanni Bernardone in Assisi, Italy (1181-1226), Italian preacher who lived in poverty, devoted himself to the care of lepers, rebuilt neglected churches, and founded the Franciscan order of monks. In response to the general decadence of religious orders throughout the fourteenth century, Francis founded the order of the Friars Minor, or Franciscans (also known as the Gray Friars for their gray robes), in 1209, a religious order of the Roman Catholic Church approved by Pope Innocent III. In response to Jesus' Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5, Francis dedicated his life and the order to living by the standards of the Gospels and imitating the life of the human Jesus, while still recognizing the authority of the Catholic Church (in opposition to the Cathars). The basic Franciscan principles were to preach the Gospel and obey it literally, care for the sick and suffering, forsake everything for Christ (wealth and learning), and to work in the world to support themselves. Various branches of the Franciscan order exist, including the Conventual and the Capuchin. St. Francis made the crib of the baby Jesus popular at Christmas and his day is celebrated on October 4.

Frankincense Gum resin obtained from various Arabian and NE African trees, often burned as incense.

Freemasonry International secret society with principles of brotherhood, charity, and mutual aid. A freemason was originally a skilled mason (one who builds with stone, brick, or concrete blocks) who travelled from town to town without restraint by local guilds.

Freethinker Someone who forms their opinions about religion independently of established belief, tradition, or authority.

Friar A member of any mendicant order of the Roman Catholic Church, such as an Augustinian, Carmelite, Dominican (Black Friar), or Franciscan; a monk who makes his livelihood by toil or begging. A friary is a place where friars live, such as a monastery. Friar Minor is a member of the Franciscan order which follows the original rules of Francis of Assisi.

Frock Robe worn by a monk, friar, or priest.

Frontal (Frontlet) An ornamental band or phylactery worn on the forehead; an ornamental drapery or its border for the front of an altar; a facade.

Frontispiece Front view of a church.

Fruitful Producing much; productive, prolific; producing results.

Fundamentalism Religious beliefs based on a literal interpretation of all biblical scripture, regarded as fundamental to Christian faith and morals; the twentieth century American Protestant movement based on these literal beliefs.

Gad Hebrew *gadh*, "fortune," one of the twelve tribes of Israel descended from the seventh son of Jacob. Also, a euphemism for God, such as Gadzooks (God's hooks, or the nails of Christ); a mild oath or expression of surprise.

Galilee Hebrew *gliha-hoyim*, "district of the Gentiles" -- region of northern Israel where Jesus came from. Galilean was a term for a Christian. A galilee is a porch or chapel at the western entrance of certain medieval churches, so named because it's at the less sacred end of the church, compared with the Galilee of the Gentiles.

Gallicanism Principles enunciated by the French Roman Catholic Church in 1682, claiming limited autonomy (as opposed to ultramontanism). From the word Gaul, a part of the Roman Empire that is now mainly France.

Gargoyle A projecting ornament on a building carved in the likeness of an animal or creature with grotesque features, sometimes used as a waterspout.

Gehenna Valley of Hinnom, near Jerusalem, where refuse was burned in biblical times; Douay Bible word for hell; any place of fiery torment. (See Hell)

Gemara Aramaic, "completion" -- the second and supplementary part of the Talmud, providing a commentary on the Mishna, or first part.

Genuflect To bend the knee in reverence, worship, or submission.

Gerah Hebrew, "a bean" -- ancient Hebrew coin and weight equal to 1/20 of a shekel.

Gethsemane (Mount of Olives) Aramaic *gath shemani*, "oil press" -- a garden or olive grove outside of Jerusalem where the agony, betrayal, and arrest of Jesus took place (Matthew 26:36-56, Mark 14:32-53, Luke 22:39-54, John 18:1-12).

Ghazi Islamic hero who wars against infidels.

Gheber Persian *gabr*, "infidel" -- Islamic name for Zoroastrian.

Ghetto Italian, "foundry" -- quarter in Venice, Italy, where a cannon foundry was located, which was occupied by Jews, later to be known in certain European cities as a section of a city to which Jews were restricted, particularly during World War I. It is now a term for any section of a city in which many members of some minority group live, or to which they are restricted by economic pressure or social discrimination.

Ghost Old English *gast*, German *geist*, soul or spirit; supposedly the disembodied spirit of the deceased that appears to the living as a shadowy, haunting apparition.

Ghoul Arabic *ghul*, demon of the mountains -- an evil spirit in Oriental folklore that robs graves and feeds on the flesh of the dead.

Giaour Arabic *kafir*, "infidel," variant of the Persian *gabr*, Islamic term for a non-Muslim, especially a Christian.

Gideons International Protestant organization for dispensing Bibles, such as in hotel rooms or hospitals, founded in 1899 by a group of traveling salesmen.

Gloria In Excelsis Deo "Glory to God on high," the first words of the greater doxology. Gloria Patri is "glory to the Father," the first words of the lesser doxology.

Glorify Latin *gloria facere*, to make glory -- to make glorious or give glory to; worship, exalt, honor, or praise extravagantly.

Gloriole Halo

Gnome Greek, wise or intelligent; according to ancient folklore, any of a race of small misshapen dwarfs supposed to dwell in the earth and guard its treasures -- so called by Paracelsus from the belief that gnomes had occult knowledge of the earth.

Gnostic From the Greek *gnosis*, knowledge, or *gnostikos*, having knowledge -- a belief system derived from a combination of Greek philosophy, Oriental mysticism, and Christianity, which stresses salvation through knowledge; positive, intuitive knowledge in spiritual matters.

Goblin Greek *kobalos*, "sprite" -- in ancient folklore, an evil or mischievous sprite, ugly or misshapen in form.

God

Godparent A person who sponsors a child, usually at birth or baptism, and assumes responsibility for its faith.

Golden Rule Treat others as you'd have them treat you (Matthew 7:12, Luke 6:3).

Golem Jewish legend of a man artificially created by cabalistic rites; a kind of robot.

Golgotha Greek "skull" or "The Place of the Skull" (Aramaic *gulgaltha*)-- the place where Jesus was crucified outside Jerusalem (Matthew 27:33, Mark 15:22, Luke 23:33, John 19:17).

Golly (Gosh) Euphemism for God; an exclamation of surprise.

Good Book The Bible.

Good Friday The Friday before Easter Sunday, observed in commemoration of the crucifixion of Jesus.

Good Samaritan Someone who helps another unselfishly, from Luke 10:30-37.

Good Shepherd An epithet for Jesus, from John 10:11.

Gospel From the Old English *godspell*, meaning "good story" or "good news," which originated from the Greek *euangelion* (evangel). First used to describe the good news of Christ and his teachings of redemption and later ascribed to the New Testament letters of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, the first three of which have become known as the Synoptic Gospels due to their harmonized view of the life and teachings of Jesus. A gospeller is either a person who reads the Gospel in church services, one who claims sole possession of gospel truth, or a Puritan.

Gothic Of the Goths or their language -- the Germanic peoples that conquered most of the Roman Empire from the 3rd to 5th century A.D.; a style of architecture developed in Western Europe between the 12th and 16th centuries, characterized by ribbed vaulting, flying buttresses, pointed arches, and steep roofs; medieval, barbarous, or uncivilized; style of literature with a medieval atmosphere, suggesting mystery or horror.

Goy A Gentile or non-Jew.

Grace Mercy or clemency; the unmerited love and favor of God toward man; divine influence acting in man to make him pure and morally strong; a short mealtime prayer of thanks and blessing; title of reverence used in addressing a church official.

Gradin A shelf behind an altar for articles such as candlesticks; one of a series of steps or seats arranged in tiers.

Gradual Book of hymns originally sung on the steps of a pulpit; a verse or chant, especially from the Psalms, presented after the Epistle at Mass in a Catholic church.

Gramarye (Gramary) Magic or occult knowledge.

Graven Image An idol engraved or carved out of wood, stone, precious metals, or constructed from other materials.

Great Week (Holy Week) The week preceding Easter in the Eastern Orthodox Church.

Greek Orthodox Church The established church of Greece and an autonomous part of the Eastern Orthodox Church.

Gregorian Something introduced either by Pope Gregory I from 590-604 A.D., or Pope Gregory III from 1572-85. Gregorian Chant is a ritual plainsong introduced under Pope Gregory I and used in the Roman Catholic Church: it is unharmonized, unaccompanied, and not divided into measures. The Gregorian Calendar is a corrected form of the Julian calendar, introduced by Pope Gregory XIII in 1582 and now used in most countries of the world: it has a 365-day year and a leap year of 366 days every fourth even year.

Gremial Lap cloth placed across the knees of a bishop when attending Mass.

Gris-Gris Amulet, charm, or spell associated with voodoo.

Guru Hindu spiritual teacher.

Gutenberg Bible Considered to be the first book printed from movable type, a Latin Bible produced at Mainz before 1456 and attributed in part to Guttenberg.

Gymnosophist Member of an ancient Hindu sect of ascetics who wore little or no clothing.

Gypsy Member of a wandering people originated from Egypt (possibly India), with dark skin and black hair, usually known for fortunetelling or as musicians.

Habit Monk's costume.

Hades Home of the dead beneath the earth in Greek Mythology; euphemism for hell.

Hafiz A Muslim who has memorized the Qur'an.

Hag (Hagge) Originally a female demon or evil spirit; witch or enchantress; an ugly, vicious old woman.

Haggadah (Haggada) Derived from the Hebrew *haged*, "to narrate" -- basically, non-legal portions of rabbinic literature, such as legends, stories, homilies, ethics, history, medicine, poetry, theosophy, theology, folklore, etc.; an anecdote or parable that explains or illustrates some point of law (Halachah) in the Talmud; the part of the Talmud devoted to such narratives; a narrative of the Exodus read at the Seder during Passover, called the *Seder Haggadah shel Pesach*, "Order of the Narrative of Passover"; a book containing this narrative, called a Midrashim, and the Seder ritual. In the 16th century, all the haggadic material from the Babylonian Talmud was extracted and compiled by Rabbi Jacob Ben Solomon Ibn Habib in a work entitled *En Yaakob*. Samuel Jaffe likewise collected the Haggadah from the Palestinian Talmud and compiled it into the *Yifeh Mareh*. H. N. Bialik and J. H. Rawnitzki made a collection of the Haggadah of the Talmud and Midrashim, called the *Sefer Haggadah*. Professor Louis Ginzberg made a more scientific collection of the Haggadah from the Creation to Esther, published as *The Legends of the Jews*.

Hagio- Greek *hagios*, "holy" -- prefix meaning holy, sacred, or saintly.

Hagiocracy Rule by priests, saints, or others considered holy; theocracy..

Hagiographa From the Hebrew *kethabhe haqqodhesh*, "writings of holiness" -- those books of the Old Testament not in the Law or the Prophets, comprising the third and final part of the Jewish Scriptures.

Hagiography Historical science which studies documents or writings about holiness, holy persons, and saints, particularly the narratives or biographies. For example, early Christian churches honored the anniversaries of martyrs, of which lists were kept with the dates of each martyrdom along with narratives and biographies. Eusebius of Caesarea (cerca A.D. 260-340) compiled two known books of martyrs documenting their passions. These types of accounts came to be categorized as Passionaries or Legendaries. The processes involved in Hagiography include establishing the original composition of the texts and determining their historical value. The founder of the more modern science of Hagiography in the early 17th century was Heribert Rosweyde.

Hagiology Sacred writings or literature about the lives of saints, particularly their legends; a published collection of such legends or a catalog of saints.

Hagioscope Narrow opening in an inside wall of a medieval church to allows those in a side aisle, or transept, see the main altar.

Hail Mary (Ave Maria)

Hajj Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca expected of every Muslim to make at least once in their lifetime. Hajji is a title given to a Muslim who has made this pilgrimage.

Hakim A ruler, judge, or governor in Islamic regions; a doctor or physician in Islamic regions.

Halakha (Halacha) Hebrew, rule by which to go -- any of the laws or ordinances not written down in the Scriptures but based on an oral interpretation of them and documented in the Talmud.

Halidom (Halidome) Archaic term for a holy place or sacred relic.

Hallah Traditional loaf of rich white bread, usually twisted or braided, eaten by Jews on the Sabbath and holidays.

Hallel The recital or singing of Psalms 113 to 118 as part of Jewish religious services during certain festivals.

Hallelujah (Halleluia) Hebrew exclamation, "Praise the Lord!" (Greek *hallelouia*, or Latin *alleluia*.)

Hallow To make holy or sacred; sanctify; consecrate; venerate; devote.

Halloween All Hallows' Eve, the evening of October 31, followed by All Saints' Day (Allhallows or Hallowmas).

Halo Greek *halos*, "round disk," as of a threshing floor or a heavenly body; the ring of light that appears to encircle luminous objects, such as the sun or moon, resulting from the refraction of light through ice particles in the atmosphere; nimbus -- a symbolic ring or disk around the head of a holy person or saint depicted in art, representing splendor, glory, virtue, innocence, etc.

Hamite A dark-skinned descendant of Ham, Noah's second son (Genesis 6:10), whose origins are Northeast Africa, particularly Egypt.

Hanukkah (Hanuka) Hebrew, "dedication" -- Jewish festival commemorating the rededication of the Temple by Judas Maccabaeus in 165 B.C. and celebrated for eight days beginning the 25th day of Kislev.

Haphtara Hebrew *haphtarah*, "conclusion" -- any of the readings from the Prophets, following a reading of the Pentateuch, in synagogue services on the Sabbath and Jewish holidays.

Hare Krishna Hindi *Hari*, one of the names of Vishnu: Hindu cult founded in 1966, involving certain Vedic beliefs and stressing devotion to Krishna.

Harrow Archaic term to enter hell and rescue the righteous, said of Christ.

Haruspex Latin, "inspector of entrails" -- any of a class of lesser priests and soothsayers in ancient Rome who professed to foretell the future by interpreting the entrails of sacrificial animals.

Hacidic Jew (Hasadim) From the Hebrew *hasid*, a pious person -- members of a sect of Jewish mystics (Hasadim) founded by Baal Shem Tov (born Israel ben Eliezer, 1700-60) in 18th century Poland, who emphasize joyful worship of an immanent God.

Hathor Goddess of love, joy, and mirth from Egyptian Mythology, usually represented as having the head or ears of a cow.

Hazzan (Hazan) Hebrew *khazan*, a cantor in a synagogue.

Heart In relation to human anatomy, the region of the heart -- the central part, essence, or core; source of emotions, feeling, and innermost nature; inmost thought, consciousness, or conscience.

Heathen A member of any nation or people not worshiping the God of Israel; pagan; irreligious; uncivilized or unenlightened.

Heaven The dwelling place of God and his angels and where the blessed will live after death; Providence; the space which overarches the earth in which the stars, sun, and moon appear; firmament; visible sky.

Heathen A member of any nation or people not worshiping the God of Israel; pagan; irreligious; uncivilized or unenlightened.

Hebrew Hebrew *ibhri*, "one from across" (the river) -- member of a group of Semetic peoples descended from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; an Israelite or Jew; the ancient Semetic language of the Israelites in which most of the Old Testament was written. The Hebrews called their language "the speech of Canaan," since it was adopted from the language spoken by the inhabitants of the land of Canaan. It was later to be referred to as the Judean language of the Kingdom of Judah, although slightly different than the language spoken by the northern Kingdom of Israel (see Judges 12:5-6 for an example). After the destruction of Judah in 586 B.C., Hebrew became a holy and classical language as it was eventually replaced by Aramaic as the spoken and written language. The modern, Western European, form of the traditional, rabbinic, Hebrew language is the official language of the current state of Israel.

Hecatomb Greek *hekatombe* (*hekaton*, hundred + *bous*, ox) -- the large-scale sacrifice of cattle in ancient Greece, specifically the slaughter of one hundred cattle at a time; any large-scale sacrifice or slaughter.

Heck Scottish *heigh*, exclamation and euphemism for hell.

Heder (plural, Hedarim) Yiddish *hedher*, "chamber" -- a Jewish religious school for young children.

Hedonism From the Greek *hedone*, "delight" -- in philosophy, an ethical doctrine that pleasure in the form of happiness of the individual or society is the principle good; in psychology, a theory that a person always acts to seek pleasure and avoid pain (hedonics is a branch of

psychology dealing with pleasurable and unpleasurable feelings); in general, the self-indulgent pursuit of pleasure as a way of life.

Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich German philosopher (1770-1831) who held that every existent idea or fact belongs to an all-embracing mind in which each idea or situation (thesis) evokes its opposite (antithesis) and these two result in a unified whole (synthesis), which in turn becomes a new thesis.

Hegira Arabic *hijrah*, "separation" or "flight" (also *hajara*, "to leave") -- the forced journey of Mohammed from Mecca to Medina in A.D. 622, from which the Islamic era dates; any journey made as an escape or for the sake of safety; flight.

Hegumen From the Greek *hegeisthai*, "to lead" -- the elected head of a monastery in the Eastern Orthodox Church (corresponding to an abbot in the Roman Catholic Church).

Heliolatry Worship of the sun. The Ancient Egyptians worshiped the sun god Ra.

Hell Old English *hel*, "hidden, unseen place" -- generally identified with the Hebrew *Sheol* or the Greek *Hades*, the place where the spirits of the dead are; the place where the devil and evil spirits live and to which the spirits of the unsaved are doomed to everlasting punishment after death (2 Peter 2:4), much like the Roman *Tartarus*, which, according to pagan mythology, was situated as far below Hades as Hades was from the sun. The word "hell" in the New Testament was used interchangeably in the King James Version for Sheol, Hades, and Tartarus. It is also used for the Hebrew *Gehenna*, "Valley of Hinnom" -- traditionally a deep gorge in the vicinity of Jerusalem where refuse was continually burned (also a location in 2 Chronicles 28:3 where King Ahaz burned his children in sacrifice to the pagan god Molech), which has become in Christianity a place of fiery torment. This idea of hell (*Gehenna*, or Greek *geenna*) as a place of everlasting fire reserved for sinners was used primarily by Jesus (Matthew 5:22, 5:29-30, 10:28, 18:9, 23:15, 23:33, Mark 9:43-47, Luke 12:5). Jesus also referred to Hades in Luke 16:23 as a place of fiery torment. Hell as a place of punishment can be traced to prophecies in the Old Testament (compare Daniel 12:2 with Matthew 24:46). In Norse Mythology, Hel was the daughter of Loki and goddess of death and the underworld where the dead not slain in battle were sent.

Hellenist Greek *Hellenistes*, "imitator of the Greeks" -- a non-Greek who adopted the Greek language and customs, such as the Jews of the Diaspora; a specialist in the Greek language and learning. From the word Hellene (Greek *Hellen*), the ancient Greeks, particularly from the eighth century B.C. to the death of Alexander the Great in 323 B.C. Hellenic is of the Hellenes, a term for Greek. Hellenism is the character, thought, culture, customs, language, or ethical system of ancient Greece; adoption of the ancient Greek ways of life. Hellenistic is of or characteristic of the Hellenists or Hellenism; of Greek history, language, and culture after 323 B.C. Hellenize is to make Greek or Hellenistic

Hellvetic A Swiss Protestant or adherent of Zwingli; Helvetian, of Helvetia (Latin name for Switzerland), an ancient Celtic country of Central Europe in Western Switzerland.

Henotheism Belief in one god, without denying the existence of others (coined in 1860 by Max Müller).

Heptateuch Greek *heptateuchos* (*hepta*, seven + *teuchos*, tool or book) -- first seven books of the Old Testament (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, and Judges).

Hereafter The state after death or life after death.

Heresy Latin *haeresis* and Greek *hairesis*, a sect or school of thought -- a religious belief opposed to the orthodox doctrines of a church, especially a belief specifically denounced by the church; rejection of a belief that is part of church dogma. A heretic is anyone who holds to beliefs opposed to established church dogma.

Hermeneutics Science of interpretation, particularly the study of the principles of Biblical exegesis or the interpretation of Biblical texts.

Hermit A recluse or one who lives a secluded life for religious motives

Herod Any one of a line of Judean kings descended from Edom who ruled parts of Palestine under Roman authority, beginning with Herod the Great, son of Antipater II, who reigned from 37-4 B.C. and reconstructed the Temple in Jerusalem with a 35-acre outer court. Herod the Great, himself part Jewish and who considered himself to be king of the Jews, ordered the death of all infant boys in and around Bethlehem in an attempt to kill Jesus as recorded in Matthew chapter 2, who was prophesied as the coming king of the Jews. A number of descendants of Herod the Great adopted the name Herod, three of whom were also mentioned in the New Testament. Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great, was a tetrarch with three brothers who himself ruled over Galilee from about 4 B.C. to A.D. 39., who tried to kill Jesus during his ministry (Luke 13:31-33), had John the Baptist imprisoned and beheaded (Matthew 14:1-12, Mark 6:17-29, Luke 3:19-20, 9:7-9), and became friends with Pilate during the persecution of Jesus (Luke 23:6-12, Acts 4:27). Herod Agrippa I, grandson of Herod the Great, ruled Judea from A.D. 37-44, persecuted the early Christians, had James put to death by the sword and had Peter imprisoned (Acts 12:1-19), and was struck down by an angel of the Lord and eaten to death by worms (Acts 12:21-23). Herod Agrippa II, son of Agrippa I, ruled Judea from A.D. 53-100, and rejected Paul's testimony during his trial under Festus (Acts 25:13-26:32).

Heterodox Inclining toward heresy; unorthodox; departing from or opposed to established doctrines.

Heteroousian Arian theory that God the Father and God the Son are different in substance.

Hexaemeron Greek *hexaemeros*, of or in six days -- the Biblical account in the first chapter of Genesis of the six-day period of the Creation, or a treatise on this subject.

Hexapla Origen's edition of the New Testament, composed of six versions arranged in parallel columns.

Hexateuch Greek *hexteuchos* (*hexa*, six + *teuchos*, tool or book) -- first six books of the Old Testament (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, and Joshua), assumed by some scholars that the Book of Joshua is a continuation of the Torah.

Hierarchy System of church government by priests or other clergy in graded ranks (hierocracy); the officials of such a system (in the Roman Catholic Church, this includes the Pope, metropolitans, archbishops, bishops, priests, and deacons); the chief priest and high priests who

preside over sacred rites; a theological term for any of the three divisions of angels; angels in general.

Hieroglyphics Greek *hieros*, sacred + *glyphein*, to carve or hollow out -- a picture or symbol representing a word, syllable, or sound used by some ancient civilizations, particularly the Egyptians, often carved in stone or other hard materials; picture writing, often difficult to decipher.

Hierology The religious lore and literature of a people.

Hieronymite A member of any of the hermit orders named after Saint Jerome.

Hierophant Formerly, a priest who presided at sacred mysteries, especially the high priest of the Eleusinian mysteries; an interpreter of sacred mysteries or esoteric principles.

High Church That party of the Anglican Church which emphasizes the importance of the priesthood and traditional rituals and doctrines (as opposed to Low Church or Broad Church).

Higher Criticism The study of the books of the Bible, their authorship, dates, meaning, etc., using such methods as archaeology, literary criticism, comparative religion, etc.

High Holidays The period encompassing Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur in the Jewish calendar.

High Mass (Solemn Mass) A sung Mass in the Roman Catholic Church, usually celebrated with the complete ritual and with incense, at which the celebrant is assisted by a deacon and subdeacon.

High Priest Chief priest of the ancient Jewish priesthood.

Hillel Jewish rabbi and scholar in Jerusalem (circa 60 B.C. to A.D. 10).

Hin Ancient Hebrew liquid measurement, equal to about 1 1/2 gallons.

Hinayana Sanskrit, "lesser vehicle" -- Buddhist branch which stresses the original monastic discipline and the attainment of nirvana through meditation, developed mainly in Ceylon, Burma, Thailand, and Cambodia.

Hinduism From the Persian *Hindu*, land of the Indus River (India) -- the peoples of India who speak an Indic language or, more specifically, the people of Hindustan who speak Hindi; the religion and social system of the Hindus, developed from Brahmanism, with elements from Buddhism and Jainism.

Hobgoblin Goblin or an elf; frightening apparition.

Holier-Than-Thou Sanctimonious or self-righteous to an annoying degree.

Holiness Title of the Pope.

Holistic (Holism) The view that an organic or integrated whole has a reality independent of and greater than the sum of its parts.

Holocaust Greek *holokauston*, "burnt whole" and Latin *holocaustum*, "whole burnt offering" -- burnt offering; great or total destruction of life, particularly by fire; the systematic destruction of over six million European Jews by the Nazis before and during World War II.

Holy Belonging to or coming from God; divine; dedicated to religious use; consecrated; sacred; hallowed; spiritually perfect or pure; untainted by evil or sin; sinless; saintly.

Holy Day of Obligation Any major Roman Catholic festival during which members are obliged to abstain from nonessential manual labor and attend Mass.

Holy Spirit (Holy Ghost) Latin *Spiritus Sanctus* -- the third person of the Trinity.

Holy Grail Medieval legend of the cup or platter used by Jesus at the Last Supper and by Joseph of Arimathea to collect drops of Jesus' blood at Crucifixion.

Holy Innocents' Day December 28, commemorating the slaughter of all male children two years old and under within the vicinity of Bethlehem by Herod the Great in an attempt to kill Jesus, the prophesied king of the Jews (Matthew 2:16).

Holy Land Palestine

Holy Office Former name for a Roman Catholic tribunal for the protection of faith and morals and the suppression of heresy.

Holy of Holies Hebrew *qodesh haqadoshim* -- the innermost part of the Jewish tabernacle and Temple where the ark of the covenant was kept.

Holy Orders The sacrament or rite of ordination; the position of being an ordained Christian minister or priest; ranks or grades of ministry in various Christian churches, such as the Major and Minor Orders of the Roman Catholic Church or bishops, priests, and deacons in the Anglican Church.

Holy Roller Member of a religious sect or Evangelical Christian church who expresses spiritual emotion by shouting and moving about during services.

Holy Roman Empire The Christianized Roman Empire of West Central Europe, comprising Northern Italy and Germany. Some scholars consider it to have begun in A.D. 800 with the crowning of Pope Charlemagne, while others start it in A.D. 962 with the crowning of Otto I. It ended in 1806, with the resignation of Pope Francis II of Austria.

Holy Rood The cross on which Jesus was crucified; any cross or crucifix symbolizing Christianity.

Holy Saturday The Saturday before Easter.

Holy Spirit (Holy Ghost) The Spirit of God and third person of the Trinity.

Holy Synod Administrative council of any branch of the Orthodox Eastern Church.

Holy Thursday Maundy Thursday or Ascension Day.

Holytide Archaic term for a holy season, or a day or period of religious observance.

Holy Water Water blessed by a priest.

Holy Week The week before Easter.

Holy Writ The Bible.

Homily Sermon. Homiletics is the theological study of the writing and preaching of sermons.

Homoiousian An adherent to the theological theory that God the Father and God the Son are neither identical nor different in substance, but similar.

Homoousian An adherent to the theological theory that God the Father and God the Son are identical in substance.

Hope A feeling of certainty that what is wanted or believed in will happen; desire accompanied by expectation; trust

Horn Biblically, an emblem of glory, strength, or honor.

Horoscope From the Greek *horoskopos*, observer of the hour of birth -- astrological observation of the position of the planets and stars in relation to one another at the time of a person's birth, used to determine their destiny; an astrological forecast of an individual's future based on a chart of the zodiacal signs and position of the heavenly bodies. Horoscopy is the practice of drawing up horoscopes.

Horus Ancient Egyptian sun god, represented as having the head of a hawk; son of Osiris and Isis.

Hosanna Greek term from the Hebrew *hoshi'ah nna*, "save, we pray" -- an exclamation of praise to God.

Hospice Traditionally, a place of shelter for travelers maintained by monks.

Host A consecrated wafer of the Eucharist.

Houri Any of the beautiful nymphs of the Muslim Paradise, among the rewards of faithful Muslims.

Huguenot Protestants in the Calvinist Reformation in Geneva; general term regarding any French Protestant of the 16th or 17th century. Originally a supporter of a group in Geneva opposing annexation to Savoy, led by Hugues Besançon; a confederate or ally of such a group.

Humane Having what may be considered the best qualities of mankind (civility, mercy, kindness, sympathy, etc.).

Humanism Any system of thought or action based on the nature, dignity, interests, and ideals of man; a modern, nontheistic, rationalist movement which holds that man is capable of ethical conduct and self-fulfillment without recourse to supernaturalism; the intellectual, cultural, and secular movement based on the study of classical literature and culture during the Middle Ages which helped give rise to the Renaissance; study of the humanities (literature, philosophy, history, classical languages such as Greek and Latin, etc.). A humanist is basically a follower of humanism.

Humanitarianism The ethical doctrine that man's obligations are limited to the welfare of mankind and that man may perfect his own nature without divine aid; the theological doctrine that Jesus was not of divine nature, but of a solely human nature; philanthropy, in a general sense.

Humeral Veil A scarflike cloth worn over the shoulders by a priest during certain liturgical functions.

Hutterite Any member of a group of Anabaptists, originally from Moravia, who live communally in the Dakotas, Montana, and Alberta, Canada, and hold beliefs like those of the Mennonites; named after Jacob Hutter, a 16th century Austrian religious reformer.

Hutzpah (Chutzpah)

Hylozoism Greek *hylo*, matter + *zoe*, life -- doctrine that all matter has life or that life is inseparable from matter.

Hymnal Collection of hymns, which are songs of praise to God. The singing of hymns is a hymnody. Hymnology is either the composition or the study of hymns.

Hyperdulia A special homage in the Roman Catholic Church paid to the Virgin Mary as holier than any other created being.

Hypnosis From the Greek *Hypnos*, mythological god of sleep (Roman god Somnus) -- a sleeplike condition, physically induced, in which the subject is in a state of altered consciousness and responds to the suggestions of the hypnotist. Hypnogenesis is the inducing of hypnosis. Hypnology is the scientific study of sleep and hypnosis. Hypnoanalysis is the use of hypnosis or hypnotic drugs in combination with psychoanalytic techniques. Hypnotherapy is the treatment of disease by hypnotism.

Hypocrisy Latin *hypocrisis*, "mimicry" and Greek *hypokrisis*, "acting a part" -- pretending to be what one is not, or to feel what one does not feel; pretense of virtue or piety; pretended sanctity. Hypocrite is someone who pretends to be what they are actually not, particularly one who acts more pious than they really are (from the Latin *hypocrita*, "stage actor" and Greek *hypokrites*, "actor").

Hypostasis Aside from its medical and genetic terms, a theological study of the unique essence or nature of the Godhead and the three persons of the Trinity; the personality of Christ as distinguished from his two natures, human and divine. Philosophically, the underlying principle of nature (essence or substance).

Hypothesis Unproved theory, proposition, or supposition, tentatively accepted to explain certain facts. A working hypothesis is a theory that provides a basis for further argument and/or investigation. To hypothesize is basically to assume or suppose.

Hyssop Hebrew *ezobh*, a fragrant, blue-flowered plant (*Hyssopus officinalis*) of the mint family, used in folk medicine as a tonic or stimulant. Its branches were used for the sprinkling of blood in certain ancient Jewish rites.

Icon (Ikon) Greek *eikon*, image - in the Eastern Orthodox Church an image of Jesus or a venerated saint held as sacred. Iconography is the art of producing such images. Iconolatry is the worship of icons. Iconology is the study of icons. An iconostasis is a screen or partition decorated with icons separating the sanctuary from the rest of an Eastern Orthodox Church.

Iconoclast Greek - *eikon* (icon) + *klaein* (to break) - Anyone opposed to the religious use of images or advocating the destruction of such images, specifically a member of the Eastern Orthodox Church during the eighth and ninth centuries who denounced the use of icons. Iconoclasm is the actions or beliefs of an iconoclast.

Idol Ecclesiastic Late Greek *eidōs*, "form" -- an image of a god; heathen deity; spiritual impostor. Idolater: Ecclesiastic Late Greek *eidololatres*: *eidolon* (idol) + *latris* (hired servant) -- a worshiper of idols; devoted admirer.

Ignatius Christian martyr and bishop of Antioch (c. A.D. 50-110), observed on February 1.

Ignatius of Loyola Iñigo López de Recalde (1491-1556), Spanish priest and founder of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits), observed July 31.

IHS Abbreviation for one of the following three Latin terms: *Jesus Hominum Salvator*, Jesus, Savior of Men; *In Hoc Signo (Vinces)*, in this sign (thou shalt conquer); *In Hoc (Cruce) Salus*, in this (cross) salvation. Originally IHΣ, a contraction derived from the Greek word for Jesus (IHΣOTΣ), used as a symbol or monogram. IHS is considered a Latin misspelling of the Greek IHΣ, of which the proper Latin form would be IES.

Illuminati People who have or profess to have intellectual or spiritual enlightenment; any of various societies, usually secret, composed of such people. Illuminism is the doctrines or claims of any of the illuminati.

Immaculate Conception Doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church that Mary conceived of Jesus by the Holy Spirit, but remained free of original sin.

Immanent Theological term for God's pervasive presence throughout the universe.

Immanuel (Emmanuel) Hebrew, "God with us" (*'im*, with + *anu*, us + *el*, God); the name given by Isaiah to the coming Messiah (Isaiah 7:14), attributed to Jesus in Matthew 1:23.

Impanation Latin *impanare* (*in*, in + *panis*, bread), to embody in bread. Roman Catholic doctrine that the body and blood of Christ are present in the bread and wine of the Eucharist after consecration by the priest, with no actual change in their substance (transubstantiation).

Imprimatur Modern Latin, "let it be printed" -- license or permission, particularly by an ecclesiastical censor, to publish or print a book, article, etc.

Impute Theological term, to ascribe a condition (such as goodness or guilt) from one person to another.

Incarnate Latin (*in*, in + *carnis*, flesh -- past participle of *incarnari*, to be made flesh), in human form, ascribed to God becoming man in the form of Jesus Christ.

Incorporeal Without material body or substance, as spirits or angels.

Index Expurgatorius A list of books that the Roman Catholic Church forbade its members to read unless certain passages condemned as dangerous to the faith were deleted or changed.

Index Librorum Prohibitorum A list of books that the Roman Catholic Church forbade its members to read, except by special permission, which were condemned as dangerous to the faith.

Indulgence In the Roman Catholic Church, a remission of temporal or purgatorial punishment still due for a sin after the guilt has been forgiven in the sacrament of penance.

Indult Variant of indulgence (favor), a privilege or special permission granted by the Pope to bishops and others to do something otherwise prohibited by the general law of the Roman Catholic Church.

Ineffable Too awesome or sacred to be spoken, inexpressible, or too overwhelming to be described in words -- said of God's name, "I AM" (YHWH, the Tetragrammaton), as expressed to Moses in Exodus 3:14.

Inerrant Latin *inerrans*, not wandering, fixed -- infallible, making no mistakes, not erring.

Infallible Never wrong; incapable of error; always reliable.

Infralapsarian Group of Calvinists who believed that God's plan of salvation for some people was a consequence of the fall of man from grace.

Iniquity Latin *iniquitas*, unequal -- lack of righteousness or justice.

Inner Light Quaker belief of a guiding influence resulting from the presence of God in the soul.

Innocent Any of thirteen popes, including Innocent I (c. A.D. 417), Innocent II (*Gregorio Papareschi*, c. 1143), Innocent III (*Lotario de' Conti de' Segni*, c. 1161-1216), Innocent IV (*Sinibaldo de' Fieschi*, c. A.D. 1254), and Innocent XI (*Benedetto Odescalchi*, 1611-89).

Inpetto Italian, "in the breast" -- secretly, not revealed, said of cardinals appointed by the Pope but not named in consistory.

Inquisition The general tribunal of the Roman Catholic Church established in the thirteenth century for the discovery and suppression of heresy and the punishment of heretics; the activities of this tribunal; an intensive inquest.

I.N.R.I. Latin *Jesus Nazarenus, Rex Iudaeorum*, Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews.

Insufflate Latin *insufflatus*, to blow or breathe into from below -- to breathe on baptismal water or a person being baptized as a rite of exorcism.

Intercede Latin *intercedere*, to go between -- to plead or make a request in behalf of another; intervene or mediate. Intercession is prayer in behalf of others. According to Romans 8:34 and Hebrews 7:25, Christ comes before God to intercede in behalf of those who come to him. According to Romans 8:26-27, the Spirit intercedes to express to God what is in our hearts. According to 1 Timothy 2:1-2, intercession is to be made for everyone, including those in authority.

Intercommunion Mutual communion among religious groups.

Interdenominational Between, among, shared by, or involving different religious denominations.

Interfaith Between or involving persons adhering to different religions.

Interlinear Having the same text in different languages printed in alternate lines.

Introit Latin *introitus*, entrance -- a song or hymn sung or played at the opening of a Christian worship service; the first variable part of Roman Catholic Mass consisting of a few psalm verses followed by the *Gloria Patri* and then repeated.

Invocation The act of calling on God or spiritual forces for blessing, assistance, support, etc.; a formal prayer said at the beginning of a church service.

Isagogics From the Greek *eisagein*, to introduce -- the study of the literary history of the Bible, considered as introductory to the study of Bible interpretation.

Ishmaelite A descendant of Ishmael, the son of Abraham and Hagar, the original progenitor of Arab peoples.

Ishtar The Babylonian and Assyrian goddess of love and fertility.

Islam Arabic, "submission" (to the will of Allah) -- Muslim religion founded by Muhammed.

Israel Hebrew *yisra'el*, "contender with God" (*sarah*, to wrestle + *el*, God) -- the name given to Jacob by the angel of the Lord after wrestling with him throughout the night (Genesis 32:28); ancient land of the Hebrews located at the SE end of the Mediterranean Sea; the Jewish people, as descendants of Jacob; northern kingdom of the Hebrews established in the tenth century B.C. by the ten tribes of Israel that broke from Judah and Benjamin (1 Kings 12:1-24, 2 Chronicles 10); Jewish state established in 1948 by the United Nations.

Issachar Ninth son of Jacob (Genesis 30:18) and the tribe of Israel descended from him.

Iyar Eighth month of the Jewish year.

J (Book of J) Unknown source.

Jacob Son of Isaac, father of the twelve tribes of Israel (Genesis 25-50).

Jacob's Ladder The ladder from earth to heaven that Jacob saw in a dream (Genesis 28:12).

James One of three Christians of the New Testament: James son of Zebedee was one of the original twelve apostles of Jesus, later known as Saint James the Greater (July 25); James son of Alphaeus was another of the original twelve apostles, later known as Saint James the Less (May 1); James the brother of Jesus, although not one of the apostles, was a disciple and leader in the church at Jerusalem and is considered by many to have written the letter in the New Testament which bears his name.

Jansenism The doctrines of Cornelis Jansen (1585-1638), a Dutch Roman Catholic theologian who believed in predestination, denied free will, and held that man, though depraved in nature, is unable to resist God's grace.

J.C.D. Latin *Juris Canonici Doctor*, Doctor of Canon Law.

Jehovah Pronounced spelling of JHVH (also Jahveh, Jahve, Jahweh, and Jahwe), another variation of the Tetragrammaton - the four consonants for the Hebrew name for God (YHWH, or Yahweh), transliterated instead as JHVH or JHWH (although J is absent from the Hebrew language). Jehovah is ascribed to the Greek transliteration of the Hebrew, popularly used during the Middle Ages by Latin Bible translators and throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in non-Catholic Bibles, such as the King James Version. The vowels used in its pronunciation come from the vowels in the Hebrew *Adonai*, meaning "Lord." Jehovah represents the ineffable name of God uttered by God himself in Exodus 3:14 as "I AM."

Jehovah's Witnesses A proselytizing Christian sect founded in the late 19th century by Charles Taze Russell (1852-1916) and corporately known as the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society. The name Jehovah's Witnesses was adopted in 1931 and is based on Isaiah 43:10, "Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen; that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me." Jehovah's Members are taught how to teach and preach from the Witness's own translation of the Bible, the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*. They are lead locally by unpaid spiritual elders, all under the oversight of international zone, circuit, and district servants from branch offices, with headquarters in Brooklyn, New York. The Watchtower Society boasts over one million publications distributed worldwide every day, including *Awake!* and *The Watchtower - Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom*. Witnesses do not consider Jesus to be the incarnation of God, rather, he was Jehovah God's first created being who died on a stake as a ransom for all obedient humans by his perfect life and was raised not physically, but spiritually as an example for those who remain faithful to spreading God's word.

Jerome *Eusebius Hieronymos Sophronius* (c. A.D. 340-420), a monk and early Christian scholar who wrote the Latin Vulgate version of the Bible. A saint whose observed day is September 30.

Jesuit A member of the Society of Jesus, a Roman Catholic religious order for men founded by Ignatius Loyola in 1534. The name basically means a follower of Jesus (Modern Latin *Jesuita*).

Jesus Hebrew *Yeshu'a*, a variant of Joshua ("help of Jehovah").

Jew Hebrew *Yehudi*, a member of the tribe or kingdom of Judah; someone descended from the ancient Hebrews; a person whose religion is Judaism.

Jewish Calendar Historical Jewish calendar established in 3761 B.C. and based on the cycles of the moon (lunar), with 354 days in a year. A full day is from sunset to sunset. The start of the calendar begins in late September or early October, the months of which are: 1. Tishri (30 days); 2. Heshvan (29-30 days); 3. Kislev (29-30 days); 4. Tebet (29 days); 5. Shebat (30 days); 6. Adar (29-30 days); 7. Nisan (30 days); 8. Iyar (29 days); 9. Sivan (30 days); 10. Tammuz (29 days); 11. Ab (30 days); 12. Elul (29 days). About once every three years (seven times in each nineteen years) an extra month, Veadar or Adar Sheni (29 days), falls between Adar and Nisan.

Joan of Arc *Jeanne d' Arc* (1412-31), French heroine who defeated the English at Orléans in 1429, later burned at the stake for witchcraft. Also known as the Maid of Orléans.

Job Job's Comforter is a person who aggravates one's misery while attempting or pretending to comfort (Job 16:1-5).

John the Baptist Forerunner and baptizer of Jesus who was killed by Herod (Matthew 3).

Josephus *Josephus Flavius* (A.D. 37-101), a Jewish court historian for Emperor Vespasian who, in A.D. 93 in Rome, published an account of the history of the Jews. This included a brief account of Jesus, describing him as a wise man and doer of wonders, and who was condemned to the cross by Pilate. Josephus also wrote of John the Baptist and his death by Herod and the death of James, the brother of Jesus.

Jot Hebrew *yodh*, the smallest bit, Latin and Greek *iota*, "i" -- the smallest letter or a very small thing. Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished" (Matthew 5:18 NIV). The KJV renders this verse as "one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law." A tittle is a small mark, such as the dot over an i.

Judah The fourth son of Jacob and the tribe which descended from him; the southern kingdom of the Hebrews consisting of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, from which Israel broke in the tenth century B.C. (1 Kings 12:1-24, 2 Chronicles 10). The Israelites rebelled against the harsh rule of Rehoboam, successor to Solomon, splitting the Jewish country into two kingdoms - Judah and Israel. King Rehoboam remained in Jerusalem, retaining the lineage of David, while Jeroboam son of Nebat became king of the ten tribes of Israel to the north.

Judaica A collection of books, papers, objects, data, etc. having to do with Jews or Judaism. Many of the newer Old Testament translations were based on the *Biblia Hebraica*, or Hebrew Bible composed by Rudolph Kittel in 1906 and revised in 1912, which itself was based on one of the most reliable Hebrew translations known as the Ben Chayyim Masoretic Text by Rabbi Abraham Ben Chayyim in 1524. There have been further revisions and releases of the *Biblia Hebraica* under various names, including the popular 1966 *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* by German rationalists.

Judaism The Jewish, monotheistic religion based on the laws and teachings of the Talmud; the observance of Jewish laws, traditions, customs, and ceremonies.

Judas Judas Iscariot (man of Kerioth), one of the twelve apostles of Jesus and the one who betrayed him (Matthew 26:14, 48); Judas son of James (Matthew 13:55, Mark 6:3, Luke 6:13-16, John 14:22), of whom some consider the author of Jude (a variant of Judas) in the New Testament, and the brother of Jesus and James; Judas Maccabaeus (Aramaic, "the hammer"), led a Jewish revolt against the Syrians between 175-164 B.C. and ruled Palestine until 37 B.C. (recorded in the Old Testament Apocryphal books of I and II Maccabees).

Judea Ancient region of southern Palestine under Persian, Greek, and Roman rule between the Mediterranean Sea and the Dead Sea, corresponding roughly to the biblical Judah.

Judges A book of the Bible recounting the rule of the tribes of Israel by individual judges beginning in 1375 B.C., and believed to have been written between the twelfth and eleventh centuries B.C. Although the author is unknown, some identify it as the work of Samuel, Israel's last judge. It is primarily about Israel's disobedience against the Lord during the following several hundred years after the conquest of Canaan, between the death of Joshua and the birth of Samuel (a period of over 325 years), during which time Israel was without central leadership and "everyone did as he saw fit" (Judges 17:6). God punishes Israel's rebellion with foreign invaders, then sends judges (saviors) to save them when they repent. There were thirteen judges in all, including Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah, Gideon, Tola, Jair, Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, Abdon, Samson, and Samuel. The oldest extant Hebrew document of any size is the Song of Deborah in the fifth chapter, dated from the twelfth century B.C.

Judgment Justice from God, particularly a misfortune considered a punishment from God.

Judgment Day The time of God's final judgment of all people; end of the world; doomsday.

Judith Hebrew *Yehudhith* (feminine of Judah, *Yehudhah*), a book of the Apocrypha and the Douay Bible about a woman who saved her people by killing Herlofernes.

Justification by Faith The act by which a sinner is freed through faith from the penalty of sin and is accepted by God as righteous.

Justin Latin *Justinus* (c. A.D. 100-165), Christian apologist and martyr from Samaria, often known as Justin Martyr, observed April 14.

Masorah

Metropolitan

Midrashim Collections of legends compiled around biblical legends.

Mishnah Compiled between A.D. 70 and 200, first great post-Biblical Hebrew book.

Monotheism Belief and worship of one god.

Moral (Amoral is a lack of ability to distinguish between right and wrong.)

Polytheism Belief and worship of many gods.

Pope His Holiness or Holy Father. Holy See is the position, authority, or court of the Pope.

Pseudepigrapha false scripture

Q An unknown source from which many Protestant scholars believe the Gospels of Matthew and Luke derived much of their material. Those of this belief include the Gospel of Mark as the second influence on the latter two gospels, with the unknown "Book of Q" providing a source for the collected sayings of Jesus

Schism A split or division in a church, primarily due to difference of opinion over doctrine. The Great Schism, or Schism of the West, was when there was conflict and division in the Roman Catholic Church between 1378 to 1417, during which time there were rival popes at Avignon and Rome. The Schism of the East took place when the Orthodox Eastern Church officially split from the Roman Catholic Church in 1472.

Scripture The text of the Bible or the Bible itself; numbered passages of most Old and New Testament translations; Jewish Old Testament consisting of the Pentateuch, Prophets, and Hagiographa.

Sun Gods Greek Mythology: Helios, son of the Titan Hyperion, who was the son of Uranus and Gaea.

Ugaritic A narrative style of Hebrew poetry from 1400 BCE, believed to have become extinct sometime in 800 BCE, attributed to the poetic style of the Psalms. Based on Sumerian cuneiform and used by the Canaanites, it was a Semitic alphabet of thirty distinct abstract pictographic representations written on clay tablets (somewhat like hieroglyphics, but more similar to Assyrian or Akkadian in appearance). The name is derived from the lost, Bronze Age city of Ugarit, Syria (6,000 BCE-1200 BCE, located near Ras Shamrah on the Mediterranean), where several libraries of Canaanite text (including mythological accounts about the cults of El, Baal, Asherah, and Dagon) and some Hebrew texts were discovered in 1928, many having been written in the same Ugaritic language. Until this discovery, nothing was known of the language, but now some scholars believe that Ugaritic may have later developed into the Hebrew alphabet. Of major importance regarding these texts is the description of Canaanite life and religion before the Israelite occupation, the possibility that the Israelites assimilated Canaanite beliefs, as well as the use of the ancient language to assist in the translation of difficult Hebrew passages of the Old Testament.

Valentine's Day Valentine's Day is the Catholic feast day of St. Valentine, bishop of Interamna, martyred in A.D. 271, and celebrated on February 14. Traditionally, it predates St. Valentine as an ancient Roman festival of love. One such Roman festival was the drawing of partners by lot by young men and women for the February feast of Lupercalia and as sexual partners throughout the year. It is said that St. Valentine secretly married such young lovers in matrimony, for which he was imprisoned by the Roman emperor Claudius II, who had made marriages illegal for the sake of a better soldier. Legend holds that while in prison awaiting execution, Valentine signed a farewell message to the jailer's daughter, "From Your Valentine." In A.D. 496, Pope Gelasius

changed the Lupercalian lottery to the drawing of the names of saints, of which young participants were to imitate the lives of their chosen saints throughout the remainder of the year. Cupid was the son of Venus, the Roman god of love and fertility, and a derivation of Eros, the Greek god of lust. Often depicted as a winged child with a bow and arrow, he is the origin of many modern images of the cherub (known as putti), a popular depiction in Italian Renaissance and Rococo art. Valentine cards come from the Roman custom during mid-February of giving women hand-written letters of admiration and affection. The earliest known Valentine card dates from 1415 and is on display in the British Museum. Although original, hand-made cards were preferential, by the nineteenth century publishers were printing "mechanical valentines" with sentimental verses. Another association of this festival with love is that it is the mating season of most birds.

Vatican From the Latin *Vaticanus Mons*, "Vatican Hill" or *Hill of Prophecy*, derived from the root word *Vatic*, meaning prophetic (plural *vaticinia*, prophecies): the governmental capital of the Catholic Church in west central Rome, consisting of the Roman Curia and its buildings, including St. Peter's Basilica, the Sistine Chapel, and the Apostolic Palace. Vatican City is a 108-acre, independent city-state constituted in 1929 by the Lateran Council as a Roman enclave (population circa 1,000) endowed with extraterritorial rights. The State of the Vatican City, as it's officially known, provides a temporal jurisdiction for the Diocese of Rome (Holy See). The Curia, or Vatican, is a royal court representing the international government of the Catholic Church overseen by the Bishop of Rome (Pope) and includes various offices, such as the Governor, Apostolic Chancery, Apostolic Dataria, Secretariate of Briefs, Roman Congregations, Cardinals, Tribunals, and Pontifical Councils. It is also associated with either of the Roman Catholic Ecumenical Councils held in St. Peter's Basilica in 1869-70 (Vatican I) or 1962-65 (Vatican II).

Veda Sanskrit, "knowledge" -- a collection of four ancient, sacred books of Hinduism, or Samhitas, consisting of psalms, chants, sacred formulas, rituals, incantations, and scripture, which includes the Rig-Veda (Veda of Verses), Yajur-Veda (Veda of Sacrificial Prayers), Sama-Veda (Veda of Chants), and Atharva-Veda (Veda of the Fire Priests). Hindu tradition holds that the Vedas are eternal, revealed from time to time to sages (rishis) by the divine principle (one true god) through Paramatma (a super spirit) and transferred orally from generation to generation. The rishi Krishna Dwaipayana, or Veda Vyasa ("editor"), compiled these oral traditions into the four Vedas. The age of these texts have yet to be determined, but are considered by many to be some of the oldest scriptures in the world. The oldest veda, the Rig-Veda, is dated at approximately 1500 B.C. (codified around 600 B.C. and written about 300 B.C.). Along with the four Vedas, Hindu scripture also includes the Brahmanas (rituals and sacrifice), Aranyakas (philosophy and sacrifice), Upanishads (philosophy and meditation), Upavedas (vedic applications), and Mahabharata (history), which expound on the original Vedas. Although the Hindu religion (Sanatana Dharma) originally recognized one god, millions of prophets, angels, and minor deities have been elevated in status throughout the centuries and worshipped as gods, or devas. Vedanta is a system of Hindu monistic or pantheistic philosophy based on the Vedas. Vedic is the Old Indic language of the Vedas, an early form of Sanskrit.

Veil The temple curtain which separated the altar of God's presence (Most Holy Place) from the outer sanctuary of the Levitical priests (Holy Place) in the Temple of the Lord in Jerusalem (2 Chronicles 3:14 -- adapted from the Tent of Meeting, Exodus 26:31-33). Only the high priest was allowed beyond the veil once a year (Leviticus 16). The Temple veil was torn open at the time of Jesus' death (Matthew 27:51, Mark 15:38, Luke 23:45), allowing for believers to enter into the presence of God (Hebrews 10:19-20). Also part of a nun's headdress, a piece of cloth

draped along the sides of the face and over the shoulders, thus the term "take the veil" -- to become a nun; the state or life of a nun or novice.

Vellum Parchment prepared from calfskin, lambskin, or kidskin, used for writing manuscripts or binding books.

Venerable Latin *venerabilis*, to be revered -- the lowest title of the three degrees of sanctity in the Roman Catholic Church (among beatification and canonization); a title given to an archdeacon in the Anglican Church.

Venial Theological term for sin that does not cause death to the soul because it is committed either without awareness of its seriousness or without full consent (distinguished from mortal sin).

Venite A canticle sung at matins or morning prayer in the Roman Catholic Church, consisting of parts of Psalms 95 and 96, so named from the opening word of the 94th Psalm in the Vulgate and the 95th in the King James Version (Latin *venire*, to come).

Veronica A woman who, according to legend, wiped the bleeding face of Jesus on the way to Calvary (saint celebrated on July 12); the bloody image of Jesus' face on the cloth used to wipe his face; any cloth or garment with a representation of the face of Jesus.

Verse Biblically, the numbered divisions of a chapter, usually one or two sentences.

Versicle A short verse, particularly one of the short sentences said or sung by a church minister which is followed by the response of the congregation.

Version A particular translation of the Bible, such as the King James Version or the Revised Standard American Version.

Vespers (Evensong) Latin *vesper*, "evening" -- an evening prayer or service; the sixth of the seven canonical hours in the Roman Catholic Church, recited or sung in the late afternoon; Evensong in the Anglican Church. A vesperal is a book containing the chants and psalms used at vespers (also a cloth cover for protecting the altar cloth between services).

Vessel A person who is the repository of a spirit.

Vestment Garments (robes and gowns) worn by Ecclesiastic officials and their assistants. A vestry is a room in a church where sacred vessels are kept and where clergy put on their vestments (sacristy); in the Anglican and Episcopal Churches, a vestry is a group of members who manage the temporal affairs of the church. A vestiary is a supply room for clothing in a monastery.

Vicar A church deputy: in the Anglican Church, a parish priest who is not a rector and receives a stipend instead of tithes; in the Episcopal Church, a minister in charge of one parish chapel as deputy of another minister; in the Roman Catholic Church, a church officer acting as deputy of a bishop. Because the Pope is regarded as the earthly vicar of Christ, he is known as the Vicar of Christ. Vicarage is the position, residence, salary, and duties of a vicar. Vicariate is the office, authority, or district administered by a vicar. Vicar apostolic (V.A.) was formerly a bishop or archbishop to whom the Pope delegated part of his jurisdiction; titular bishop administering a

vacant diocese; missionary bishop acting as a delegate of the Holy See in a region where no regular see has yet been organized. Vicar-general in the Anglican Church is a layman serving as a deputy to a bishop or archbishop; in the Roman Catholic Church, it's a priest acting as administrative deputy to a bishop or a general superior; title given to Thomas Cromwell as vicegerent of Henry VIII. Vicar forane is a dean in the Roman Catholic Church; in general, the rural part of the episcopal city.

Vigil A watch kept during sleeping hours; the devotional services held on the evening before a religious festival. Vigil light is a candle burned as an act of devotion or petition.

Viminal Seven Hills of Rome

Vincent de Paul (1580-1616) French priest who founded charitable orders, celebrated July 19.

Virgin Birth Birth of Jesus to Mary, who conceived by the Holy Spirit while betrothed to Joseph.

Virgin Mary Holy Mother of the Roman Catholic Church; doctrine that since Mary was the mother of Christ and Christ was God, then she was the mother of God.

Vishnu Sanskrit *Visnu*, "all-pervader" -- second member of the Hindu trinity (Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva), called the "Preserver" and supposed to have had several human incarnations, including Krishna. Vaishnava is a devotee of Vishnu.

Vision Something seen beyond normal sight, such as in a dream, a trance, or supernaturally revealed.

Visitant A supernatural being perceived by a person, such as a ghost, phantom, or spirit. Visitation is a personal reward or infliction of punishment by God; an official visit of a bishop to a church in his diocese.

Vis Major Latin, "greater force" -- an act of God.

Vitalism Doctrine that life in living organisms is caused and sustained by a vital force distinct from physical and mental forces and is self-determining and self-evolving.

Vocation A call or impulsion to a certain career, particularly a religious one

Volition Exercise of the will; conscious or deliberate decision.

Voltaire French writer and philosopher, born François Marie Arouet (1694-1778).

Voodoo (Hoodoo) French Creole *vodu*, "fetish" or "demon" -- primitive religion that originated in West Africa and is practiced primarily in the West Indies, based on a belief in sorcery and the power of charms, fetishes, spells, and black magic.

Votary Latin *votus*, "to vow" -- a person bound to religious vows, such as a monk or nun; a person devoted to a particular religion or object of worship (devout); consecrated by a vow.

Votive An offering consecrated in fulfillment of a vow; a special Mass in the Roman Catholic Church said at the priest's option.

Vulgate Medieval Latin *volgata*, "popular" (Latin *volgatus*, common or ordinary) -- a Latin version of the Bible commissioned by Pope Damasus and prepared by St. Jerome in the fourth century A.D., which served as an authorized version for the Roman Catholic Church. The Old Testament was translated from Hebrew and Aramaic and the Gospels from the best available Greek manuscripts. Among the canonized scriptures of the Old Testament, it also includes the apocryphal books of Tobias, Judith, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, and I and II Maccabees. In 1546, the Council of Trent declared it the authentic Latin Bible. The current, official edition of the Vulgate was issued in 1592 by Pope Clement VIII.

Wahhabi Strict Islamic sect in Saudi Arabia founded by Abdul-Wahhab (1703-92), which adheres closely to the Quran.

Wake All-night vigil over a corpse before burial, often with festivities.

Waldenses Sect of Roman Catholic dissenters founded by Peter Waldo around 1170 in the South of France, which now survive in the Alps of France and Italy.

Wandering Jew In medieval folklore, a Jew condemned to wander the earth restlessly until the second coming of Christ because of their scornful attitude prior to the Crucifixion; trailing plants of the spiderwort family having white, red, blue, or purple flowers.

Warlock Old English for liar or traitor; sorcerer, wizard, or magician; one who practices black magic (male equivalent of a witch).

Wartburg Medieval castle in Thuringia, Germany, where Martin Luther completed his translation of the New Testament (1521-22).

WASP White Anglo-Saxon Protestant

Way fjkghkh

W.C.T.U. Woman's Christian Temperance Union

Weltanschauung German, "world view" -- a personal, comprehensive philosophy or conception of life or the universe, generally non-religious and based on rationale, proven science, or experience.

Wesley, John (1703-91) English clergyman and evangelist, founder of Methodism, brother of Charles Wesley (1707-88, English clergyman and hymn writer). Wesleyan is a follower of John Wesley; Wesleyan Church is generally a Methodist Church.

Western Church Primarily the Roman Catholic Church; generally any part of the Catholic Church that recognizes the Pope and follows the Latin Rite; broadly, all Christian churches of Western Europe and America.

Western Wall (Wailing Wall) Hebrew *ha-kotel ha-ma'aravi*, "the Western Wall," or simply *ha-kotel*, "the Wall" -- a high wall in Jerusalem on the Temple Mount believed to be part of the

western section of the wall surrounding Solomon's Temple (some believe it to be Herod's Temple), where Jews have traditionally gathered for prayer. Jerome described Jews on the Mount of Olives in the fourth century A.D. wailing and lamenting as they looked upon the ruins of the Temple on the ninth day of the Hebrew month Av, a day of mourning for the Temple. The traditional Arabic term for the wall is El-Mabka, "the Place of Weeping." The name "Wailing Wall" is predominantly a European term introduced by the British after their conquest of Jerusalem from the Turks in 1917. Jews traditionally gathered here on Fridays to mourn, however, after the Six-Day War in 1967 and the reunification of Jerusalem under Israeli sovereignty, many have considered this to be a place of celebration.

Westminster Abbey Originally a Benedictine abbey in Westminster (metropolitan borough of London), a Gothic church where English monarchs are crowned and/or buried.

Whitewashed Tomb Hypocrite (Matthew 23:27-28), also called a whited sepulcher; traditionally a burial vault whitened with a mixture of water, lime, chaulk, and glaze; to give a falsely virtuous appearance; gloss over.

Whitefield, George English Methodist evangelist (1714-70).

Whitsunday White Sunday, day of baptism, so called because of the white garments traditionally worn by baptismal candidates.

Wimple Head covering worn by certain orders of nuns consisting of cloth wrapped around parts of the head, revealing only the face.

Winter Solstice Time in the Northern Hemisphere when the sun is farthest south of the equator, December 21-22.

Wisdom of Solomon One of the books of the Apocrypha.

Witch From the Old English *wicca*, a sorceress

Witch Doctor Medicine man of some African tribes who practices primitive forms of healing involving magic or witchcraft.

Wizard Sage; magician; sorcerer; conjurer.

Word of God The Bible.

Wormwood Bitter; unpleasant; bitter, green oil used in making a liqueur called absinthe.

Worship Reverent devotion; veneration; religious devotion.

Wraith From Scottish *warth*, a guardian angel; a ghost or the spectral figure of a person supposedly seen as a premonition just before death.

Wreath A twisted band or ring of leaves, branches, flowers, foliage, etc.; garland.

Wycliffe, John (1324-84) English religious reformer who was the first to make a complete English translation of the Bible (from the Latin Vulgate).

Xavier, Francis (1506-52) Spanish Jesuit missionary whose day is celebrated on December 3rd.

Xmas Abbreviation for Christmas, derived from the Greek name for Christ (ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ), first used in Europe in the 1500's.

Xn (Xnty) Abbreviation for Christian or Christianity.

XP (Chi Rho) First two letters of the Greek word for Christ, ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ (*Kristos*), *chi* and *rho*, used as an early symbol or emblem for Christ, often represented as a P in the middle of an X.

Yahrzeit Anniversary according to the Jewish calendar of the death of an immediate family member commemorated by the lighting of yahrzeit candle for 24 hours and the saying of the kaddish (Judaism).

YAHWEH (YHWH) Hebrew, "I AM" (Exodus 3:14), the ineffable (unspeakable) name of God, comprised of the four Hebrew characters *Yod*, *Heh*, *Waw*, and *Heh*, which has come to be known among Bible scholars as the Tetragrammaton (four letters) with vowels added for better pronunciation. Variations include YHWH, YHVH, IHVH, JHVH, YAHVEH, YAHUAH, IAHUAH, YEHOWAH, and JEHOVAH. Any of these are arguable since Y, W, and V are not Hebrew consonants. Hebrew is a different dialect than English and difficult to translate, so the Hebrew characters are often transliterated as sounds similar to English characters. Most modern English Bibles have adopted the lower caps version of Lord (LORD) to represent the formal name of YHWH. It was believed that the Jews held the name of YHWH in such high regard that they didn't even say this name, which stems from the third Commandment, "Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain" (Exodus 20:7). Only once a year, on the Day of Atonement, the high priest pronounced the *shem ha-meforash*, or ineffable name. Yahwism is a term for worship of Yahweh. Yahwist is an unidentified writer or writers of certain Old Testament passages in which Yahweh is used for the name of God, instead of Elohim.

Yarmulke (Yamulka) A skullcap worn by Jewish males.

Ye Old English for "you" -- archaic term originally used only as a nominative plural, later as a nominative singular.

Yea Old English for "yes" -- archaic term meaning moreover (not only that, but more); indeed, truly, or verily.

Yeshiva Hebrew, "a sitting" -- seminary for the training of Orthodox rabbis; school or college for Talmudic studies; Jewish school combining religious and secular studies.

Yiddish Jewish-German -- language derived from medieval High German, spoken by East European Jews and their descendants in other countries, written in the Hebrew alphabet and borrowing vocabulary primarily from Hebrew, Russian, Polish, and English.

Y.M.C.A. Young Men's Christian Association, founded in London in 1844 by George Williams as an organization for providing recreational activities for young men working in poor labor conditions in England. The first American YMCA was founded in Boston in 1851 by Baptist sea

captain T. V. Sullivan. The World Alliance for YMCA's is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.

Yoga Hinduism: a mystic and ascetic discipline by which one seeks to achieve liberation of the self and union with the supreme spirit or universal soul through intense concentration, deep meditation, and practices involving prescribed postures and controlled breathing. A yogi is one who practices yoga.

Yom Kippur Day of Atonement, Jewish day of fast and rest observed on the tenth day of the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar (Tishri), from Leviticus 16:29-34 and 23:26-32. "This is to be a lasting ordinance for you: Atonement is to be made once a year for all the sins of the Israelites" (Leviticus 16:34).

Yuletide Christmas time, from the Old English word *yule*, the name of a heathen festival at the winter solstice celebrated by the Teutonic tribes of northern Europe (Scandinavians, Germans, and Celts) and integrated into the annual feast of Christmas when they were converted to Christianity in the 10th and 11th centuries, one of the activities of which was to burn a yule log. (Santa's elves also evolved from Scandinavian paganism.)

Y.W.C.A. Young Women's Christian Association, organized in London in 1855 and in New York City in 1858 (under the name of Ladies' Christian Association) as an evangelical Protestant movement to provide spiritual development, as well as recreational and educational opportunities, for women adversely affected by the industrial revolution. The World YWCA was formed in 1894.

Zaddick A righteous and just man (Judaism); spiritual leader of a Hasidic community.

Zealot One who is extremely or excessively devoted to a cause and vehemently active in supporting it; religious fanatic; member of a radically political and religious Jewish sect who openly resisted Roman rule in Palestine.

Zebulun Tenth tribe of Israel descended from the tenth son of Jacob.

Zen Anti-rational Buddhist sect which seeks enlightenment through introspection and intuition, developed in India and now widespread in Japan; to see a sign as a result of meditation.

Zend-Avesta Sacred text of the Zoroastrians.

Zeno Greek Eleatic philosopher, 5th century B.C., founder of Stoicism

Ziggurat A temple tower of the ancient Assyrians and Babylonians in the form of a terraced pyramid.

Zion Hebrew *tsiyon*, "hill" -- originally the City of David, a Canaanite fortress in Jerusalem captured by David; the hill in Jerusalem where the Temple was built; Jerusalem; Israel; a symbol of the center of Jewish national life. The heavenly city. The theocracy of God. Zionism was formerly a movement for reestablishing the Jewish national state of Israel, now in support of it.

Zizit (Zizith) Fringes or tassels worn by orthodox Jewish men, formerly on the corners of the outer garment, now on the four corners of the tallit, intended to remind them of God's commandments (Numbers 15:37-41, Deuteronomy 22:12, Matthew 23:5).

Zodiac Greek *zodiakos*, "of living things," derived from ancient Babylonian astrology. Zodiac means "circle of animals" and its current design was arranged by the Greek astronomer Hipparchus circa 150 B.C. It is an imaginary, circular belt in the heavens extending for about eight degrees on either side of the apparent path of the sun, including the paths of the moon and principal planets (except Pluto), divided into twelve equal zones of 30 degrees, or "houses," each represented symbolically by the different constellations that reside in them -- most of which are in the shape of animals -- and assigned to certain parts of the year when the sun appears in each house. The signs of the zodiac include: Aquarius (Water Bearer, January 20 - February 18); Pisces (Fishes, February 19 - March 20); Aries (Ram, March 21 - April 19); Taurus (Bull, April 20 - May 20); Gemini (Twins, May 21 - June 21); Cancer (Crab, June 22 - July 22); Leo (Lion, July 23 - August 22); Virgo (Virgin, August 23 - September 22); Libra (Balance, September 23 - October 23); Scorpio (Scorpion, October 24 - November 21); Sagittarius (Archer, November 22 - December 21); Capricorn (Goat, December 22 - January 19). (See Astrology)

Zohar Hebrew, "brightness," a mystical commentary on the Pentateuch written from the second to the thirteenth century and a principal source of the cabala.

Zoroaster (Zarathustra) Founder of Zoroastrianism (circa 590 B.C., although some scholars believe as early as 750 B.C.), also known as Mazdaism, the religious system of the Iranians before their conversion to Islam, which includes belief in an afterlife and in the continuous struggle of the universal spirit of good (Ormazd) with the spirit of evil (Ahriman), with good ultimately to prevail. Zoroaster reformed the polytheistic cults of the Iranians into a religious system that worshiped one Wise Lord (Ahura Mazda) and introduced concepts of heaven and hell, along with an ultimate savior and final judgment of mankind. Zoroastrianism later became the primary religion of the Medes and the Persians (the Persian name for Zoroaster is Zarathustra), the official religion of the Sassanians (who compiled the Zend-Avesta, the sacred writings of the Zoroastrians), and had profound effects on the Babylonians and the Greeks, all of which altered its doctrines somewhat. Many scholars believe that it also had direct effects on Judaism from the time of the Exodus and indirect effects on Christianity. Zoroastrianism survived the spread of Islam for several centuries before finally being suppressed.

Zucchetto Skullcap worn by Roman Catholic ecclesiastics -- a priest's is black, a bishop's purple, a cardinal's red, and the Pope's white.

Zwingli, Huldreich Swiss Protestant reformer (1484-1531), formerly a Catholic priest, who advocated the doctrine that the body of Christ is not actually present in the Eucharist but that the ceremony is merely a commemorative one. He also translated the Bible into Swiss German, wrote a book entitled *On the True and False Religion*, and died a martyr as a chaplain in the army of Zürich in the second war of Kappel. His last words were, "What does it matter? They can kill the body, but not the soul."

Aeromancy Divination by concentrating on cloud shapes and other natural phenomena.

Alchemy The science of changing the base elements into gold or silver with the aid of a mysterious psychic substance.

All Hallows Eve October 31 witch festival.

Alomancy The divination by salt.

Amulet An ornament inscribed with a magic spell or sign, usually worn around the neck or wrist.

Animism Belief that inanimate objects are alive and have souls.

Apantomancy A method which makes forecasts from chance meetings with animals, birds, and other creatures. Practiced in various types of Mexican voodoo.

Astral Projection The soul leaves the body and travels on a different plane of consciousness.

Astrology Fortune telling by stars or the Zodiac.

Augury Divination from omens and signs.

Automatic Writing Writing under a trance induced by spirit or demon powers in which the demonic spirit writes.

Bewitch To influence by witchcraft.

Black Magic A form of witchcraft often called the black arts which uses demon power for occult force.

Botanomancy Divination by burning tree branches and leaves.

Cartomancy Fortune telling with cards.

Causimonancy Divination from objects burning in a fire.

Cephalomancy Divination using the skull or head of a donkey or goat.

Ceraunoscopyl Divination from the study of thunder and lightening.

Ceroscopy Divination in which melted wax is poured into cold water.

Charm An ornament believed to contain magical powers.

Chiromancy Divination by lines of a person=s hand.

Clairvoyance A medium who forecasts distant happenings through visions.

Cleromancy Akin to divination with dice, but using pebbles or other odd objects.

Clidomancy Divination using a dangling key which answers questions.

Coven An assembly of 13 witches.

Conjure To summon a departed demon spirit often by incantation.

Cosmic Consciousness To be in tune with the Universe. An expression used by people spaced out by drugs or meditation.

Crystal Gazer Person who uses a crystal ball for divination.

Cult Religious group with beliefs or practices considered to be false based on Biblical principles according to Scripture.

Curse Incantation made to bring harm to some one.

Demon An evil power or spirit subservient to Satan (see Fallen Angel).

Demonomancy Divination using demons.

Divination The ability to foretell future events or to discover hidden information.

Esbat Witchcraft meeting held for transacting business or to accomplish an act of Satanic mischief.

ESP Abbreviation for extra-sensory perception.

Exorcism Ritual used to drive away a spirit contrary to exorcists will.

Extra-Sensory Perception Ability to gain insights without the use of ordinary senses.

Familiar Spirit Spirit embodied in an animal which attends, serves, and guards a person. The spirit can also be in form of person.

Fetish An object regarded as magical or sacred.

Fortune-Teller One who tells future events for individuals.

Gastromancy Divination with the voice lowered as though issuing from the ground.

Genethliology Divination by use of stars at birth.

Graphology Analysis of character through one's handwriting.

Grey Magic Use of spirit or demon power for occult force.

Halomancy Divination by salt. Otherwise known as Alomancy.

Hex To effect by an evil spell.

Horoschopy Pertains to the casting of an astrological horoscope.

Horoscope Diagram showing position of planets and stars with their signs or the zodiac. Used by astrologers for divination.

Incense Perfumes, herbs, and charcoals burned in rituals.

Libranomancy Requires incense as a means of interpreting omens.

Magic Supernatural power over natural forces.

Meditation Fixing your mind on one object for enlightenment by spirits.

Medium Person acting as the communications between this world and the spirit world with the ability to talk to demons or evil spirits representing the voices of the dead.

Metaphysics Pertaining to the cosmos, cosmic energy, and the metaphysical world.

Mystic One who is into mysticism or the occult.

Mystic Christianity Mixing God and Satan.

Necromancy Conjuring spirits of the dead to reveal future events, or to influence them.

Numerology Divination using vital numbers.

Occult Secret, mysterious, relating to supernatural forces.

Omen An occurrence or phenomenon believed to portend the future.

Oneiromancy The interpretation of dreams.

Ooscopy Divination by eggs used frequently in the Mexican type of voodoo.

Ouija Board Game board used to obtain spiritualistic or telepathic messages about the future or other hidden knowledge.

Palmistry Divination by lines and formation of the hands.

Phrenology Divination by head formations.

Physiognomy Character analysis through physical appearance of the features.

Poltergeist Mischievous ghost said to be responsible for strange noises or movement of inanimate objects.

Potions Herb mixes or drugs with magical or hallucinogenic powers.

Precognition Discernment about an event not yet experienced.

Premonition Uneasy anticipation of an event.

Prognostication Foretelling the future.

Psychic Person sensitive to non-physical forces and their possible significance.

Psychic Phenomena Events that cannot be explained by physical reference and are attributed to spiritual forces.

Recognition An inner knowledge of things to come.

Reincarnation Rebirth of a soul into a new human body or other form of life.

Rhodomancy Divination by means of a wand or stick.

Sabbat Main meeting of witches to bring in new members.

Satan Fallen archangel of God set upon various types of destruction on earth.

Satanic Bible The official Bible of the Church of Satan

Satanic Church Refers to any group practicing Satanism.

Satanism Satan worship or idol worship usually involving travesty of Christian rites.

Seance Group meeting to receive communication from spirits through a medium.

Seer One who predicts future events or developments.

Soothsaying Act of foretelling future events.

Sorcerer Wizard or witch.

Sorcery Use of power obtained from control of evil spirits.

Soul Transmigration Astral projection or transferring of souls.

Spell Spoken word or pattern of words with magical power using evil spirits.

Spiritism Belief that departed spirits commune with living people usually through a medium.

Spiritualism Type of church organization noted for communicating with the dead.

Spiritualist One who believes in Spiritism.

Spook A spirit, demon, or fallen angel.

Tarot Cards Fortune telling cards.

Tea Leaf Reader Fortune telling by reading omens in tea leaves.

Telepathy Communication from one mind to another without using physical channels.

Trance State of partially suspended animation.

Vibes Vibrations believed to be set off by body energy.

Voodoo Old form of ritual witchcraft usually similar to black magic rituals.

Warlock A male witch.

White Magic Use of spirit or demon power for occult force.

Witch Woman or man who practices black arts and other type of occult.

Witchcraft A type of occult practice. A word is often used to denote all of the occult collectively.

Witch Doctor One who uses herbs or machines to cure in non-medical ways.

Wizard One who uses spirit power to bring about certain reactions. A Sorcerer.

Xylomancy Divination from pieces of wood.

Yoga Exercise and meditation opening mind to dark powers.

Zodiac Imaginary belt of planets and constellations forming the astrological signs.

Pagan A follower of one of the nature or fertility orientated religions of the world. (The Christians and Jews often incorrectly use the term to mean everybody else but themselves). This word comes from the Latin word *paganus*, meaning country dweller. There are many different types or denominations of Pagans.

Heathen This word is roughly synonymous with "Pagan" and literally means a dweller on the heath.

Wicca One of the Pagan religions with roots in ancient expressions of the reverence of Nature. We believe that The Great Spirit is presented in all beings and things. The ultimate creative force represents itself in both masculine and feminine aspects, so is often symbolised as God and Goddess. The aspects most popular in Wicca are the Triple Goddess of the Moon (Maiden, Mother, and Crone), and the Horned God of the animals and of Death and Rebirth. We practice magick for positive purposes: spiritual development, healing, guidance and safety. Our rituals are practiced outdoors whenever practical. We have no Holy Book, or any equivalent of the Christian Bible. Ours is an ancient tradition, from the days before writing. Individuals have access to the Divine and do not require an intermediary. EVERY initiate of the Craft, whether self-dedicated, or dedicated by a High Priest or High Priestess, is considered to be a Priest or Priestess in their own right. We strive to live in harmony with nature and the Earth, we shall not exploit them. Wicca is a valid religion but it is not the only one. We do not try to convert people to our religion claiming that it is for everyone. We believe that people should be FREE to choose the religion that right for them. We say that "all paths lead to the centre". We are all different and it is our difference that

make us special.

Satanism Is a perverted form of Christianity. It is necessary to believe in the Christian pantheon, including Satan, in order to practice Satanism. Satanists worship the Devil, recite the Lord's prayer backwards and perform a rite they call the Black Mass, a parody of the Christian mass. Satanism is usually an excuse for indulging in vices such as perverted sexual acts, drug and alcohol abuse, and even murder in extreme cases. A famous example of a Satanic cult was the prestigious Hellfire Club, to which such people as Benjamin Franklin, Oscar Wilde's wife, and Aleister Crowley (among others) belonged to. It is important to realise that Wicca and Satanism are not the same thing. They are not even close! Wicca is an ancient, pre-Christian religion dedicated to fertility and nature, love and balance. The Wiccan Rede: "An' it harm none, do what ye will", prohibits a Witch from taking part in anything that may harm any thing, living or non-living, including themselves. The confusion arises, at least in part, because many Satanists like to call themselves "witches", a title to which they have no right.

All Hallows Eve The night of October 31st. Originally a Pagan festival of darkness, and death. Halloween was believed to be the one time of year when the souls of the dead revisited their former homes. The modern use of wearing costumes originated from the use of scary masks used to scare the roaming souls away.

Amulet A charm worn around the neck in order to bring luck, or ward off evil.

Anti-Christ -- Satan The enemy of man and God who, according to many religious cultures, will establish a reign of evil on earth which will last fifty years, before being overthrown by the second coming of Christ

Apparition A supernatural appearance or image recognizable (being familiar) to the viewer.

Apport An object transported through supernatural means.

Astral Body The invisible spirit of a person (or more likely an animal). *See Astral Projection*

Astral Plane The level of existence through which spirits of the dead first pass. The level in which an astrally projected spirit travels.

Astral Projection The separation of the astral body (or spirit) from the physical body. The astral body travels in the astral plane, to places near and far.

Automatic Writing The production of written material, by a spirit, through a person, but without conscious control of that person. Often, a person may write pages and pages of words that, upon "awakening", they do not remember writing.

Beelzebub One of Satan's chief lieutenants, considered Satan's "left hand man".

Black Magic The practice of conjuring preternatural forces for a specific evil purpose.

Black Mass The mass said in honor of Satan at the black witches sabbath, and by Satanists.

Circumambulism Ceremonial walking around an object or person to secure protection.

Clairaudience The psychic ability to hear sounds and voices, normally not heard by most people.

Clairvoyance The psychic ability to see objects, persons, places or events regardless of time or distance.

Conjuring The process of calling preternatural forces into aid or action through the use of sorcery or ceremonial black magic.

Curse To invoke preternatural forces to cause harm or injury to a person, place or object.

Demon An evil entity hostile to humans. A lower level evil spirit working for Lucifer.

Demonic Pertaining to or caused by demons.

Demonologist Involved in the study of Demonology.

Demonology The study of demons, including their characteristics, classification, and effect on mankind.

Devil An upper level evil spirit working for Lucifer. (Beazelbub, among many)

Diabolical Pertaining to or caused by a devil.

Discarnate Existing outside a physical body.

Disembodied A spirit functioning without a body.

Doppleganger or (Doubleganger) A spirit of a living person, outside the physical body.

Earthbound A spirit being trapped to or remain on the earthly plain.

Ectoplasm An unknown substance which emanates from the bodies of mediums, correlating to supernatural phenomena.

Elemental A lesser spirit bound to the fundamentals of nature (earth, wind, water, and fire).

Entity A disembodied or preternatural spirit.

Exorcism The process of expelling or removing an evil spirit by religious ceremony.

Exorcist One who conducts the rights of exorcism.

Fairy an elemental spirit considered benign but inclined to mischief.

Ghost A supernatural appearance or image not recognizeable to the viewer.

Human Sacrifice The ceremonial killing of a person as an offering to an offering to an evil spirit for magical purposes.

Human Spirit The (earthbound) spirit of a deceased person.

Incarnate Living in a physical body.

Incubus A demon which seeks sexual intercourse with a living woman.

Inhuman Spirit An entity or spirit of a being that has never lived in the earthly realm.

Levitation The raising of a body or object without any physical or visible means.

Lucifer Satan, leader of the rebellious angels.

Magic The art of producing illusions. *See Conjuring, Black Magic*

Materialization The appearance of spirits in material form.

Medium A person who makes contact with discarnate or inhuman spirits on the astral plane.

Necromancy The practice of conjuring evil spirits.

Necronomicon The book of the dead

Occult Pertaining to the supernatural, that which is beyond the range of natural knowledge.

Ouija Board A board consisting of the letters of the alphabet, numbers 1-0, and the words "yes", "no", and "goodbye" which is used as a tool for communicating with spirits.

Out of Body Experience Can be done purposefully or unconsciously by a person. *See Astral Projection*

Parapsychology The scientific study of phenomena that natural laws can not explain.

Pentagram The magical diagram consisting of a five pointed star which is a representation of man. Considered by occultists to be the most potent means of conjuring spirits.

Phantomania An occurrence in which the victim is held paralyzed while being subjected to preternatural attack.

Planchette The indicator, or pointer used in association with a Ouija Board.

Poltergeist From the German meaning, "noisy ghost". Term for a spirit which is associated with the movement of objects and general mishchevous haunting activity.

Possession The state in which a living person is controlled by a foreign, malignant energy.

Precognition Knowledge of future events.

Premonition A vision of warning of future events.

Preternatural Associated with inhuman, demonic, or diabolical spirits or forces.

Psychic Dealing with the ability to see, hear, feel and sense beyond the average human ability. A medium.

Psychic Cold The cold sensation received when a spirit is present, usually having defined boundaries.

Psychic Photograph Supernatural or preternatural images appearing on a photograph.

Psychic Research The study of psychic phenomena.

Psychokinesis (PK) The movement of objects without the use of physical means, such as using the mind.

Psychometry The ability to acquire knowledge of people, places or objects by touching an object associated with it.

Reincarnation The belief that each person possesses a soul which is independent of the body and can be reborn into another body.

Relic An item closely associated with a holy person's body or clothing.

Satan God's adversary, expelled from heaven for rebelling against God.

Satanic Pertaining to Satan.

Satanism The worship of Satan.

Sensitive A person who possesses psychic powers.

Sorcerer A male who has made a pact with the devil in exchange for magical powers.

Sorceress A female who has made a pact with the devil in exchange for magical powers.

Sorcery The practice of black magic.

Spectre A ghost (unrecognizable to the viewer).

Succubus A demon which seeks sexual intercourse with living men.

Supernatural Activity caused by God or his angels, commonly referred to as anything outside the bounds of natural laws.

Talisman Drawings of various shapes and sizes which have specified purposes of good luck.

Telekinesis Telepathic sounds and voices projected to people.

Telepathy Psychic communications between individuals.

Teleportation Objects moved by supernatural forces.

Voodoo Magical practice considered to be a form of black magic but also is considered a religion to some.

Warlock A male witch

Werewolf A person who has been transformed into or has gained wolflike characteristics.

White Witch A witch whose practice in withcraft is solely for the purpose of good.

Wicca An ancient witchcraft religion which honors the gods of nature. Wicca means "wise one".

Witch A woman who practices withcraft.

Withcraft The practice of performing acts with the aid of a spirit.

Angels, Fallen. Another term for demons which refers to the most logical origin of demons, as described in **Revelation** 12:7-9. They are known as fallen because they rebelled against God and were hurled out of Heaven to earth as a result.

Angels, Holy The supernatural beings who did not rebel against God, and become fallen angels or demons.

Astrology The study of the heavenly constellations for the purpose of predicting the future for persons born under a specific sign of the zodiac.

Astronomy The legitimate science of studying the heavenly bodies.

Channel The alleged ability of a psychic to communicate with the dead; usually associated with belief in reincarnation; crystals may be used to enhance the process.

Deliverance The process of helping a person become free of demon possession through prayer for the cleansing power of the Holy Spirit. The on-site helper during deliverance is only a catalyst. The Holy Spirit is the active agent and does all the real work. **Evangelical deliverance** should not be confused with exorcism, which is a precise liturgical ritual practiced with the sanction of the Roman Catholic Church.

Demon oppression Sometimes used as another term for severe temptation by Satan. Some evangelicals use this term interchangeably with demon "possession." [The author advises against this confusion. JFC]

Demon possession The action of a demon taking over the mind and soul of a human who is not being protected by the Holy Spirit. Possession may be intermittent through a demonic time-sharing process which allows a single demon to contaminate many people almost simultaneously. A single instance of demon possession may last no longer than a few seconds, but with devastating results, as in the case of a mass murderer with an automatic weapon. See "Time-sharing."

Demons Evil supernatural beings who serve Satan and work against humans. The word probably comes from the ancient word "da" which means "the knowing ones."

Devil A word used in the King James Version to represent either Satan, the primary agent of evil, or an individual demon. See "demon."

Discernment The ability of persons who are filled with the Holy Spirit to detect the activity of demons based on the presence in victims of the known symptoms of violence, lust, greed, and an unnatural power of persuasion.

Evil spirit A word used in the King James Version of the Bible to represent an individual demon. See "demon."

God, the Father The first Person of the Trinity; the chief executive officer of the entire universe. All power, holy and evil, originates with Him.

God, the Holy Spirit The third Person of the Trinity; when Jesus died and went to Heaven, He sent back His Holy Spirit to serve humans in three ways: (1) help us understand the Bible and what it teaches about God and Jesus Christ; (2) help us do the will of God in our lives; and (3) help us resist the evil power of Satan and his demons.

God, the Son The second Person of the Trinity, Jesus Christ. He came to earth so He could die as the supreme sin sacrifice for all humans. He is the Lamb of God.

Gospels The first four books of the New Testament. The word "gospel" means "good news."

Greed One of the primary symptoms of demon possession, along with violence, lust, and an unnatural power of persuasion.

Guardian angels Holy angels in their capacity as the protectors of humans who believe in prayer and pray to God for physical and spiritual protection.

King James Version The most popular Protestant translation of the Bible; commissioned by King James of England and completed in 1611.

Living Bible A paraphrase of the King James Version of the Bible by Dr. Kenneth N. Taylor, Tyndale House, Wheaton, IL, Copyright 1971; useful for people who are studying the Bible for the first time.

Luke, the Physician. The author of the third gospel; a recognized authority on Biblical demon possession.

Lust One of the primary symptoms of demon possession, along with violence, greed, and an unnatural power of persuasion.

NAMBLA the North American Man/Boy Love Association. NAMBLA (pronounced "NAM-bluh") is an organized group of pedophiles which is dedicated to promoting the normalization and legalization of men having sex with boys. NAMBLA members may be respected members of the community with stature in such fields as education and medicine.

New International Version (NIV) Zondervan Bible Publishers, Grand Rapids, MI, Copyright 1978. This is a scholarly modern language translation from Hebrew and Greek manuscripts and is equally suitable for first-time readers and advanced Bible students.

New Testament The second major division of the Bible; the first is the Old Testament. In this context, "testament" means covenant or contract. See "sacrifice".

Pedophile A person who makes sexual involvement with children a compulsive way of life. Photography plays a large role; pictures are taken of children in sexual situations whom they have molested; these pictures are treasured, exchanged with other pedophiles, and often find their way into super-slick child pornography publications. Computer electronic mail bulletin boards are used to facilitate activities. The North American Man/Boy Love Association (NAMBLA) is a major organization of pedophiles.

Psychic A person who claims to have supernatural powers do such things as predict the future, solve mysteries, communicate with the dead, or heal the sick. If a person really has this kind of power, it comes from Satan and his demons. This is true even though the intent of such an individual is benign.

Reincarnation The theory that a soul occupies successive bodies down through the centuries. Psychics use a process called channeling to communicate with persons from other eras.

Resurrection The Biblical doctrine that we will be raised from the dead with a glorified body when Jesus returns to earth.

Sacrifice The central theme of God's plan for allowing humans to escape the death penalty for our sins. In the Old Testament, animals died so we wouldn't have to die for our sins. In the New Testament, Jesus Christ died as the Lamb of God and became the ultimate sacrifice for our sins.

Satan The major source of evil power in the universe. Satan derives his power from God, who grants it to him on a temporary basis. Ultimately, God will destroy Satan and bring an end to all evil power. See Revelation 20:10.

Spirit guide A euphemism for demon used by psychics and persons who are involved with such activities as mind control. Persons who use "spirit" guide may not know it's true meaning.

Spiritual Warfare The constant spiritual battle that rages between God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Angels, on the side of good, and between Satan and his demons on the side of evil. Human beings are in the crossfire and are in danger unless they are shielded by being filled with the power of the Holy Spirit.

Supernatural Anything which is above the laws of nature. There are only two sources of supernatural power: God and Satan. If a phenomenon is not of God, it is of Satan. There is no "neutral" supernatural power.

Synoptic The literal meaning is "seeing together". The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke are considered to the synoptic Gospels because they report many of the same incidents in the life of Jesus.

Time-sharing The process whereby a main-frame computer works with many users simultaneously. This book uses the analogy of time-sharing to explain how a fixed number of demons may be able to trouble millions of humans around the world.

Trinity The three-fold nature of God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Unnatural power of persuasion One of the primary symptoms of demon possession, along with violence, lust, and greed.

Violence One of the primary symptoms of demon possession, along with lust, greed, and an unnatural power of persuasion.

Wicca "*Modern witchcraft*. In the second half of the 20th century, a self-conscious revival of pre-Christian paganism occurred in the United States and Europe. The foundation of this revival was witchcraft, or wicca (said to be an early Anglo-Saxon word for witchcraft). Wicca is interpreted simply as the nature and fertility religion of pre-Christian Europe, which has been explored in books such as Charles Leland's *Aradia: The Gospel of the Witches* (1899), Margaret Murray's *The Witch-Cult in Western Europe* (1921), and Robert Graves's *The White Goddess* (1948). Although they are now considered unreliable by scholars, such books gave inspiration to some people seeking spiritual alternatives. The writings of Englishman Gerald Gardner, who in his book *Witchcraft Today* (1954) claimed that he was a witch initiated by a surviving coven, imparted much of the alleged lore and rituals of English witches. Although his claims have been questioned, covens of modern witches sprang up under Gardner's inspiration and spread to the United States in the 1960s".

Accepting Christ; Born Again; Conversion; New Birth; Salvation; Saved A conscious and climactic act of believing that Jesus is the Son of God and that His sacrificial death for our sin holds the power to free us from the guilt, domination, and punishment of sin.

Addiction A chemical and/or psychological need to use tobacco, alcohol, or illegal drugs.

Adoption The process of reinstating us in the favor of God as a brother of Jesus Christ and the son of God.

Age of accountability The age beyond which a child will be held responsible for his/her relationship with Christ.

Altar A railing at the front of the church, between the platform and the pews, which is used as a place of prayer.

Altar Call; Altar Invitation The part of the service when worshippers are invited to come forward and kneel or stand at the altar for prayer.

Anoint The prayer of healing by a minister, usually accompanied by touching oil (a symbol of the Holy Spirit) on the brow amid a chorus of audible prayer.

Baby Christian The term used for a person who has recently accepted Jesus Christ as a personal savior.

Backslide According to Wesleyan doctrine, the ability to fall from the born-again state because of sinning, as illustrated in Ezekiel 18:21-24.

Baptized in the Spirit According to Pentecostal doctrine, a special filling of the Holy Spirit usually associated with the gift of speaking in unlearned languages.

Baptism, adult Complete immersion as a testimony of the fact that Christ has washed away all sin.

Baptism, infant Bringing a baby or young child before the altar for sprinkling with water; replaced by "infant dedication" in many evangelical churches.

Benediction The concluding prayer in a worship service.

Book store A retail outlet which specializes in Bibles and Christian music, literature, and gifts.

Bulletin A folder which includes the order of service and a listing of activities.

Camp meeting A series of outdoor revival services held in a rustic setting.

Calvinist The school of evangelical thought developed by John Calvin which is characterized by the following concepts: (a) God has already decided (predestined) who will be saved and who will be lost and there is nothing we can do to change that; (b) a Christian is filled by the Holy Spirit when born again instead of in a separate act of sanctification; (c) all Christians sin daily in word, thought, and deed, and must ask for daily forgiveness; (d) if a born-again believer returns to a life of sin, that person will not go to Hell if death or the rapture comes before repentance; and (e) he/she is eternally secure. Major denominations: the various branches of the Baptist Church.

Canon The sacred writings which have been accepted as the official books of the Bible.

Charismatic See "Pentecostal".

Christian A person who has been born again and who is living according to the teachings of Jesus Christ.

Comforter A term for the Holy Spirit found in the King James version of the Bible.

Communion A symbolic re-enactment of the Last Passover Supper when Jesus shared bread and wine with His disciples the evening before He was crucified. The Last Supper was simultaneously the last celebration of Passover and the first celebration of Communion.

Concordance A word index of Bible verses.

Conference, district All the churches of one denomination within a given geographic area.

Congregational singing The part of a worship service when everyone sings together.

Consecration Consciously turning your life over to Christ.

Conviction A state of anxiety brought on by the Holy Spirit, associated with the knowledge that there is a need to accept Christ and achieve forgiveness for sins.

Dedication, church A special service for consecrating facilities to the service of God.

Dedication, infant A special service when parents bring a baby to the altar and promise they will train him/her in the teachings of Jesus Christ.

Demons The fallen angels who were thrown out of Heaven with Satan for rebellion against God; from the ancient word da, meaning the "knowing ones" .

Demon possession The presence of one or more Satanic demons within the body and mind of a human being.

Denomination A group of churches held together with a form of central government.

Devotions Personal daily prayer and Bible reading.

Doctrine A statement of what the Bible teaches and the church believes.

Eternal security According to Calvinist doctrine, the inability of a born-again believer to miss Heaven because of sinning.

Evangelical Any religious activity with an emphasis on encouraging others to accept Jesus Christ.

Evangelism The act or process of encouraging persons to accept Christ.

Evangelist A minister who makes a career of preaching in revivals and camp meetings.

Faith Accepting the teaching of the Bible as fact even without "proof".

Family altar A time when the family has devotions together, including Bible reading and prayer.

Free moral agency; will The ability to choose good or evil without direct intervention by God or Satan.

Full-gospel To be associated with Pentecostal activities, as in "Full-Gospel Business Men's Association".

Fundamentalist A media term for any person or group with a strong commitment to a religious belief; evangelical.

God, the Father The Chief of the Godhead who is holy, all powerful [omnipotent], all knowing [omniscient], and present everywhere [omnipresent].

God, the Holy Spirit The third person of the Godhead revealed to us on the day of Pentecost.

God, the Son The second person of the Godhead who came to earth to die as a sin sacrifice for us.

Gospel music Christian songs with an evangelical emphasis.

Gospels The first four books of the New Testament: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John.

Greek The language in which most of the original New Testament was written.

Healing The power of God to alleviate physical problems.

Heaven The literal place reserved for the eternal joy of all persons saved by the blood of The Lamb, Jesus Christ.

Hebrew The language in which the original Old Testament was written.

Hell The literal place reserved for the eternal punishment of Satan, demons, and sinners.

Hypocrite A person who appears to talk better than he or she lives.

Inspiration God's blessing on the Bible's authors which enabled them to write what they wrote.

Intercessory prayer Praying for someone else.

Invocation The opening prayer of a service, calling in the Holy Spirit.

Justification Total forgiveness by God.

King James Version A popular translation of the Bible completed in 1611.

Lamb of God The title Jesus carries in heaven because He died for our sins.

Liturgy Any form of worship.

Living Bible A modern language paraphrase of the Bible published by Tyndale House.

Manual A book of denominational doctrine and regulations.

Membership Vowing to accept a denomination's doctrine and live by its regulations.

Message The presentation of the sermon by the pastor or evangelist.

Minister The spiritual and administrative leader of a local church.

Missionary A person who serves the Lord in another country as minister, doctor, nurse, teacher.

New Testament The second section of the Bible which contains the new contract we have with God: if we will accept Jesus Christ as God's Son, we will live in Heaven forever when we die.

NIV. New International Version, a popular modern language translation of the Bible published by Zondervan.

Offering Putting money in the plate when it is passed.

Offertory Music which is played during the offering.

Old Testament The first section of the Bible which contains the old contract with God: if the Children of Israel [Israelites] would obey the laws of God handed down to Moses, God would help them win all their battles and give them all the land they walked on. Unfortunately, the Israelites did not hold up their end of the contract.

Pauline Epistles Letters which the Apostle Paul wrote to his new churches.

Pentecostal The school of evangelical thought developed around the fact that on the first day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit was given, the observers were able to hear Peter preach in their native languages. Pentecostal, or charismatic, doctrine is characterized by the following concepts: (a) the Christian should be baptized in the Holy Spirit after being born again, and (b) a Christian who is baptized in the Holy Spirit will receive special gifts such as the ability to speak in unlearned languages (tongues), interpret a message given in tongues, and/or pray for the sick with the "laying on of hands". The modern Pentecostal movement grew out of the three-year Azusa Street (Los Angeles) revival which began in 1906. Major denominations: Assemblies of God, United Pentecostal Church, Foursquare Church. Many non-Pentecostal churches have pockets of charismatic worshippers, including denominations not usually associated with Evangelicals.

Plan of Salvation God's accepting animal deaths and then Christ's death as payment for man's sin.

Platform The raised area at the front of the church.

Prayer Talking to God.

Prayer Service A mid-week service devoted to prayer and Bible study.

Predestination According to Calvinist doctrine, the fact that God has already decided who will go to Heaven and who will go to Hell.

Protestant A Christian who is not a Catholic. Martin Luther was the original protestant because he protested against the evils of the organized religion of his day.

Pulpit The lectern at which the minister stands.

Quarterly A study guide for Sunday school classes which is issued every three months.

Rally A special service for promoting a specific aspect of the church's program.

Rapture; Second Coming The unannounced return of Jesus to take all Christians to heaven to be with Him forever. [Read the novel *Gone*]

Regeneration Being born again.

Responsive reading A leader and a group taking turns reading verses of scripture.

Restitution After salvation, paying back what is owed and asking forgiveness where needed.

Revival A series of services with an emphasis on spiritual growth and evangelism.

Sacrifice The death of animals in the Old Testament and Jesus Christ in the New Testament because God requires the death penalty for sin.

Sanctification According to Wesleyan doctrine, a second (after being born again), definite, instantaneous work of grace which removes the inbred carnal nature through an act of the Holy Spirit, thereby making it less likely for the believer to sin again.

Sanctuary The portion of a church building used for worship services.

Satan; Devil The primary evil supernatural being who wants everyone to sin and go to hell forever where he will be.

Scripture The writings in the Bible.

Seekers Persons who come forward for prayer during an altar invitation.

Sin A willful violation of God's laws as set forth in the Bible.

Standards Bible based guidelines developed by a denomination regarding behavior and interaction.

Sunday School A Christian education program which meets for an hour each Sunday morning.

Temptation An urge to do something wrong as brought on by Satan and his demons.

Testimony A public statement of having accepted Jesus Christ as a personal savior.

Text A portion of scripture used by a minister as the basis for a sermon.

Tithing Paying ten percent of personal income to the work of the Lord.

Tongues Speaking in unlearned languages. See "Pentecostal".

Trinity The Godhead made of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Tureen dinner A fellowship meal comprised of casseroles brought by the participants. Also known as "potluck supper."

Vacation Bible School A summer Christian education program lasting one or two weeks.

Vestibule The foyer or entryway of a church building.

Wesleyan The school of evangelical thought developed by John Wesley which is characterized by the following concepts: (a) the Christian should be sanctified by a filling of the Holy Spirit after being born again; (b) a Christian who is sanctified is better equipped to resist Satan's temptations to sin, and (c) if a born-again believer returns to a life of sin (backslides), that person will go to Hell if death or the rapture comes before repentance. Major denominations: Church of the Nazarene, Wesleyan Church. Persons who follow the Wesleyan doctrine are also known as Arminians.

Witness Telling another person about how to accept Jesus Christ as a personal savior.

Youth for Christ A Christ centered youth organization for high school students.

Youth Society or youth group A church's program for young people.

Antichrist The figure who acts as Satan's lead agent on earth during the end times. Most Christian scenarios predict the Antichrist -- a sort of evil twin of Jesus in many ways -- will forge a one-world government through promises of peace. When Jesus returns, he will expose the Antichrist as an impostor, defeat him in the battle of Armageddon, and reign with the Christian martyrs for a thousand years on earth.

Apocalyptic Referring to the belief that the end of the world as we know it is approaching, usually through a sudden, cataclysmic transformation. Comes from the Greek word apokalypsis meaning "the lifting of a veil," or a revelation. Also the name given to a specific genre of prophetic literature, of which the book of Revelation is best known. Western apocalyptic traditions tend to be dualistic, in that they view this end as the final outcome of an ongoing battle between good and evil forces, usually represented by God and Satan.

Armageddon The geographic location given in the book of Revelation (16:16) for the climactic battle between Christ and Antichrist, with Christ's victory ushering in his thousand-year reign on earth. Named after the hill near the town of Megiddo in Palestine, which due to its strategic location overlooking major military and trade routes was the site of many ancient battles.

Chiliasm The belief that the righteous will enjoy their rewards here on earth. In Christianity, this has meant belief in the millennium, Christ's thousand-year reign on earth. From the Greek chilioi meaning "thousand."

Daniel The book of Daniel, the most famous of the Jewish apocalypses, and the source of many of the ideas and symbols in Revelation. Likely written in the 2nd century B.C. as a response to the desecration of the Temple by Antiochus IV of Syria, although the author is cast back to the time of the Exile and "predicts" events back to the present. In Daniel, one sees many of the elements of the apocalyptic world view coming together for the first time in a single work. In it, God's chosen rise up and overthrow their oppressors, thus inheriting "the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven."

Dispensationalism A theological system which breaks history down into discrete epochs, called dispensations, in each of which God has offered humans a different means of salvation. First developed in the mid-19th century by English theologian John Nelson Darby, dispensationalism found its most popular expression in the "Scofield Reference Bible" of the early 20th century. See premillennialism, below.

Eschatology The study of "last things," or the end of human history. Although specific interpretations vary widely, most Christian eschatologies center on the belief that the just will be rewarded when God triumphs over Satan in the last days.

Messianism The belief that a chosen individual holds the key to a higher truth which will lead to salvation for his followers. Extreme forms of apocalyptic belief have tended to manifest themselves through messianic figures, from Montanus in the 2nd century to David Koresh in 1993. Messiahs tend to be highly charismatic individuals prone to megalomania and violence.

Millennial Referring to a period of 1000 years, such as the end of the second Christian millennium in the year 2000. In religious terms, anything referring to the expected thousand-year reign of Christ on earth after the events of the last days have brought an end to this world. Such a radical transformation could come at any time, although expectations tend to increase at round markers such as the year 2000. Related to chiliasm, above.

Millenarian Referring to more extreme millennial expectations, in which belief in an imminent apocalyptic transformation tends to spur the faithful into action, often of a violent nature.

Postmillennialism The belief that Christ will return only after humans have established a millennial kingdom on earth through their own efforts. In extreme forms, postmillennial beliefs have given rise to violent theocracies, such as that of Thomas Muntzer in 16th century Germany. But a more typical example is the milder postmillennialism of most New England Puritans, who believed they were building just such a righteous society, a "city on a hill." This type of apocalyptic expectation has gone hand-in-hand with social reform movements, and has contributed to the notion of divinely ordained progress which has played an important role in American history.

Premillennialism The belief that God's millennial kingdom will not come until Christ returns to save a sinful humanity and defeat the forces of Satan. Specific interpretations vary as to the exact timing of the Second Coming -- at the beginning, middle, or end of the Tribulation period. But in general, premillennialists tend to be highly pessimistic about the present state of the world, yet anxiously await a perfect world in the near future. By placing the fate of mankind squarely in God's hands, premillennialism has tended to discourage social action, concentrating instead on conversion and preparation for final judgment.

Rapture The belief that true believers in Christ will be taken bodily into heaven just prior to or during the Tribulation period, and thus be spared the horrible fate awaiting those left behind on earth. The rapture is an integral part of the premillennial dispensationalist systems which have dominated Christian prophecy belief in the second half of the 20th century, as it proposes faith in Christ as the only route to salvation.

Revelation The book of Revelation, also known as "The Revelation to John" and "St. John's Apocalypse," is the primary source of inspiration for Christian prophecy believers. The last book and only apocalypse in the New Testament, it was likely written in the last decade of the first century, during a period of great turmoil after the destruction of the second Jewish Temple by the Romans in 70 A.D. Biblical scholars are skeptical of the historical claim that the Apostle John was its author. Millions of Christians have taken the events so vividly described in Revelation as a blueprint for what will happen in the last days as God brings an end to this world. But beyond that, many ideas and symbols from Revelation have found a place in the wider culture, including:

the Mark of the Beast, represented by the number "666;" the seven seals; the four horsemen of the Apocalypse; the Whore of Babylon; and the battle of Armageddon.

Tribulation A period of upheaval, usually seven years in length, during which Satan will exert control over the earth through the antichrist. All but a small remnant of Christian faithful -- perhaps numbering 144,000 -- will die as a result of wars, plagues, and famine. The Tribulation will end with Christ's defeat of the antichrist at Armageddon, ushering God's millennial kingdom on earth.

Abrahamic adjective used to describe either of the three primary cults of Yahweh (i.e., Christianity, Judaism and Islam).

Ahriman the chief Devil of Persian Zoroastrianism. Depicted as a dragon, he supposedly created ninety-nine thousand, nine hundred and ninety-nine diseases to plague the Earth. He is blamed for all the maladies and physical ailments of life.

Amam another name for Apep, which means "Devourer" in Egyptian.

Ambivalent design a belief that the universe may indeed have a teleological purpose, but that said purpose does not revolve around mortals in any humanly benevolent way.

Angel an attendant spirit that serves as a messenger for a deity or deities.

Anpu a psychopomp who is associated with jackals in ancient Egyptian religion and Neopagan reconstructions thereof; was worshiped as a god of healing and protection.

Antichrist a person who teaches that Jesus Christ is not the Messiah or the "Son of God," and that Christianity is not the one true religion.

Anubis the Greek spelling of Anpu.

Apep the Egyptian name for the Devil. Viewed as a giant snake demon who lived in the underworld and attempted to swallow the sun each night. A personification of nighttime, darkness, and chaos.

Apocalypticism a branch of eschatology in which it is believed that endtime prophecies are somehow imminent.

Apophis the Greek spelling of Apep.

Apostate a person who once worshiped Yahweh, but who later rejects him and turns against him. Many Satanists and Neopagans, for instance, are apostates.

Ashtoreth the Phoenician name for the goddess worshiped as Inanna in ancient Sumer and Ishtar in Babylon.

Astaroth a Hebrew bastardization of the name Ashtoreth, which is given to her in Christian demonology. This name is used to refer to the goddess in her demonic aspect.

Atheistic Satanist a Satanist who does not believe in any gods, and who interprets Satan as either an impersonal force of nature or as a symbol. The term is often used synonymously with symbolic or LaVeyan Satanists.

Azazel a name used to identify the Prince of Darkness in both Second Temple era Jewish literature and in Islam. I use it to refer to Him in His form as an "angel of light" who brings forth civilization. Can also be called Lucifer in this aspect

Baal a pre-Christian Canaanite deity who became demonized in Jewish scriptures as Beelzebub, the Lord of the Flies.

Back-masking a term used for when heavy metal musicians supposedly record subliminal backwards messages into their music. The subliminal messages supposedly drive teenagers to Devil worship and suicide. Bands like Ozzy Osbourne and Judas Priest were put on trial for supposedly murdering children through back-masking, but the cases were both dismissed, and the idea of murder through back-masking is largely discredited today as an urban myth.

Baphomet an idol that the Knights Templar were accused of worshipping. Eliphas Levi drew a famous picture of it, as a goat-headed hermaphrodite creature. Later adopted as a term for the goat's head pentagram by Anton Szandor LaVey.

Beelzebub "Lord of the Flies," a demonized title of the Semitic storm god Baal.

Belial a name used to identify the Prince of Darkness in the apocryphal Dead Sea Scrolls. It means either "without a yoke" or "without worth." I use it to refer to the Prince in His aspect as the God of the Earth.

Black the color which is most associated with the Powers of Darkness in occult tradition.

Black mass a ritual communion with the Powers of Darkness, usually performed in honor of the Prince of Darkness specifically. Numerous forms of the black mass exist. It is often thought to be a strict inversion of the Catholic mass, but for my purposes, a black mass is literally any sort of ritual communion with Devils or demonic spirits.

Black metal a variety of heavy metal music developed in the 1970's and early 1980's, the lyrical content of which centers around an often serious enthusiasm for Devils, demons, and the occult. Originated in Great Britain.

Black sabbath an alternate term for the black mass. Later became the name for one of the first and most influential heavy metal bands, Black Sabbath.

Church of Azazel a denomination of Satanism founded in 2003 by Diane Vera, which stresses the importance of philosophy and intellectual-thinking among theistic Satanists. Teaches polytheistic Devil worship that adheres to both the Post-Copernican and here-and-now principles of theology.

Church of Satan the very first above-ground public Satanic organization ever. Founded in 1966 by Anton Szandor LaVey. Teaches that Satan is not a being, but just a symbol, and stresses the importance of Self worship over any kind of deity worship. Teachings are based upon LaVey's *Satanic Bible*.

Conductor of Souls a cult title for the Egyptian spirit Anpu, who guides the souls of the deceased to their appropriate places in the Netherworld.

Coven an assembly of dark mystics, Devil worshipers, Demonolators and/or Satanists. Corresponds to the church congregations of other spiritual paths.

Cult a controversial term that has a number of meanings. It is sociologically used to describe a system or community of religious worship and ritual, and/or the formal means of expressing religious reverence, ceremony and ritual. By this definition, all religions, including Christianity, are cults. The more popular definition used by the media today is "an extremist religious sect, the followers of which live in an unconventional manner under the guidance of an authoritarian, charismatic leader."

Czernobog a Slavic name that means "Black God," and which is sometimes used as an alternate name for the Prince of Darkness.

Dark creationism a belief that the universe was or is indeed created by a powerful spiritual being or beings, but that said being or beings are not in any way personal or benevolent toward human beings.

Dark Doctrines, the a denomination of atheistic Satanism founded in the 1990's, which teaches that Satan is an impersonal "dark force in nature" that works through entropy and the Second Law of Thermodynamics to create and destroy all things.

Dark mystic a person who interprets mystical realities in terms of dark imagery, and whose experiences literally "feel" dark. Often misunderstood as a "black magician."

Death metal a form of heavy metal music that started in the 1980's, and which features a fascination with horror films and images of violence and death.

Deity a spirit that is given god-status by mortals.

Demon a genius spirit that is replete with wisdom, and that roams the dark bowers of the Earth.

Demoniac a person who is possessed or indwelt by a demonic spirit.

Demonolator a person who worships a demon or demons.

Demonolatry the worship of a demon or demons.

Demonology the study of demons. Not to be confused with Demonolatry. Just because a person is a demonologist does not mean that they worship demons; many demonologists are actually Christian, for instance.

Devil a spirit that is maligned and feared as a cultural scapegoat figure by mortals. Devils are often given god-status indirectly. The term is most often used to describe one deity in particular, i.e. the Satan of the New Testament.

Devil worship the expression of ardent love, devotion, and reverence toward a cultural scapegoat figure, and the reclamation of said figure as a wrongfully slandered deity.

Diabolator a person who worships a Devil or Devils.

Diabolatry from the Greek *diabolus* ("Devil") and *latreia* ("worship"); a synonym for Devil worship.

Djinn desert-dwelling fire spirits in Islamic mythology that serve Iblis, the Prince of Darkness. I consider the djinn to be the same thing as demons.

Dragon a giant serpent or lizard, often depicted with wings, but not always. When I speak of "the Dragon," I am referring specifically to the Prince of Darkness, who is described as a dragon in the New Testament and in Egyptian mythology.

Eschatology the teachings within a religion concerning events that will supposedly come to pass at the end of the world.

Esoteric something which is intended to be confined and understandable to only a particular inner circle of people, as in an "esoteric cult" or an "esoteric doctrine."

Exoteric something which is comprehensible or suited to the general public.

Futurist a term usually used for Christians who believe that the events of the apocalypse, as described in the book of Revelation, have yet to occur.

Genius a spirit that is particular to a specific person or geographical area; a guardian spirit.

Goat's head pentagram a five-pointed star drawn with one point down, and with a picture of a goat's head inside. Also popularly called a Baphomet.

God a spirit that is worshiped by mortals.

Hades a Greek synonym for Hell, which means "that which is out of sight."

Heavy metal a variety of rock and roll music that was born in the late 1960's, and which is often more extreme than regular rock. Lyrical content usually focuses on sex and youthful rebellion. There are also quite a few heavy metal bands that flirt with the occult; those that are serious are termed "black metal."

Hell "the Concealed Place," the hidden spirit realm that exists as an unseen dimension of the carnal world in which we live. Also called the Netherworld and the Abyss.

Hemhenti another name for Apep, which means "Roarer" in Egyptian.

Here-and-now principle of theology a principle of theology taught by the Church of Azazel, which maintains that personal spirits ("gods") are best understood in terms of their immediate influences upon humankind in the present, rather than in terms of their alleged histories or futures (e.g., "creation myths" or eschatology).

Heretic a member of an Abrahamic faith who differentiates from the traditional doctrines of that particular faith.

Iblis an Islamic name for Azazel which is sometimes translated to mean "Doubt" and sometimes translated to mean "Despair." As Iblis, the Prince of Darkness is regarded as the Lord of the Djinn in Islamic mythology. Also spelled Eblis.

Immortal a spirit that does not have a body, and which is not born and does not die as a carnal being.

Inanna an ancient Sumerian lion goddess of love and war, who was associated with the morning star, Venus, and who was believed to have power over the heavens, the Earth, and the dead. She is also called Ishtar, Astarte, Ashtoreth and Astaroth.

Incubus a male demon that enjoys exchanging sexual energy with mortals.

Initiation a ceremony, ritual, test, or period of instruction through which a new member is admitted into a coven, cult, or level of esoteric knowledge.

Invocation a prayer or formula that is recited in order to gain the attention of a particular spirit or spirits. Often recited at the opening of a religious ritual.

Ishtar the Babylonian name for the goddess Inanna, who would later be demonized in Christian demonology as Astaroth.

Jehovah another name for Yahweh, the god of Abraham.

Joy of Satan ministry a denomination of theistic Satanism founded by Maxine Dietrich which teaches that Satan and Jehovah are aliens on a distant planet who are engaged in a telepathic mind-war over the souls of human beings. Combines the archaeological "theories" of Zachariah Sitchin with a dose of David Icke-style conspiracy mongering and a dose of Neo-Nazism.

LaVeyan a Satanist who adheres strictly to the teachings and principles of Anton Szandor LaVey's *Satanic Bible*. Often used to mean Church of Satan members, but not all LaVeyans are actually members of LaVey's church.

Left hand path a confusing term that is often used to mean different things. It is sometimes used to mean either dark mysticism, "black magic," Self worship, Devil worship, Satan worship, or demon worship. Not a particularly useful term in the contemporary occult scene.

Leviathan a name given to the ancient Serpent in Old Testament scriptures such as Job, Isaiah, and the Psalms.

Light mystic: a person who interprets mystical realities in terms of bright imagery, and whose experiences literally "feel" bright. Often misunderstood as a "white magician."

Lilith the Queen of the succubi and goddess of this age. The spirit of a mortal woman who was made into a demoness by the Prince of Darkness, and who is now His bride and consort.

Lucifer a Latin title meaning "Light-bearer," which can be used to describe virtually anyone or anything that acts as a bringer of light. Usually used by Christians in reference to the Prince of Darkness, but it is sometimes used in reference to other spirits as well.

Luciferian either a variety of Satanist who chooses to identify their Satan by the name of Lucifer, or a type of Neopagan who worships a pre-Christian deity of light.

Melek Ta'us a Kurdish name for Azazel, which is correctly translated to mean "Angel King" or "King of the Lesser Spirits." It is incorrectly translated "Peacock Angel." Used by the Yezidi to refer to Azazel in His role as God and custodian of the Earth.

Mortal a spirit that has a body, and which is born and dies as a carnal being.

Mysticism a belief in the existence of realities beyond perceptual or intellectual apprehension that are central to being and that are directly accessible by subjective experience. Often misunderstood as "magic."

Neopagan a person who practices a modern reconstruction of a pre-Christian religion. Not all Neopagans are "pagan" by the original definition of that term, for many Neopagans are actually apostates (i.e., former Abrahamics).

Occult a term that literally means "hidden." Anything that pertains to the supernatural or spiritual is really occult in nature.

Occultism a system of belief and/or practices that involve personal investigation of the occult.

Opener of the Ways a cult title for the Egyptian spirit Anpu.

Order of the Nine Angles a mysterious and highly controversial sect of Satanists in Great Britain who believe in Satan as a literal entity, but who believe in Self worship and working to aid the "Sinister dialectic." Perhaps the only Satanist group that has been known to publically endorse human sacrifice, although it is unknown if any members have ever actually practiced it. They were the first Satanists to call themselves "Traditional Satanists."

Pagan a scapegoat term used for people who have never worshiped Yahweh and who have never been members of either of his cults. Used to describe various non-Abrahamic persons, such as polytheists, atheists and agnostics.

Paganism the practice of being anything other than a member of one of the three Abrahamic religions (i.e., Christianity, Judaism or Islam).

Pentagram a five-pointed star drawn within a circle. When it is drawn with one point up, it is often used as a sign for Wicca; with one point down, it is most often a symbol of Satanism or Devil worship.

Post-Copernican natural theology a principle of theology taught by the Church of Azazel, which maintains that the Creator(s) and/or other cosmic gods are evidently devoid of any personal interest in human affairs, and that all and any spiritual beings that demonstrate such a personal interest must necessarily be smaller-than-cosmic entities.

Powers of Darkness a general catch-all term for all Devils and demons.

Preterist a term usually used to describe Christians who believe that the events of the apocalypse, as described in the book of Revelation, already occurred within the first century C.E.

Prince of Darkness a title for the chief of all Devils and demons, developed during the Middle Ages.

Psychopomp a spirit that guides the souls of the dead to their appropriate places in Hell. The Egyptian god Anpu and the Greek god Hermes are both psychopomps.

Qadishtu the holy women of Sumer and Babylon; priestesses of the goddess Inanna/Ishtar, who worshiped the goddess by making love with multiple partners. Sometimes called "sacred prostitutes."

Rahab another name given to Leviathan in Old Testament scripture.

Reincarnation the belief that, when a living entity dies, the spirit of that entity will eventually be reborn in a new body.

Right hand path a confusing term that is often used to mean many different things. It can be used to mean either light mysticism, "white magic," god worship, or virtually any kind of conventional religion. Not a particularly useful term in the contemporary occult scene.

Ritual a sequence of events and/or practices that an individual repeats regularly. In a religious context, rituals are often used to commune with a spirit or spirits for a particular purpose.

Rock and Roll a variety of modern popular music that was born in the 1950's from African American blues music. Old school rock music usually focuses on chasing women; the term "rock and roll" itself is an old African American term for the act of lovemaking.

Saatet-ta another name for Apep, which means "Darkener of the Earth" in Egyptian.

Sacrifice "to make sacred"; the offering of a gift to a spirit or spirits.

Satan a word that is commonly used as a name for the Prince of Darkness, but which can be used for virtually anyone or anything that takes an adversarial role toward something else. There are many spiritual beings that can be described as satans, and not all Satanists and/or Satan worshipers follow the same satan. The word means "adversary" in Hebrew.

Satan worship the expression of ardent love, devotion, and reverence for a spirit or spirits called Satan.

Satanic an adjective that is generally used to mean anything that pertains to or is of the Prince of Darkness; in a more general sense, it can mean anything that is adversarial or subversive to authority.

"Satanic Panic," the an era of paranoia which occurred mostly during the 1980's. This panic was marked by a popular belief among the media and law enforcement that an international conspiracy of Satanists was responsible for abducting large numbers of children and sexually abusing them as part of their rituals. The panic died down in the late 1980's and early 1990's after an investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation discredited the entire theory. There are still many people involved in law enforcement and the media, as well as conservative Christian leaders, who believe that this "Satanist conspiracy" really exists.

"Satanic Ritual Abuse" a term used to describe the alleged sexual abuse of children as a part of Satanic religious ritual. The FBI has determined such terminology to be problematic; child abuse can occur within any religious ritual trappings, including those of Christianity. But despite the FBI's assessment, as well as the fact that no Satanist or Devil worshiper church even tolerates child abuse, there are many religious fanatics who still believe that "SRA" is a commonly occurring problem that is being "covered up" by a conspiracy.

Satanic Bible, the A book written in 1969 by Anton Szandor LaVey and published by Avon Books. Basically explains the worldview and ritual practices of Self worshiping Satanists, as formulated and practiced by LaVey's Church of Satan. Was the very first "pro-Satanism" instruction manual ever published.

Satanism a belief system that is structured around a positive interpretation of a Satan or satans. Can mean either Satan worship or Self worship with Satanic symbolism.

Self worshiper a person who deifies him or herself.

Set an ancient Egyptian deity associated with thunderstorms, deserts, war, and the nighttime sky. Originally worshiped as a positive deity who represented part of the Egyptian theocracy, but later became demonized as a partner of and/or replacement for Apep.

Setekh an alternate version of the name Set.

Setian a Satanist, Devil worshiper or Temple of Set member who identifies the Prince of Darkness with the Egyptian deity Set. Usually used exclusively for Temple of Set members.

Sinister Dialectic a term coined by members of the Order of the Nine Angles. Refers to an esoteric strategy of observing the ways that individuals and their groupings are shaped within societies and civilizations, and of influencing the future patterns thereof in accordance with Satanic philosophy.

Slaytanist a derogatory term I use for so-called "Satanists" who are really Satanic dabblers, and who base their interpretations of Satanism strictly on pop cultural views of Devil worship, such as those presented in the media by heavy metal bands like Slayer.

Spirit a bodiless intelligence that exists apart from the realm of matter, yet which can intervene in said realm.

Spiritual Satanist a synonym for theistic Satanist. Often used to identify adherents of the theistic Satanist denomination developed by the Joy of Satan ministry.

Succubus a female demon that enjoys exchanging sexual energy with mortals.

Supernatural someone or something which seems to violate or go beyond natural forces.

Suti an alternate spelling of the name Set.

Symbolic Satanist a Satanist who only believes in Satan as a symbol, and not as a real force or being. Those who worship themselves may also be termed Self worshipers.

Temple of Set a denomination of Satanism founded in 1975 by Dr. Michael A. Aquino, formerly of the Church of Satan. Teaches that the Prince of Darkness was originally worshiped in Egypt as the god Set before becoming demonized as "Satan" in Christianity. Also teaches Self worship and the idea of Xeper.

Theistic Satanist a Satanist who actually believes in the literal existence of a Satan or satans. Those who worship said Satan or satans can also be called Devil worshipers or Satan worshipers.

Tiamat a cosmic dragon of primordial chaos who gave birth to all of the gods in ancient Sumerian mythology. However, her children began to annoy her with all of their noise, so she attempted to eat them. The storm god Marduk killed her in battle, and created the universe from her remains. It is from the symbolism of Tiamat that later Middle Eastern cultures would inherit the theme of the chaos dragon.

Traditional Satanist a synonym for theistic Satanist, which is used to refer to the "traditional" definition of a Satanist (i.e., a Satan worshiper). Often used by theistic Satanists who wish to claim that their form of Satanism pre-dates the formation of the Church of Satan in 1966; most who make such claims are lying. The term was first used by members of the Order of the Nine Angles, who strangely enough are Self worshipers and not Satan worshipers.

Typhon an ancient Greek titan, usually depicted as a reptilian giant with multiple serpentine heads. Associated with water and primordial chaos, Typhon battled the god Zeus in order to overthrow the gods of Olympus. Typhon would later be identified by the Greeks with the Egyptian Set, in his demonized role as a partner of/replacement for Apep. In reality, Typhon is probably much more similar to Apep than to Set. It is from the name Typhon that we get our modern day word "typhoon."

Whore of Babylon a cult title for the goddess Ishtar, signifying her role as a patroness of prostitutes and unbridled sexuality.

Witches' Sabbath an annual festival celebrated by witches and Devil worshipers, according to medieval mythology. Usually celebrated on April 30, which is Walpurgisnacht. Supposedly marked by the practice of black masses, "backward dancing," and ritual orgies.

Worship the expression of ardent love, devotion, and reverence toward someone or something.

Xeper an ancient Egyptian word which means "to come into being." Used by members of the Temple of Set as a term for their philosophy of self-transformation and consciousness-worship.

Yahweh the god of the Jews, Christians and Muslims, who falsely claims to be "God" (i.e., the one and only true god). The sworn enemy of the Dragon.

Yezidi an ancient Kurdish sect that originated from the Near East, which centers around religious worship of Azazel. They refer to Him as Melek Ta'us. However, they are not correctly termed Satanists or Devil worshipers, because they do not accept that Azazel is a Devil or a satan, or that He is the Prince of Darkness. Instead, they view Him as an angel who serves an impersonal Creator god by managing over the Earth in his absence.

Zoroastrianism an ancient Persian religion which was the first truly dualistic belief system. Teaches that the universe is divided between an ultimate spirit of good (identified as Ahura Mazda), and an ultimate spirit of evil (identified as Ahriman). It is from Zoroastrianism that Judaism, Christianity and Islam inherit some of their ideas about the Devil, angels, demonic possession, and apocalypticism.

Abrahamic Covenant God made specific promises to Abraham. He promised that He would make a great Nation from Abraham, and that they would inherit a specific piece of land. He promised that the Messiah would come through his lineage, and finally He promised blessing and protection. (see Gen 12:1-3, Deut. 30:1-10, 2 Sam. 7:12-16, Jer. 31:31-34)

Antichrist The false Christ led and controlled by Satan that will be the great world leader during the tribulation, before the second coming of Christ. His objective is to deceive people into following him. He imitates Christ, trying to take the position of God. Also called "The man of sin". He is not Satan himself, but is controlled by Satan. At one point it seems that Satan actually enters him, so it is hard to separate the human man and Satan who controls him. At the beginning of the tribulation he will sign a peace agreement with Israel, and possibly with the whole world, setting himself up as the head.

Antithesis Exact opposite, a contrast or opposition of thoughts

Arianism (Arius) Movement in the early church that believed God the father alone was God, and that Jesus was created. Declared heretical at the Council of Nicea in A.D. 325, and again at the Council of Constantinople in A.D. 381.

Allegorical A method of Bible interpretation (hermeneutic) that assumes the text has a meaning other than what the literal wording says.

Alexandrian school School of Bible education in the early church age. Started by Philo who wanted to mix Greek philosophy and Judaism. The Alexandrian school influenced the early church through teachers like Clement and Origen.

Antiochene school School of Bible education in the early church, founded by Lucian in opposition to the excesses of the allegorical hermeneutics of the Alexandrian school of Philo, Origen.

Born again From John chapter 3:3 "...Unless a man is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God" - refers to a spiritual rebirth that a sinful man must go through to inherit the kingdom of God. John 3:16 goes on to explain that belief in Jesus as the Son of God is how one becomes born again.

Clement Early Bishop of Rome, died about A.D. 100. Letters written by Clement to the church at Corinth give us some idea of church life in the first century.

Chrysostom, John (AD 354-407) Student of Lucian and Diodore of the Antiochene school.

Christocentric Referring to the O.T. the belief that the O.T. is centered on Christ, and that there is hidden meaning about Christ there.

Covenant theology A system of theology that sees only one people of God, the true Israel, which is now the Church, since national Israel rejected Jesus as their Messiah.

Daniel Jewish prophet of the Babylonian captivity, wrote the book of Daniel. Taken into captivity around 586 B.C. (after Ezekiel) by Nebuchadnezzar. Babylon took the southern kingdom of Israel in three moves, first in 605 B.C., then 597 B.C., and finally destroyed Jerusalem in 586 B.C.

Deity Divinity, or the state of being God.

Dispensationalism A system of theology that recognizes different stewardships of man under God. Sees God working with man differently during different periods, such as Law vs. Grace, or the garden vs. the postnoahic age, etc. Dispensationalism's key teachings are 1.) a consistent literal interpretation of the Bible; 2.) a clear distinction between Israel and the Church, and 3.) the glory of God as the ultimate purpose in the plan of God. (not necessarily the salvation of man)

Empiricism The view that experience, especially of the senses, is the only source of knowledge

Eschatology From Gk. *eschatos*, 'last', the term refers to the 'doctrine of the last things'

Evangelical A movement in church history started at the Protestant reformation. Most believe in an inerrant scripture, and a born again experience required for salvation based on John 3:3, Ephesians 2:8-9.

Exegetical (Exegesis) - Critical analysis or interpretation of a word, literary passage.

Ezekiel Jewish prophet during the Babylonian captivity, wrote the book of Ezekiel. Taken into captivity around 597 B.C. by Nebuchadnezzar. Babylon took the southern kingdom of Israel in three moves, first in 605 B.C., then 597 B.C., and finally destroyed Jerusalem in 586 B.C.

Gnosticism Views the material creation as being evil, including flesh. Belief in secret knowledge. Tries to separate the man Jesus with the Christ, since the man Jesus was flesh.

Gospel The good news, or message, of how Jesus Christ redeemed, or paid for, the sins of man by dying on the cross. The substitutionary death of Christ. (Isaiah 53)

Hellenism The thought and culture of ancient Greece.

Hermeneutics the art or science of the interpretation of literature.

Ignatius Bishop of the church at Antioch early in the second century. He wrote seven letters to different churches.

Infallibility perfect, incapable of error. In the case of the Roman Catholic Church, they claim that the pope is infallible on points of doctrine and faith when acting in official capacity. Protestants don't believe this, but trust only in the Word of God, the Bible. This debate stems from the Roman Catholic interpretation of *Matthew 16:17-19*, believing that Jesus created the papacy when He told Peter that he had the keys to the kingdom of heaven.

Justin Martyr Converted from paganism, he became the most noted of second century apologists. Taught in Ephesus and Rome. Martyred in Rome in A.D. 165

Jonah The prophet in the O.T. sent by God to preach to the Assyrians in Ninevah. Known for his trip in the belly of the sea monster.

John Darby (1800-1882) One of the founders of the Plymouth Brethren movement. Born in London, graduated at 18 with a Law degree from Trinity college in Dublin. He soon left law to work in the Church of Ireland. This didn't last long as he disagreed with the ecclesiology (Doctrine of the Church) of the Church of England. This led him to Plymouth England, where he found some like minded believers, and helped to start what became the Brethren movement. Darby was one of the early teachers of Dispensationalism. He believed that each dispensation placed man under some condition, having a specific responsibility before God, and that man failed during each dispensation.

Lucian (AD 240-312) Founded the Antiochene school in opposition to the excesses of the allegorical hermeneutics of the Alexandrian school of Philo, Origen.

Marcionism (Marcion) Gnostic born in Sinope, Pontus. Believed that the God of the O.T. was different from the God of the N.T. Taught that Jesus wasn't born of a woman. Excommunicated

in A.D. 144, and refuted theologically by Justin Martyr and Tertullian. This was the first great threat to the early church.

Messiah The Hebrew term for one called the *Anointed one*, or *Christ in Greek*. The Jews were waiting for their Messiah, although they expected a leader that would solve the political crisis they were in with Rome. His coming and death was foretold in Daniel 9. His suffering was foretold in Isaiah 53. Unfortunately the Jews didn't evidently read the prophets much, or they just didn't understand the passages that depicted a suffering Messiah. When Jesus died they didn't see the Lamb of God that took away the sins of the world. They didn't see how Jesus fulfilled the pictures or symbolism in Jewish religious customs, like the lamb's blood in the Passover, like the timing of the feasts and how they pictured the exact timing of the death of Christ and what He would accomplish on the cross. The sacrifice of Isaac by Abraham was a picture of how God would offer His Son as a sacrifice for the sins of the world.. Isaiah 53 tells us "But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities"... "But the Lord has caused the iniquity of us to fall on Him."

Millennium Literally means one thousand years.

Millennial kingdom Literal one thousand year reign of Christ initiated after the 7 year tribulation.

Moses Great prophet of God called to lead the Jews out of Egypt to the land that God promised his forefather Abraham. Moses was from the tribe of Levi. Moses was also called the lawgiver, since he was the one that received the ten commandments from God directly while in Mount Sinai. Moses led the Jews through the desert for 40 years while God purged out the unbelievers. God performed many great miracles through Moses.

Origen Great scholar, most prolific author of the early church. Born in a Christian family about AD 185. He became a well known teacher/speaker. Moved to Caesarea. Died in AD 254. From the Alexandrian school, believed in a very allegorical method of interpretation.

Philo Started the Alexandrian school in Alexandria Egypt. Clement and Origen came from this school.

Posttribulation rapture The view that the rapture (snatching or taking away) of the church will happen at the end of the tribulation

Premillennial happening in the period before the millennium

Pretribulation rapture The view that the rapture (snatching or taking away) of the church will happen before the tribulation

Prophecy Prediction of the future under divine guidance.

Rapture refers to the snatching away of believers at some point before, during, or at the second coming of Jesus Christ. (1 Thess 4:16-17) (1 Cor 15:51) (John 14) (Rev 3:10)

Rationalism The doctrine or system of those who deduce their religious opinions from reason or the understanding, as distinct from, or opposed to, revelation. (See [Empiricism](#))

Reformation The Protestant reformation officially broke out in AD 1517. The printing press was an integral part of the reformation, since it allowed the writings of the reformers to travel quickly. The first printed book using metal type was the Bible in AD 1483. Other writers paved the way, including John of Wesel from Rhineland, Germany who wrote that the Bible alone is the authority in matters of faith. Wrote against indulgences. On October 31, 1517 Martin Luther (AD 1483-1546), professor of biblical studies at the Univ. of Wittenburg, Germany, announced a disputation on indulgences. He stated his argument in his 95 theses, which he nailed to the church door. The news spread quickly. Luther was excommunicated in AD 1520 by the pope. Luther wrote in German, and translated the Bible into German. In AD 1529, Emperor Charles V tried to stop Luther, but people stood up in protest, getting the name 'Protestant'.

Revelation The disclosure of something not previously known. In the case of Biblical revelation, the prophets of the Bible spoke under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God, sometimes not even understanding what they were writing. (see *1 Peter 1:10-11, and 2 Peter 1:20-21*)

Revelation, book of The last book of the Christian Bible, written by the Apostle John while exiled on the Isle of Patmos around 96-98 A.D.

Salvation The act of being saved, which in Biblical terms means the promise that God will bring a person into His presence for eternity, as opposed to those that will be banned from His presence due to sin and unbelief. The Bible is not political. God is very clear about how to be saved. (*John 3:16, Rom 10:9, John 5:24, Eph 2:8-9, Rom 3:21-23, 1 John 5:11-13, Rom 8:1, 2 Cor 5:17, Acts 4:12, Phil 2:9-10*)

Tertullian First major Christian author to write in Latin. Lived in Carthage, capital of Roman province of Africa. His work "Against Marcion" defended the use of the O.T. by the Christian church. He also helped develop the doctrine of the trinity. In his work "On Baptism" he criticized the baptism of children.

Tribulation A period of seven years of judgment before the second coming of Christ, foretold by Daniel the prophet, and Jesus Christ in Matthew 24. Also known as "The time of Jacobs trouble", "The last day", and "The day of the Lord".

Typology The study of types, symbols, or symbolism. In the Bible, an example of a type would be Moses. He was a type of Christ, as he was used to save his people. Jonah was a type in that he was three days in the belly of the sea monster, just as Christ's body was in the grave three days.

Abyss Exoterically, the Abyss represents the region where the causal gives way to, or merges into, the acausal, and thus where the causal is "transcended", gone beyond, or passed, and where one enters the realm of pure acausality. Hence The Abyss can be considered as an interchange, a nexus, of temporal, atemporal, and spatial and aspatial, dimensions. This region is, for example, symbolized on The Tree of Wyrd, as being between the spheres of Sun and Mars, and 'Entering the Abyss' is that stage of magickal development which distinguishes the Master/ Mistress from the Adept. Esoterically, The Tree of Wyrd is itself a re-presentation of The Abyss, as are other esoteric re-presentations, such as The Star Game.

Acausal The term acausal refers to “acausal Time and acausal Space”: that is, to the acausal Universe. This acausal Universe is part of the Cosmos, which Cosmos consists of both the *acausal* and the *causal*, where “causal” refers to the Universe that is described, or re-presented, by causal Space and causal Time. This causal Universe is that of our physical, phenomenal, Universe, currently described by sciences such as Physics and Astronomy. The acausal is non-Euclidean, and “beyond causal Time”: that is, it cannot be represented by our finite causal geometry (of three spatial dimensions at right angles to each other) and by the flow, the change, of causal Time (past-present-future), or measured by a duration of causal Time. In addition - and just as causal energy exists in the causal (understood as such energy is by sciences such as Physics) - acausal energy exists in the acausal, of a nature and type which cannot be described by causal sciences such as Physics (based as these are on a causal geometry and a causal Time). According to the aural tradition of the ONA, there are a variety of acausal life-forms; a variety of acausal life, of different species, some of which have been manifest in (or intruded into) our causal Universe. For more details regarding the acausal, and acausal life, see the following ONA MSS: (1) *The Mythos of the Dark Gods: Beings of Acausal Darkness*; (2) *Advanced Introduction to The Dark Gods: Five-Dimensional Acausal Sorcery*.

Aeon An Aeon - according to the Sinister Way of the ONA - is a particular presencing of certain acausal energies on this planet, Earth, which energies affect a multitude of individuals over a certain period of causal time. One such affect is via the psyche of individuals. This particular presencing which is an Aeon is via a particular nexion, which is an Aeon *civilization*, which Aeon *civilization* is brought-into-being in a certain geographical area and usually associated with a particular *mythos*.

Archetype An archetype is a particular causal presencing of a certain acausal energy and is thus akin to a type of acausal living being in the causal (and thus “in the psyche”): it is born (or can be created, by magickal means), its lives, and then it “dies” (ceases to be present, presenced) in the causal (i.e. its energy in the causal ceases).

Baphomet Baphomet is regarded as a Dark Goddess - a sinister female entity, The Mistress (or Mother) of Blood. According to tradition, she is represented as a beautiful mature woman, naked from the waist up, who holds in her hand the severed head of a man. She is regarded as one manifestation of one of The Dark Gods.

Black Book of Satan The book of that name containing the traditional ceremonial rituals of sinister/Satanic ceremonial magick, used by ONA Initiates.

Dark Gods According to the Sinister Tradition of the ONA, The Dark Gods are specific entities - living-beings *of a particular acausal species* - who exist in the realms of the acausal, with some of these entities having been presenced, via various nexions, on Earth in our distant past. [See, for example, the ONA MS *The Mythos of the Dark Gods: Beings of Acausal Darkness*.]

Magick Magick - according to the Sinister tradition of the ONA - is defined as “the presencing of acausal energy in the causal by means of a nexion. By the nature of our consciousness, we, as human individuals, are one type of nexion - that is, we have the ability to access, and presence, certain types of acausal energy.” Furthermore, magick - as understand and practised by the ONA - is a means not only of personal development and personal understanding (a freeing from psychic, archetypal, influences and affects) but also of evolving to the next level of our human existence where we can understand, and to a certain extent control and influence, supra-personal

manifestations of acausal energies, such as an Aeon, and thus cause, or bring-into-being, large-scale evolutionary change. Such understanding, such control, such a bring-into-being, is Aeonic Magick. Aeonic Magick is the magick of the Adept and those beyond: the magick of the evolved human being who has achieved a certain level of self-understanding and self-mastery and who thus is no longer at the mercy of unconscious psychic, archetypal, influences, both personal/individual, and of other living-beings, such as an Aeon. Internal Magick is the magick of personal change and evolution: of using magick to gain insight and to develop one's personality and esoteric skills. There are seven stages involved in Internal Magick. External Magick is basic, "low-level", *sorcery* - where certain acausal energies are used for bring or to fulfil the desire of an individual. Ceremonial Magick is the use (by more than two individuals gathered in a group) of a set or particular texts or sinister rituals to access and presence sinister energies. Five-dimensional magick is the New Aeon magick *sans* symbols, ceremonies, symbology (such as the Tree of Wyrd) and beyond all causal abstractions, and it is *prefigured* in the advanced form of *The Star Game*.

Nexion A nexion is a specific connexion between, or the intersection of, the causal and the acausal, and nexions can, *exoterically*, be considered to be akin to "gates" or openings or "tunnels" where there is, or can be, either a flow of acausal energy (and thus also of acausal entities) from the acausal into our causal Space and causal Time; a journeying into the acausal itself; or a willed, conscious flow or presencing (by dark sorcery) of acausal energies. Basically, there are three main types of nexion. The first is an actual physical nexion. The second type of nexion is a living causal being, such as ourselves. The third type of nexion is a magickal creation: that is, some form in-which acausal energy is presented or "channelled into" by a sinister Adept. [For more details of these three types see the ONA MS *The Mythos of the Dark Gods*.]

Nine Angles The Nine Angles have several meanings - or interpretations, exoteric and esoteric - depending on context. In the esoteric sense, they re-present the nine combinations (and transformations) of the three basic "alchemical" substances, which nine and their transformations (causal and acausal) are themselves re-presented by The Star Game. In the exoteric, pre-Adept, sense, they may be said to re-present the 7 nexions of the Tree of Wyrd plus the 2 nexions which re-present the ToW as itself a nexion, with The Abyss (a connexion between the individual and the acausal) being one of these 2 "other nexions". It should be remembered, of course, that each sphere of the ToW is not two-dimensional (or even three-dimensional) and in a simple way each sphere can be taken as a reflexion (a "shadow") of another - for example, Mercury is the 'shadow' of Mars. In another exoteric sense, the nine are the alchemical process of the 7 plus the 2, which 2 are the conjoining of opposites: and, in one sense, this conjoining can be taken to be (magickally, for instance, in a practical ritual) as the conjoining of male and female (hence what is called one of *the Rites of the Nine Angles*) - although there are other practical combinations, just as each magickal act involving such Angles should be undertaken for a whole and particular alchemical season: that is, such a working should occupy a space of causal-time, making it thus a type of four-dimensional magick which can access the fifth magickal dimension, the acausal itself. A somewhat more advanced understanding of the Nine - in relation to a ritual to create a Nexion - is hinted at in the recent fiction-based MS *Atazoth*. Beyond this, the Nine Angles are symbols of *The Star Game* which itself is magick - that is, one nexion which can presence the acausal. But even this is only a beginning - a re-presentation, in symbols, of what is, in essence, without symbols: a useful means for Initiates, and Adepts, to move toward the new five-dimensional magick embodied in, and beyond, the ONA.

Psyche The psyche of the individual is a term used, in the Sinister Way, to describe those aspects of an individual - those aspects of consciousness - which are hidden, or inaccessible to, or unknown to, the individual. Basically, such aspects can be considered to be those forces/energies which do or which can influence the individual in an emotional way or in a way which the individual has no direct control over or understanding of. One part of this psyche is what has been called “the unconscious”, and some of the forces/energies of this “unconscious” have been, and can be, described by the term “archetypes”

Satan Satan is regarded, by the ONA, as the *exoteric* “name” of a particular acausal being: that is, as a living entity dwelling in the acausal. This entity has the ability to presence, to be manifest in, our causal, phenomenal world, and the ability - being a shapeshifter - to assume various causal forms. [Regarding the "names" of such beings, see, for example, Footnote (2) of the MS *The Mythos of the Dark Gods*.]

Satanism According to the ONA, Satanism is a specific Left Hand Path, one aim of which is to transform, to evolve, the individual by the use of esoteric Arts, including Dark Sorcery. Another aim is, through using the Sinister Dialectic, to transform the world, and the causal itself, by - for example - returning, presencing, in the causal, not only the entity known as Satan but also others of The Dark Gods.

Septenary A name for the basic symbology (causal magickal symbolism) of the Seven Fold Sinister Way represented *exoterically* by The Tree of Wyrd, and consisting of seven stages or “spheres” joined by various pathways.

Sinister Dialectic The sinister dialectic (often called the sinister dialectic of history) is the name given to Satanic strategy - which is to further our evolution in a sinister way by, for example, (a) the use of Black Magick/sinister presencings to change individuals/events on a significant scale over long periods of causal Time; (b) to gain control and influence; (c) the use of Satanic forms and magickal presencings to produce/provoke large scale changes over periods of causal Time; (d) to bring-into-being a New Aeon; (e) to cause and sow disruption and Chaos as a prelude to any or all or none of the foregoing.

Sinister Way A name given to the system of training (magickal and practical) of Initiates used by the ONA. Sometimes also called *The Seven-Fold Sinister Way*. It consists of seven stages, each represented by a particular magickal Grade. [See, for example, the ONA MS *NAOS*.] One aim of the Way is to create Satanic individuals.

Sorcery Often used as a synonym of *magick*. Sorcery - according to the Dark, Sinister, tradition followed by the ONA - is the use, by an individual, individuals, or a group, of acausal energy, either directly (raw/acausal/chaos) or by means of symbolism, forms, ritual, words, chant (or similar manifestations or presencing(s) of causal constructs) with this usage often involving a specific, temporal (causal), aim or aims. [See the ONA MSS *An Introduction to Dark Sorcery* and *NAOS*.]

Star Game The Star Game is a re-presentation of the nine aspects of the basic three whose changing in causal time represents a particular presencing of acausal energy. That is, the nine represents not only the nexion that is the presencing of the acausal evident in our psyche and consciousness, but also many other nexions as well. This particular re-presentation is an “abstract” one, as distinct from the more “causal” symbology of The Tree of Wyrd (and of the septenary system itself). The Star Game exists in two basic forms: the “simple form” and the

“advanced” form, and one of its aims is to develop acausal-thinking (beyond causal abstractions) and thus skill in five-dimensional magick. It can also be played as a “game”, akin to a chess, and can be used magickally, to presence acausal energies. The basics of The Star Game are described in the ONA MS *NAOS*.

Tree of Wyrd The Tree of Wyrd, as conventionally described (“drawn”) and with its correspondences and associations and symbols (see the ONA MS *NAOS*), re-presents certain acausal energies, and the individual who becomes familiar with such correspondences and associations and symbols can access (to a greater or lesser degree depending on their ability and skill) the energies associated with the Tree of Wyrd. The Tree of Wyrd itself is one symbol, one re-presentation, of that meeting (or “intersection”) of the causal and acausal which is a human being, and can be used to represent the journey, the quest, of the individual toward the acausal - that is, toward the goal of magick, which is the creation of a new, more evolved, individual.

Demonic Possession Possession by evil spirits.

Chai (Chinese, "fast") In Taoism, rites of fasting, repentance, or purification. The term refers to rites on behalf of the living and the dead, including exorcism, protection from illness, securing houses, and recitations for salvation. Unlike related folk rites involving animal sacrifice and alcohol, the Taoist rite stresses the offering of petitions and confessing of sins.

Confucius (*Chinese: K'ung Fu-tzu, "Master K'ung"; 551-479 BC*) The most famous philosopher of ancient China. According to tradition, he was born in Lu, China. Author of the *Ch'un Chiu* (Spring and Autumn Annals) and possible compiler of some early poetry, Confucius denied contemporary claims of his sageliness. The most reliable historical source regarding Confucius is the *Lun Yu* (Analects). Transmitter of the rites and culture of earlier sage-kings, Confucius aimed to counteract the militarism of his day through training prospective leaders in humane government and gentlemanly arts. Ironically, no ruler fully accepted his teachings or employed him in high office. Religious issues were generally secondary to his ethical and political lessons but were expressed through his ritual piety. Sacrifices were properly performed to ancestral spirits at appropriate times during meals and after receiving certain gifts. Confucius frequented the ancestral temple, presided in exorcism rites, and visited the Grand Temple of the great Duke of Chou. This sagely predecessor had stabilized the kingdom through unselfish service and religious mediation, securing the Mandate of Heaven (T'ien-ming). Confucius's concern to understand the Mandate of Heaven in his day was fulfilled when he was fifty. He anguished over the early death of his best disciple, Yen Yuan, yet pursued a mission he believed was willed by Heaven. Later Chinese generations claimed Confucius to be the perfect sage, honoring him in temples erected throughout China. The *Chung Yung* (Doctrine of the Mean) calls Confucius the "partner of Heaven and Earth. "

Exorcism The severing or disruption of all unwanted psychic circuits and circuit potentials within a specific object, person or place; hence the dismissal of ghosts and spirits. The act of ritual expulsion of demons or evil spirits or negative forces from an individual or place. In the New Testament, exorcisms are a central part of the public ministry of Jesus. Christianity has utilized exorcisms in a variety of ways: as an integral part of baptismal liturgies in which prayers and rites are used to symbolize the person's departure from sin and entrance into the body of Christians; as blessings to separate material things from profane use in order to dedicate them to divine use (e. g. , the exorcism of water used in baptism); and as a rite to free persons from demonic possession. In the Roman Catholic Church this rite can only be done with episcopal authorization. Fundamentalist and Pentecostal churches attempt to drive out the demonic with

sessions of prayer, the laying on of hands, and the reading of scripture. In some forms of early Christianity there was a separate clerical office for the exorcist.

Insurance A contract whereby an insurer promises to pay the insured a sum of money or some other benefit upon the happening of one or more uncertain events in exchange for the payment of a premium. There must be uncertainty as to whether the relevant event(s) may happen at all or, if they will occur (e.g. death) as to their timing.

Absolute (from Latin *ab* away + *solvere* to loosen, dissolve) Freed, released, absolved; parallel to the Sanskrit *moksha*, *mukti* (set free, released), also to the Buddhist nirvana (blown out), all three terms signifying one who has obtained freedom from the cycle of material existence. Absolute, in European philosophy, is used somewhat loosely for the unconditional or boundless infinitude. On the other hand, Sir W. Hamilton (Disc 13n) considers the Absolute as "diametrically opposed to, . . . contradictory of, the Infinite," which is correct from the standpoint of both etymology and abstract philosophy. Blavatsky uses the term both ways: sometimes equating it with infinity, at other times with the first cause or one divine substance-principle. Strictly speaking, absolute is a relative term. It is the philosophic One or cosmic originant, but not the mystic zero or infinitude. An absolute or a cosmic freed one is not That (infinity), for infinity has no attributes: it is neither absolute nor nonabsolute, conscious nor unconscious, because all attributes and qualities belong to manifested and therefore noninfinite beings and things (cf FSO 89-90). The boundless or infinite, in which exist innumerable absolutes, includes the cognizer, the cognized, and the cognition, and is both matter and spirit, subject and object; all egos and non-egos are included within it. From the zero emanate an infinite number of cosmic Ones or monads. Every absolute is not only the hierarch of its own hierarchy, the One from which all subsequent differentiations emanate, but is also a cosmic jivanmukta, a released monad freed from the pull of the lower planes. Every monad at the threshold of paranirvana reassumes its primeval essence and becomes at one with the absolute of its own hierarchy once more. The absolute is thus the goal of evolution as well as the source, the highest divinity or Silent Watcher of the hierarchy of compassion, which forms the light side of a universe or cosmic hierarchy.

Anneliese Michel (September 21, 1952 – July 1, 1976) was a German woman who was believed to have been possessed by six or more demons and subsequently underwent an exorcism. Anneliese Michel - Early life. She was born into a lower-middle class Catholic family in Leiblflng, Bavaria, a small town. Anneliese Michel - Hospitalization. In 1968, Anneliese began suffering from seizures and was diagnosed as epileptic at the Psychiatric Clinic in Wrzburg. She remained hospital .

Holy water is used in Orthodox rites of blessing and exorcism, and is the water normally used for baptisms. A quantity of holy water is typically kept in a small font placed near the entrance of the church where it is available for anyone who needs it. Orthodox Christians most often bless themselves with holy water by drinking it, and they normally keep some at home for this purpose. Holy water is also sometimes sprinkled on items or people when they are blessed, as part of the prayers of blessing. For instance, in Alaska, the fishing boats are sprinkled with holy water at the start of the fishing sea .

Vampire During the 18th century there was a major vampire scare in Eastern Europe. Even government officials frequently got dragged into the hunting and staking of vampires. The word vampire only came into the English language in 1732 via an English translation of a German report of the much-publicized Arnold Paole vampire staking in Serbia. It all started with an

outbreak of alleged vampire attacks in East Prussia in 1721 and in the Austro-Hungarian Empire from 1725 to 1734. Two famous cases involved Peter Plogojowitz and Arnold .

Ghosts Ghosts are often depicted of a human size and shape (although some accounts also mention animal ghosts), but typically described as "silvery", "shadowy", "semitransparent", or "fog-like." Parapsychologists refer to the "substance" of which ghosts and other spirits are made of as "ectoplasm". Ghosts do not have a physical body like human beings, but only a subtle astral body. Sometimes they do not manifest themselves visually but in terms of other phenomena, such as the movements of an object, spontaneous throwing of a light switch, noises, etc. A ghost is an alleged non-corporeal manifestation of a dead person (or, rarely, an animal). It is often thought to be the spirit or soul of a person who has remained on Earth after death. According to some beliefs, a ghost may be the personality of a person after his or her death, and not tied directly to the soul or spirit. Every culture in the world carries stories about ghosts.

Necromancy may or may not have a relation to shamanism, which calls upon spirits (angles of the elements and such) or 'The Great Spirit/Creator' (God) to heal or help ghosts reach the afterlife. The historian Strabo (Strabo, xvi. 2, 39, νεκρομαντία) refers to necromancy as the principal form of divination amongst the people of Persia; and it is believed to also have been widespread amongst the peoples of Chaldea (particularly amongst the Sabians or star-worshippers), Etruria and Babylonia. The Babylonian necromancers themselves were called Manzazuu or Sha'etemmu an.

Stigmata (plural of stigma) are wounds that were, according to the Holy Bible, inflicted on Jesus during his crucifixion. There have been many reports of other individuals who display similar wounds, the causes of which have been subject to considerable debate. Some contend that stigmata are miraculous, others argue they are hoaxes or can be explained medically. The infliction of stigmata is called stigmatization. Stigmata - History.

Exorcisms A Brief History Of The concept of possession by evil spirits and the practice of exorcism are very ancient and widespread, and may originate in prehistoric Shamanistic beliefs. Shamanism refers to the traditional healing and religious practices of northern Asia (e.g. Siberia, Mongolia, etc.) By extension, the concept of shamanism has been extended in common language to a range of traditional beliefs and practices that involve the ability to diagnose, cure, and sometimes cause human suffering by traversing the axis mundi and forming a special relationship with, or gaining control over, spirits. Shamans have been credited with the ability to control the weather, divination, the interpretation of dreams astral projection, and traveling to upper and lower worlds. Shamanistic traditions have existed throughout the world since prehistoric times. Shamanism is based on the premise that the visible world is pervaded by invisible forces or spirits that affect the lives of the living. Exorcism is mainly thought of as the rite of driving out the Devil and his demons from possessed persons. Exorcism is mainly performed in incidences of demonic possession that is generally distinguished from spiritual possession. A general assumption is that the Roman Catholic singularly practices the rite of exorcism, but some Protestant denominations such as the Pentecostals, and other charismatic groups practice it as well. These groups refer to the practice as "deliverance ministry" where gifted people drive out devils and heal while they touch the persons with their hands, called laying on of hands, and pray over them. Technically, exorcism is not driving out the Devil, or a demon, but it is placing the Devil or demon on oath. And in some incidences there may be more than one demon possessing a person. "Exorcism" is derived from the Greek preposition ek with the verb horkizo which means "I cause [someone] to swear", and refers to "putting the spirit, or demon on oath," or

invoking a higher authority to bind the entity in order to control it, and command it to act contrary to its own will. there are three types of exorcisms: one in which an object (such as your house, or car) is exorcised another performed at every baptism in which the devil formally is renounced, and finally the type in which demons are cast from the body of a victim. Daimon is the Greek derivative for the term demon. In this sense the term "demon" means "replete with knowledge. " The ancient Greeks thought there were good and bad demons called 'eudemon's, and 'cacodemons.' The term 'daimon' means "divine power," "fate" or "god." Daimons, in Greek mythology, included deified heroes. They were considered intermediary spirits between men and the gods. Good daimons were considered to be guardian spirits, giving guidance. and protection to the ones they watched over. Bad daimons led people astray. Bad demon's\Diamons are nothing to mess around with If you think you are in need of an exorcism get help as soon as possible.

Abaddon (Hebrew) Destroyer, Advisor. Said to be chief of demons. Sometimes regarded as the destroying angel.

Abdiel (Arabic) from "Abd" meaning *slave*. Lord of slaves/slavery.

Abatu An earth bound form of destructive/negative energy in the Order of the Nine Angles. Associated with rites of sacrifice.

Abduxuel (Enochian) One of the demonic rulers of the lunar mansions.

Abigar Can foretell future and give military advice.

Abigor (Unk) allegedly a warrior demon who commands sixty legions. Weyer names him as god of Grand Duke of Hell. Appears in a pleasant form.

Aclahayr (Unk) Of the fourth hour of the Nuctemeron, the genius spirit.

Adad, Addu (Babylonian, Hittite) god of the storm.

Adramalech (Samaritan) devil. Commander of Hell. Wierius' chancellor of infernal regions. In Assyria where he was worshipped, children were supposedly burned at his alters.

Adriel Mansions of the moon among the Enochian demons.

Aeshma, Aesma (Persian) One of seven archangels of the Persians. Adopted later into Hebrew mythology as Asmodeus. Has been recorded in history for at least three thousand years. Said to be a small hairy demon able to make men perform cruel acts.

Ahazu-demon the siezer demon of the night.

Agaliarept (Hebrew) commander of armies. Aussi General of hell - Grimoire of Pope Honorius..

Agares or Aguares (Unk) devil. Wierius' hierarchy states Agares is the demon of courage.

Agathodemon (Egyptian) a good demon worshipped by the egyptians.

Agramon (Unk) Demon of fear

Agrat-bat-mahlaht One of Satan's wives and demoness of whores.

Ahpuch (Mayan) devil.

Ahriman (Mazdean) devil. Ahremanes was the name given to fallen angels by the Persians.

Alastor (Unk) Wierius' cruel demon called "the executioner."

Aldinach (Egyptian) A demon who causes natural disasters (i.e. floods, hurricanes, tornados, earthquakes).

Allocen One of the 72 spirits of Solomon.

Alocer, Allocer (Unk) Grand duke of hell. One of Solomon's 72 spirits.

Alu-Demon (Semitic) Night demon.

Amaimon One of the 72 spirits of Solomon.

Amaymon Evil Spirit, king of South.

Amducious (Hebrew) The destroyer.

Amducias Grand Duke of Hades. According to Wierius a demon of music.

Amon, Ammon (Egyptian) Sun God. Much like Lucifer except controls reproduction and life. See also Amaimon, Amoymon, Amaymon, and Aamon.

Amy One of the 72 spirits of Solomon. Said to be supreme president of hell. He will trade knowledge for the human soul.

Anamelech, Anomylech (Assyrian) bearer of bad news. An obscure demon. His name means "good king". Some sources claim Anamelech is the moon goddess while Andramalech is the sun god.

Andras (Unk) god of quarrels. Grand marquis of hell.

Andrealphus One of the 72 Spirits of Solomon.

Andromalius One of the 72 Spirits of Solomon.

Anini One of the 72 Spirits of Solomon.

Anneberg (German) demon of mines.

Ansitif (unk) Possessed Sister Barbara of St. Michael in 1643 during the possessions of the nuns at Louviers.

Apollyn (Greek) Another name for Satan.

Ardat-Lile (Semitic) a female spirit/demon who weds human beings and wreaks havoc in the dwellings of men.

Arioch (unk) Demon of vengeance. He delivers vengeance only when called on.

Arphaxat (Unk) The demon who possessed Loise de Pinterville during the possession of the nuns at Loudun.

Ashtaroth, Astaroth (Phonician)- goddess of lust, seduction. Same as Ishtar. Turned male in christian mythology - Lord Treasurer of Hell. Prince of accusers and inquisitors. Demon of vanity and sloth. One of the 72 spirits of Solomon.

Asmodeus, Asmoday (Hebrew) god of lust. A demon most commonly involved in possession cases, particularly noted in the possession of the Louviers nuns. Evolved from the Persian Aeshma. See Aeshma.

Asoth Dark female force in the pantheon of the Order of the Nine Angles. Works of passion and death. The name should be vibrated.

Asmodeus (Heb) devil of sensuality and luxury, originally 'creature of judgement'. He was the overseer of all the gambling houses in the court of Hell, and the general spreader of dissipation. In addition, Asmodeus was the demon of lust, responsible for stirring up matrimonial trouble.

Asmoday A king of hell according to the Key of Solomon. He can grant invincibility.

Astarte Queen of spirits of the dead.

Atazoth The most powerful of the Dark Gods in the pantheon of the Order of the Nine Angles. The name itself signifies in one sense the purpose of the cosmic cycles and the opening of the Gates since 'Atazoth' as a word means 'an increasing of azoth.

Awar Son of Iblis. Arab demon of laziness.

Aym (Unk) Grand duke of hell. Also Haborym.

Ayperos (Unk) Prince of hell. Subordinate in Grimoire of Pope Honorius.

Azanigin Mother of all demons who lie waiting in Earth in the pantheon of the Order of the Nine Angles.

Azathoth Rules all time and space from a black throne at the center of Chaos.

Azazel (Hebrew) god/demon of war. See also Azael.

Baal, Bael (Hebrew) devil. Means "the lord." The Canaanites worshipped Baal and held rituals at which children were burned for sacrifice. According to Wierius, this demon is the first monarch of hell and appears as a three headed beast. Bael is cited in the Grand Grimoire as commanding general of infernal armies.

Baalberith, Balberith (Canaanite) Lord of covenant later made god of death. According to Wierius - a demon master of the infernal alliance. In some hierarchies he is the secretary of the archives of hell. Demon of blasphemy and murder.

Baalzephon (Canaanite) Captain of guard and sentinels of Hell according to Wierius.

Babael (Unk) Keeper of graves.

Balaam (Hebrew) avarice and greed.

Balan (Unk) A demon in Wierius' hierarchy said to be high in the monarchy. The demon of finesse and ruses. Also a prince of hell.

Balban (Unk) a demon of delusion.

Baltazo (Unk) The Demon who possessed Nicole Aubry of Laon in 1566.

Baphomet God of the Templars. Worshiped as Satan. The Templar's are thought, by some, to be one of the earliest sects of Demonolatry.

Barbas (Unk) a demon of mechanics according to some hierarchies.

Barbetos (Unk) Duke of Hades.

Bar-Lgura (Semitic) A gargoyle type demon who is said to sit atop houses and pounce on the inhabitants.

Barqu (Unk) The demon who keeps the secrets of the philosophers stone.

Barzabel Associated with Machidael and Barchiel.

Bast (Egyption) goddess of pleasure. Represented by a cat.

Bathym, Bathim, Bathin (Unk) See also Marthim. Demon of herbs and precious stones according to Wierius. One of the 72 spirits of Solomon.

Bayemon (Unk) According to the Grimioire of Pope Honorius a reigning monarch demon presiding over western infernal region.

Bechard, Bechaud (Unk) A demon mentioned in Key Of Solomon as demon of tempests. Demon of the natural forces.

Beelzebub, Beelzebuth, Belzebath (Hebrew) Lord of Flies. Among the demons blamed for the demonic possessions of the nuns at Loudun. Chief of false gods.

Behemoth (Hebrew) Another name for Satan.

Beherit - (Syriac) Another name for Satan.

Belial, Beliar (Hebrew) The earth elemental. Speculation has suggested the name Belial comes from the Hebrew phrase *beli ya 'al* meaning "without worth." Prince of trickery. One of the 72 princes of Solomon.

Belphegor, Belphegore, Baalphegor (Moabites?) Demon of discovery, invention, and riches.

Beng A roman name for the devil.

Berith One of the 72 Spirits of Solomon.

Biffant (Unk) The demon who allegedly possessed Denise de la Caille.

Bifrons (Unk) Wierius' demon of astronomy, geometry, and other such sciences. A demon who lights strange lights above tombs of the dead.

Bile (Celtic) god of Hell.

Bileth One of the 72 Spirits of Solomon.

Blisargon (Unk) Grand enticer of thieves until he brings his followers to destruction.

Botis One of the 72 spirits of Solomon.

Budsturga A blue, aetherial entity related to Order of the Nine Angles' 13th path. Tradition relates it as a Dark God, of female aspect, trapped in the vortex between the causal and acausal spaces, In one sense represents hidden wisdom - but generally dangerous to sanity.

Buer (Unk) a demon of the second order who commands fifty legions. One of the 72 Spirits of Solomon.

Bune (Unk) One of Wierius' demons of death.

Caacrinolaas (Unk) Wierius' demon of knowledge of liberal arts. Appears as a Griffon. Also Grand President of Hell. Also Caasimolar or Glasya.

Cambions (Unk) Offspring of Incubi and Succubi.

Carreau Mercilessness.

Cassiel, Caspiel (Unk) Ruler of Saturn.

Caym, Caim (Unk) Grand President of Hell. One of the 72 Spirits of Solomon.

Charon Boatman of hell. Ferries souls across styx and/or archeron.

Chax (Unk) Grand duke of hell. Also Scox.

Chemosh (Moabite) devil.

Chomie (Enochian) no description.

Choronzon demon of dispersion, guardian of the Abyss.

Cimeries (African) devil.

Clauneck Demon over treasures and riches.

Clisthert (Unk) a demon who can change day to night and night to day.

Colopatiron Of the 9th hour of the Nuctemeron, genius. Sets prisons open.

Cresil (Unk) Demon of impurity and slovenliness. Also Gressil.

Cunali One of the demons of the 8th hour of the Nuctemeron.

Dagon (Philistine) another serpent god and god of ocean.

Dantalian One of the 72 Spirits of Solomon.

Decarabia One of the 72 Spirits of Solomon.

Delepitorae, Delepitore (Unk) demones of sorcery enlightenment.

Demogorgon, Gorgo (Greek) devil.

Demoriel no description

Diriel no description

Dracula (Romanian) devil.

Eblis (Mohammedan) Also called the "Satan" of the Mohammedans. It is claimed that once he was an inhabitant of Azazil, the heaven nearest God; and when the angels were commanded to bow down to the first man, Eblis was the leader of those who rebelled. Also Haris.

Emma-O (Japanese) ruler of Hell.

Euronymous, Eurynomous (Greek) god of death. Prince of hell who feeds upon corpses.

Flereous, Feurety (Unk) god of fire. Fire Elemental used in place of Satan. Lieutenant of hell.

Furfur (Unk) Holds rank as count of hell.

Geryon (literary- Dante) Centaur/Dragon who guards hell.

Guecubu (Chili) Evil spirits.

Haborym (Hebrew) Another name for Satan.

Hecate (Greek) goddess of underworld and sorcery. Queen of witches.

Hela (Teutonic) goddess of death, daughter of Loki.

Ifrits (Arabic) Evil, hideous spectres. Became Genies in Persian and Indian mythology. Also associated with Jinns and Divs of Persia.

Incubus male demon of seduction said to invade a woman's dreams. Note various spellings: Inncubus, Inccubus. Plural = Incubi

Ishtar (Babylonian) goddess of fertility.

Jezebeth (Unk) the demon of falsehoods.

Kali (Hindu) daughter of Shiva, the destroyer. Kali ("the black one") is the Hindu mother goddess, symbol of dissolution and destruction.

Kasdeya The Book Of Enoch refers to this demon as the "fifth satan"

Kobal (Unk) Hell's entertainment liason.

Kostchtchie (Russian) a goblin of death.

Leonard (see also Urian german) Demon of sorcery . Appears as a giant black goat.

Leviathan (Hebrew) the serpent, the raging sea. Snake worship. Water Elemental. Grand admiral of hell. Seen as androgynous.

Lilith (Hebrew) in Hebrew myth - Adam's first wife. Later wife to Satan. According to many demonologists, Lilith presides over Succubi. Lilith is said to attempt to destroy newborn infants. For this reason the practice of writing a formula to drive Lilith away on all four corners of the birth chamber was adopted by the Jews. Lilith is the princess of hell.

Loki (Teutonic) devil.

Lucifer (Roman) The Light Bringer. Air Elemental. Often misconstrued as being Satan. They are two separate demons.

Lucifuge, Lucifuge Rofocale (Roman) devil.

Malphas (Unk) Grand president of the infernal regions. Appears as a crow.

Mammon (Aramaic) god of wealth & profit.

Mandragoras (Unk) Familiar demons. They are attributed to the mandrake root and considered gifts from Satan to the sorcerer who conjures them.

Mania (Etruscan) goddess of Hell.

Mantus (Etruscan) god of hell.

Mara (Buddhist) a demon who attempts to damn the soul.

Mastema (Unk) leader of human/demon offspring.

Melchom (Unk) the treasurer of the palace of hell.

Mephistopholes, Mesphto (Greek) the light shunner. Counterpart of Lucifer.

Merihim (unk) the prince of pestilence.

Metztli (Aztec) goddess of night

Mictain (Aztec) god of death

Moloch (Phoenician) devil

Mormo (Greek) God of Spirits. Hecate's Consort.

Mullin (Unk) Leonard's right hand man.

Murmur (Unk) Demon of music. A count of hell.

Naamah (Hebrew) seduction

Naburus, Naberios (Unk) protector of the gates of hell. Associated with Cerberos. A marquis of hell.

Nebiros (Unk) Mar De Camp of hell.

Nergal (Babylonian) god of underworld. A second order demon.

Nihasa (American Indian) devil.

Nija (Polish) god of underworld

Nina (Babylonian) Serpent Goddess.

Nybras (Unk) an inferior demon who publicizes the pleasures of hell.

Nysrogh (Unk) another second order demon - who- is chief of staff in the palace of hell.

Orias (Unk) Demon of divination. Marquis of hell.

Oroan (Guyana) Demon of the eclipse.

Orthon (Unk) a demon of unknown origin who is said to have ties with possessions in France and with the Satanic-Masonic cult of Palladinism in 19th century Italy.

O'Yama (Japanese) Another name for Satan.

Pan (Greek) god of lust.

Paymon (Unk) master of infernal ceremonies.

Philotanus (Unk) a second order demon in service to Belial.

Pluto (Greek) god of underworld.

Proserpine (Greek) queen of underworld.

Pwcca (Welsh) Pooka in Celtic Mythos derived from this name for Satan.

Pyro (Unk) A demon prince of falsehood.

Pytho (Unk) a demon of lies. A serpent demon.

Rahu (Hindu) devil.

Rakshasa (India) demon whose appearance in the least, horrifying.

Raum (Unk) a count of hell.

Rimmon (Syrian) devil.

Ronwe (Unk) the demon of knowledge. In some accounts - a lesser demon.

Sabazios (Phrygian) the snake. Serpent worship.

Samael (Unk) it is thought this angel of death was the demon who tempted Eve. Also the prince of air. This is merely another name for satan.

Samnu (Asian) devil.

Satan, Shaitan (Satan/Hebrew Shaitan/Arabic) The Adversary. Lord of fire. Fire Elemental.

Satanchia (Hebrew/Greek) devil. Same as Satan.

Sargatanas brigadier of hell.

Sedit (American Indian) devil.

Sekhmet (Egyptian) goddess of vengeance.

Semiazas (Unk) said to be the chief of all fallen angels.

Set (Egyptian) devil.

Shabriri (Jewish Myth) a demon who strikes people blind.

Shiva (Hindu) the destroyer.

Sonnilion, Sonnilon (Armenian) goddess of hate.

Succorbenoth (Unk) demon of jealousy and said to protect gates and bridgeways.

Succumbus, Succubus female demon of seduction. Said to seduce males while sleeping. Note various spellings. Plural - Succubi.

Supay (Inca) god of underworld.

T'an-mo (Chinese) devil of desire.

Tchort (Russian) The Black God. Another name for Satan.

Tezcatlipoca (Aztec) god of Hell.

Tezrian (Armenian) goddess of war

Thamuz (Sumerian) devil. An ambassador of hell. Said to have started the inquisition and to have invented artillery.

Thoth (Egyptian) god of magick.

Troian (Russian) night demon.

Tunrida (Scandinavian) devil.

Typhon (Greek) Another name for Satan.

Ukobach or Urobach (Unk) a fire demon.

Unsere (Unk) goddess of sorcery and fertility.

Uphir (Unk) the head demon physician in the palace of hell.

Valafar (unk) another grand duke of hell.

Veltis (Babylonian) Evil spirit who assaulted St. Margaret.

Verdelet (Unk) Master of ceremonies of infernal court. Demon of the second order.

Verin (Unk) the demon of impatience.

Vetis (Unk) the temptor of the holy.

Xaphan (Unk) another fire demon. Keeper of the furnaces of hell.

Yaotzin (Aztec) god of Hell.

Yen-lo-Wang (Chinese) ruler of Hell.

Zabulon (Unk) Demon who possessed one of the nuns at Loudun.

Zaebos (Sumerian) Grand Count of hell said to have gentile disposition.

Zagam (Unk) Grand king and president of infernal regions. Said to change things into its opposite. Demon of counterfeit.

Zapan (Unk) One of the kings of hell according to Wierius.

Zeernebooch (German) monarch of the empire of the dead.

Zepar (Unk) Grand duke of hell - god of war. Also Vepar and Separ.

Agathodaemon, Agathodaimon (Greek) The good genius (represented as a youth holding a horn of plenty and a bowl, or a poppy and ears of corn) to whom at Athens a cup of pure wine was drunk at dinner; in one of his many forms, the kosmic Christos, the serpent of eternity -- which in the human mind becomes the serpent of Genesis -- which after the fall of Mediterranean civilizations became Satan. Brahma, in order to create hierarchies, becomes fourfold and emanates successively daemons, angels, pitris, and men. Agathodaimon refers to the first of these emanations, sons of kosmic darkness, signifying incomprehensible light which is prior to manifested light. Christian theology has recognized this in making Satan's host the first sons of God, but has unconsciously perverted their descent in order to enlighten man into a rebellion against Almighty Power. Thus in later times Agathodaimon became the enemy of divine goodness. The same has happened in the case of the asuras in India, and of the kosmic serpent. In Gnostic gems it appears under the name Chnouphis or Chnoubis. Clement of Alexandria, as an initiated Neoplatonist, knew that Agathodaimon was the kosmic Christos and the true spiritual savior of mankind, like Prometheus -- an early form of the Agathodaimon teaching applied to the enlightening of the human race through the influence of an incarnating spiritual power. Opposite to him stands a Kakodaimon, the evil genius or lower serpent, the Satan who bids Christ worship him and "I will give thee all the kingdoms of the earth." Kakodaimon is the nether or inferior aspect of Agathodaimon, kama-manas the deluder as opposed to buddhi-manas the redeemer.

Evil That which is bad, morally wrong, causing harm, pain, misery. In Western religions, evil is often thought of as a moral antagonism to God. This force is the source of sin and is attached to the soul from its inception. Whereas, for Hindus, evil is not a conscious, dark force, such as Satan. It is situational rather than ontological, meaning it has its basis in relative conditions, not in ultimate reality. Evil (badness, corruption) springs from ignorance (avidya) and immaturity. Nor is one fighting with God when he is evil, and God is not standing in judgment. Within each soul, and not external to it, resides the principle of judgment of instinctive-intellectual actions. God, who is ever compassionate, blesses even the worst sinner, the most depraved asura, knowing that individual will one day emerge from lower consciousness into the light of love and understanding. Hindus hold that evil, known in Sanskrit as papa, papman or dushta, is the result of unvirtuous acts (papa or adharma) caused by the instinctive-intellectual mind dominating and obscuring deeper, spiritual intelligence. (Note: both papa and papman are used as nouns and adjectives.) The evil-doer is viewed as a young soul, ignorant of the value of right thought, speech and action, unable to live in the world without becoming entangled in maya.

Intrinsic evil Inherent, inborn badness. Some philosophies hold that man and the world are by nature imperfect, corrupt or evil. Hinduism holds, on the contrary, that there is no intrinsic evil, and the real nature of man is his divine, soul nature, which is goodness.

Lucifer (Latin) Light-bringer (cf Greek *Phosphoros*; or *Eosphoros* dawn-bringer); the planet Venus, the morning star. Lucifer is light bringer to earth, not only physically as the brightest of the planets, but in a mystical sense also. In mysticism he is the chief of those minor powers or logoi who are said to rebel against high heaven and to be cast down to the bottomless pit -- the so-called war in heaven and the fall of the angels. This allegory is found also in the legend concerning Prometheus, in the Hindu Mahasura who rebels against Brahma and is cast by Siva into patala, and in the Scandinavian Loki. In the cyclic sweep of evolution, spirit has first to descend or become involved in differentiation and in the worlds of matter, so that worlds and beings may be brought forth and evolved. The logoi who thus bring the light may allegorically be said, like Prometheus, to steal the fire, and their assertion of divine free will may be construed into an act of evolutionary rebellion; yet such is their karmic function as well as duty. Lucifer has been transformed in later Occidental theology into a synonym for the Evil One or the Devil. If the god Jehovah were the highest divinity, which this Jewish tribal deity is not, then any power withstanding him must necessarily be considered to be his adversary; and in the same way the teaching as to the immanent Christ, not only in the world but in each individual person, not being altogether agreeable with the doctrine of salvation by faith in an external savior, became transformed into the Tempter inspiring man to sinful rebellion against God. Lucifer in a very true sense stands for the self-conscious mind in man, which is at once tempter and enlightener -- tempter in its lower aspects and enlightener and inspirer in its higher.

Sadhana Sadhana: Spiritual discipline or exercise; self effort (BV-30), (BV-33) The essential ingredient of this Sadhana is Love. Sadhana without Love (Prema) towards all creation, will reveal only Satan. (SSS-III)

Satan Originally any angel of God sent as an adversary (Satan means adversary in Hebrew) On at least one occasion in the Old Testament Satan is a specific angel acting as God's agent to discover and punish sin. Modern Christian mythology teaches that Satan was a high ranking angel named Lucifer who wanted to be exalted to the position of God. Through this sin, Lucifer fell and became Satan, the Devil, leading a large number of rebellious angels with him who became the demons. The Jesus cult teaches that Satan and his host now seek to destroy the plan of God.

666 Many have been the designators of this apocalyptic finger, from Nero to the Popes, to Mohammed, to Ronald Wilson Reagan. But only through careful numerological analysis can we be certain of its true meaning. In *The Dimensions of Paradise*, John Mitchell shows clearly how this "number of the beast" is actually the Gnostic designation for Jesus Christ and the Crucifixion foisted on the world by the corrupt Church. Christ as an historical figure instead of a spiritual force was repugnant to the Gnostics. Decadent Babylon and the New Jerusalem are one and the same City of God, symbolizing the death rattle for the perverted religion and the birth of a new understanding. In Revelation, 666 refers to the phrase *kai ho arithmos Chi-Xi-Sigma* and stands for Jesus Christ as the idol on the cross rather than the Gnostic idea of the new Christ spirit, "the son of man," present in all men (much like our own "New Aeon" feeling). The New Jerusalem numbers are 3168, 1080, 1224 and 1764, but especially 864 and 666 (all of these, by the way, reduce to 9). New Jerusalem itself is 961 (seven), as is "the number of the leaves of the Tree of Life which are for the healing of nations." A similar attribution can be found in Kenneth Grant's work (*Outside the Circles of Time*). For him, as for the writer of Revelation, the number

has special apocalyptic meanings: "The Christians misunderstood the Unspeakable Name (IHVH) and supposed that by causing a rift between the Old Ones and the life-wave on earth they could 'save' mankind, and incidentally [of course!] gain total mastery of the planet." In order to do this, they inserted the Hebrew letter Shin (Grant calls this the letter of "Spirit," others associate it with "fire") between IH and VH, the Sh of Spirit. Thus we derive the name Yeheshuah or Johoshuah (IHShVH), which in Latin we call Jesus. The Xtians proceeded from there to identify this mythological name with a real person who, as Gerald Massey demonstrated, could only have been -- in an historic sense -- Jesus ben Pandira, an Egyptian who lived a century earlier. This wizard's mother was named Mary Magdalene, and he was stoned to death for sorcery. But the letter Shin, Grant tells us, "represents the triple-tongued flame of the Great Old Ones, whose supreme concentration -- Choronzon -- exhibits the triple Firetongue in the number 333." The latter is "mirrored in the final Heh of Tetragrammaton, the daughter-letter, whose number becomes the trebled Hex and the Unholy Act of Earth's destruction, under the rule of the Son of Typhon who is Set/Satan and the Anti-Christ." Thus, to this very day, the idol that the entire "Christian" world bows down to is not the Christos spirit at all, but the Anti-Christ. The washed faces, the white gloves, the alb and pale lilies of Sunday worship cannot dispel the blood of ages. Average Galileans are unable to display love of any kind for their fellow-man. Instead, they constantly evoke the images of sin, corruption, misery and damnation. All "holy books" contain contradictions, lies and false teachings, but the Xtian Bible is a monument of fabrications and contradictions, second only to the Koran.

Daemon Est Deus Inversus (Latin) Daemon is divinity inverted; more commonly, the Devil is God inverted. An ancient Hermetic, and later Qabbalistic, aphorism referring to that polar power which is required by the equilibrium and harmony in nature. The One, when manifested, becomes Two, and from the Two are unfolded or evolved all the sequence of manifest existence. Spirit and matter, good and evil, as distinct conceptions exist only by their mutual contrast. There is no evil per se, but the human notion of essential evil arises from our inability to take in the whole at a single glance. Daemon is applicable in general to all formative power, from the highest to the lowest; in this aphorism it denotes the formative rays in their manifestation in and on the lower planes of prakriti, called by contrast the nether pole. Western monotheism, having anthropomorphized the higher creative powers into a personal God, personified the lower powers into a Devil and demons. But Satan or the Adversary is only God's messenger, because what is below reflects what is above. This aphorism, then, states that all the manifested universe is the representation or material inversion or reflection of the divine essence and its emanations which in their aggregate compose the spiritual background and causal forces of the universe. Furthermore, a reflected image reverses. Finally, the aphorism denotes the astral light, represented by a black triangle inverted on a white (SD 1:424).

Beelzebub, Beelzebul *ba`al zebub* (Hebrew) (from *ba`al* lord + *zebug* fly) Lord of the flies; a god of the Philistines, popularly worshiped as the destroyer of flies, to whom was erected a temple at Ekron. The mythical zoology of the ancients points directly to an inner and mystical significance: "flies" is used not in the sense of the insect, but for a certain class of elementals whose "flying" around and through the earth is governed directly by lunar influences. Thus Beelzebub is in this connection a lunar divinity. *Ba`al-zebul*, a form in the Old and New Testaments, is translated as Lord of the High House or Lord of the Habitation, the reference here being to the moon as the habitation or receptacle of these elemental souls at a certain time of their existence. In Christian demonology, Beelzebub is one of the gubernatores of the infernal kingdom under Lucifer: thus in Milton's *Paradise Lost* he is second to Satan. In Matthew 12:24, Beelzebub is referred to as the prince of the devils.

Devil, The "Heir of Man," originally the Evil God of the Zoroastrians; later a creation of Christian and Islamic theologians (who called him Satan and Shaitan) consisting of old fertility gods, wisdom spirits and nature elementals combined with Ahriman into a figure of terror and malevolence fully equal to that of that Good God (Jehovah or Allah); the deity worshiped by Neogothic Witches.

Nidhi (Sanskrit) A treasure; the nine divine treasures or jewels of Kuvera, the Vedic Satan, each under the guardianship of some demon -- or rather a spirit more of the nature of the Greek daimon. These nine nidhis are popularly given as: padma (lotus), mahapadma (great lotus), sankha (conch shell), makara (marine animal or fish), kachchhapa (tortoise), mukunda (kettle drum), ananda (joy), nila (a dark color or blue), and kharva (dwarf). They are sometimes personified as attendants of Kuvera or of Lakshmi. All these nidhis are the objects of special worship by the Tantrikas. They differ from the nava-nidhi, or nine treasures or jewels of wisdom referring to a consummation of spiritual development in occult training, occult life, or mysticism generally. In theosophy the "seven jewels of wisdom" are seven of the nine nava-nidhi.

Satan [from Hebrew *satan* adversary, opposer from the verbal root *satan* to lie in wait, oppose, be an adversary; or possibly from the verbal root *shut* to whip, scourge, run hither and thither on errands; Greek *satan*, *satanas*] Adversary; with the definite article (has-satan) *the* adversary in the Christian sense, as the Devil. This Satan of the exoteric Jewish and Christian books is a mere figment of the monkish theological imagination. From the second possible derivation many eminent Shemitic scholars have held that the Satan of the Book of Job was a good angel arranged by God to try the characters of men in order to help them; and therefore supposedly to be different from the Satan of other books of the Bible. The theosophist would not limit the good angel to the Book of Job alone, but would look upon the adversative or contrary forces of nature as being the means upon which each one tries his will, resolution, and determination to evolve and grow spiritually and intellectually. The Satan of this hypothesis is in a sense our own lower character combined with the lower forces of nature surrounding earth and elsewhere.

Michael *micha'el* (Hebrew) Who is as God; one of the seven archangels, in the Old Testament one of the chiefs of the heavenly host, regarded as the guardian angel or celestial patron of Israel. According to one legend, Michael was chief of the four or seven angels who surrounded the heavenly throne. The Roman Catholic Church regards Michael in much the same light, his festival, Michaelmas, being held on September 29. With the Gnostics, the first of the Aeons, called the savior. In the New Testament Michael leads the angelic host against the Apocalyptic Dragon, repeating the familiar tale of many ancient mythologies. Again, he is the chief opponent of Samael, the principal antagonist of the heavenly host. Originally, however, both Michael and Samael were as one, both proceeding from ruah (soul), neshamah (spirit), and nephesh (vitality) -- as taught in the Qabbalah (in the Chaldean *Book of Numbers*). "*Samael is the concealed (occult) Wisdom, and Michael the higher terrestrial Wisdom, both emanating from the same source but diverging after their issue from the mundane soul, which on Earth is Mahat (intellectual understanding), or Manas (the seat of Intellect). They diverge, because one (Michael) is influenced by Neschamah, while the other (Isamael) remains uninfluenced. This tenet was perverted by the dogmatic spirit of the Church; which . . . made of Samael-Satan (the most wise and spiritual spirit of all) -- the adversary of its anthropomorphic God and sensual physical man, the devil!*" (SD 2:378).

Muluk-Taos (Arab.). From Maluk, "Ruler", a later form of Moloch, Melek, Malayak and Malachim, "messengers", angels. It is the Deity worshipped by the Yezidis, a sect in Persia, kindly called by Christian theology "devil worshippers", under the form of a peacock. The Lord

"Peacock" is not Satan, nor is it the devil; for it is simply the symbol of the hundred eyed Wisdom ; the bird of Saraswati, goddess of Wisdom; of Karttikeya the Kumara, the Virgin celibate of the Mysteries of Juno, and all the gods and goddesses connected with the secret learning.

Salvation [from Latin *salvatio* from *salvare* to save] In Christianity, the saving of individual souls from supposed damnation, usually by faith in the Atonement. In theosophy, as concerns the individual, salvation is achieved by victory of his divine self over the illusions created by the contact of the intermediate nature with the lower planes. In this sense the serpent of Eden, Satan even, is man's savior, as are Prometheus, Lucifer, etc. Mankind as a whole is saved by those manasaputras who descended into intellectually senseless mankind of the third root-race and who, by thus enlightening the minds of early humanity, became the elect custodians of the mysteries revealed to mankind by its divine teachers. Again, the Silent Watchers in their various grades, who refuse to pass on into a greater light and maintain their post for the protection and guidance of humanity, are saviors also. Yet no one can be saved by the vicarious merit of another; his salvation is achieved by means of that very free will and enlightened intelligence of his own through which he at first risks falling. But the great ones maintain the ideal which the multitude elect to follow, and thus light the path mankind will ultimately tread.

Heaven and Hell In Christian theology, the abodes of Deity and the celestial hierarchy on the one hand, and of Satan and his fallen angels on the other hand; the final goal of those who are saved and of those who are damned. The origin of the doctrine is founded in the ancient Mystery teachings concerning the human afterdeath experiences and the corresponding experiences passed through by the candidate for initiation. Hell may be likened to kama-loka and also avichi, though neither is eternal. Kama-loka is better represented, however, by purgatory. Heaven is a reflection of devachan, blended also with ideas of nirvanic states. Thus heaven and hell should both be used in the plural, as is commonly the case in their non-Christian equivalents: Elysium, nirvana, Paradise, Valhalla, Olympus, and many other names for heaven; and Tartarus, Gehenna, She'ol, Niflheim, etc., for hell. Heaven and hell may denote states of consciousness experienced in daily life on earth. A rough division of cosmic spheres makes heaven the highest, hell or Tartarus the lowest, with the earth beneath heaven, and the underworld beneath it and preceding Tartarus. The crystalline spheres of medieval astronomy are called heavens surrounding the earth concentrically. Far from being adjudicated by a deity to happiness or torment, after death a person goes to that region to which he is attracted by the affinities which he has set up during his life. Thus theosophy teaches the existence of almost endless and widely varying spheres or regions, all inhabited by peregrinating entities; and of these regions the higher can be dubbed the heavens and the lowest the hells, and the intermediate can be called the regions of experiences and purgation. All spheres possessing sufficient materialized substance to be called imbodyed spheres are hells by contrast with the ethereal and spiritual globes of the heavens. Therefore in a sense and on a smaller scale, the lower globes of a planetary chain may be called hells, and the higher globes of the chain, by contrast, heavens. All evolving entities go to both the heavens and the hells of our solar system in accordance with their evolutionary necessities, and for the purpose of purgation through the suffering of material experience; but in all cases such peregrinating egos are attracted at the different times of their long evolutionary schooling to those spheres by sympathy or psychomagnetic pull. The immense justice of this idea, from which the heavens and hells of the different religions have come, is readily apparent.

Ialdabaoth (Gnostic) (from Shem *ilda + baoth*) Child from the egg (of Chaos); the spirit of matter, the chief of the lower 'elohim and father of the six dark stellar spirits or terrestrial angels, and thus one of the lower group of the Qabbalistic Sephiroth, the shadow or reflection on the

lower four cosmic planes of the arupa or formless higher Sephirothic range. These emanations from the stellar spirits become darker and more material as they recede in descent from their sources, and are thus properly represented as the seven planetary (and global) genii or rector. Ialdabaoth's mother, Sophia Achamoth (wisdom of the lower four of the cosmic planes) is the daughter or manifested reflection of the Heavenly Sophia -- divine wisdom, or the mahat-side of akasa. Therefore Ialdabaoth is equivalent to the Nazarene Demiourgos of the *Codex Nazaraeus*, which makes him identical with the Hebrew Jehovah, the creator of the physical earth and the material side of the rector of the planet Saturn. He is also identical with Tsebaoth-Adamas, "the Pthahil of the *Codex Nazaraeus*, the Demiurge of the Valentinian system, the Proarchose of the Barbelitae, the Great Archon of Basilides and the Elohim of Justinus, etc. Ialdabaoth (the Child of Chaos) was . . . the Chief of the Creative Forces and the representative of one of the classes of Pitris" (BCW 13:43n). In the Ophite scheme he is the first of the superior septenate. As a creative spirit, Ialdabaoth generates six sons (the lower terrestrial angels or stellar spirits) without assistance of any female, and when these sons strive with him he creates Ophiomorphos, the serpent-shaped spirit of all that is basest in matter. When Ialdabaoth proclaims that he is Father and God, and that none is above him, Sophia tells him that the first and second Anthropos (heavenly man) are above him. So Ialdabaoth's sons create a man, Adam, to whom Ialdabaoth gives the breath of life, emptying himself of creative power. Having rebelled against his mother, his production is mindless and has to be endowed with mind by Sophia Achamoth -- a reference to the descent of the manasaputras. The man, thus informed, aspires away from his producer, who thereupon becomes his adversary, produces the three lower kingdoms of beings, and imprisons man in a house of clay (flesh). Ialdabaoth also makes Eve (Lilith) to deprive the man of his light powers. Sophia sends the serpent or intelligence to make Adam and Eve transgress the commands of Ialdabaoth, who casts them from Paradise into the world along with the serpent. Sophia deprives Adam and Eve of their light power, but eventually restores this power so that they awoke mentally. Here there is much the same confusion that surrounds the various meanings of Satan and the serpent. Ialdabaoth, who is lion-headed or in the form of a lion, represents the kama principle, the false light that draws the soul into matter and struggles against its rise again to spirit. Some Gnostics held that Sophia sent Christos to help humankind when Ialdabaoth and his forces were shutting out the divine light, and Ialdabaoth, "discovering that Christos was bringing to an end his kingdom of Matter, stirred up the Jews, his own people, against Him, and Jesus was put to death" (BCW 14:161).

CHURCH OF SATAN: The controversial form of Satanism founded by Anton LaVey in 1966, which split into several factions in 1975. Practitioners follow the Satanic Bible (written by LaVey) as scripture. The Church of Satan does not recognize the existence of Satan as an entity but uses the name as a symbol of the material world and the carnal nature of man. The Church of Satan renounce sacrifice and crime as conducive to meeting their spiritual goals.

AIWASS/AIWAZ Crowley's alter ego. One of the 3 keywords of the Aeon of Horus (with Thelema and Agapé). Its number is 418. Aiwass has been attributed to Satan or Lucifer.

MOTHER, MAIDEN, CRONE The three aspects of the Triple Goddess.

TRIPLE GODDESS Refer to MOTHER, MAIDEN, CRONE

Meaning of Dreams in Islam Few Western **dream** researchers have any familiarity with the rich **dream** traditions of **Islam**. The Muslim faith first emerged in seventh century B.C.E. Arabia as a profound revisioning of early Jewish and Christian beliefs and practices. One theme the Prophet Muhammed (pbuh) drew from the scriptures of those two religions was a reverence for

dreaming. In the Quran, as in the Jewish Torah and the Christian New Testament, dreams serve as a vital medium by which God communicates with humans. Dreams offer divine guidance and comfort, warn people of impending danger, and offer prophetic glimpses of the future. Although the three religions drastically differ on many other topics, they find substantial agreement on this particular point: dreaming is a valuable source of wisdom, understanding, and inspiration. Indeed, as I will propose in this brief essay, **Islam** has historically shown greater interest in dreams than either of the other two traditions, and has done more to weave dreaming into the daily lives of its members. From the first revelatory visions of Muhammed to the myriad **dream** practices of present-day Muslims, **Islam** has developed and sustained a complex, multifaceted tradition of active engagement with the dreaming imagination.

Psychic Reading The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines a psychic as "*a person susceptible to [psychic](#) influence,*" and a [clairvoyant](#) as having a "*faculty of perceiving, as if by seeing what's happening or exists out of sight; exceptional insight.*" These terms define the new type of clairvoyant emerging in almost every city, town or area around the world. No longer does the word "psychic" bring forth an image of an old woman in a long dress or robe, ribbons streaming from her hair, shaking a tambourine and saying, "Cross my palm with silver and I'll tell your fortune," or the guru sitting with legs crossed on a snow-capped mountain contemplating the meaning of life.

Rabbinical demonology has three classes of demons, though they are scarcely separable one from another. There were the shedim, the mazziqim ("harmers"), and the ruḥin ("evil spirits"). Besides these there were lilin ("night spirits"), ṭelane ("shade", or "evening spirits"), ṭiharire ("midday spirits"), and ṣafrire ("morning spirits"), as well as the "demons that bring famine" and "such as cause storm and earthquake."

Eutheism dystheism and maltheism - Satanism. Satanists advocate rebellion against God because they also consider him evil, and (depending on the particular flavor of Satanism) may or may not believe in the existence of an actual Satan as a real entity, as described in various parts of the Bible and in Milton's Paradise Lost.

Leviathan The Christian interpretation of Leviathan is often considered to be a demon or natural monster associated with Satan or the Devil, and held by some to be the same monster as Rahab (Isaiah 51:9). Some biblical scholars considered Leviathan to represent the pre-existent forces of chaos. In Psalm 74:13-14 it says "it was You who drove back the sea with Your might, who smashed the heads of the monsters in the waters; it was You who crushed the heads of Leviathan, who left him as food for the creatures of the wilderness."

Blanche Barton is Magistra Templi Rex, the chairmistress of the "Council of Nine" that serves as the governing body of the Church of Satan. Within the Church of Satan, Barton is known as The Reverend Magistra Blanche Barton, Magistra Templi Rex. Barton was previously the High Priestess of the Church, a position to which she was appointed by her consort and Church founder Anton LaVey shortly before his death on October 29, 1997.

Acorn The acorn is the fruit of oaks (genus *Quercus*, in the family Fagaceae). It is a nut, containing a single seed (rarely two seeds), enclosed in a tough, leathery shell, and borne in a cup-shaped cupule. Acorns vary from 1-6 cm long and 0.8-4 cm broad. Acorns take about 6 or 24 months (depending on the species) to mature; see List of *Quercus* species for details of oak classification, in which acorn morphology and phenology are important factors.

William ('Bill') Schnoebelen is an American Fundamentalist Christian who claims that he was once a Satanist. He was born in a devout Roman Catholic household and at the age of five, he desired to become a Catholic priest. However he claims that because of the changes made during the Second Vatican Council and the so called 'hypocrisy' of the Catholic clergy at his seminary, he began looking for other paths of faith.

Mephistopheles (also Mephisto, Mephistophilus, Mephist and Mephistophilis as referred to in the original text) is a name given to one of the chief demons of Christian mythology that figure in European literary traditions. The name is frequently used as an alternative form of Satan or the Devil. Because the name Mephistopheles evolved during the Renaissance, Mephistopheles makes no appearance in the Bible.

The Christian Day of Atonement is based on the English translation of the the Jewish Holyday Yom Kippur. The Bible calls the day Yom Hakippurim (Hebrew, "Day of the Atonements"). The day is commemorated with a 25-hour fast by Jews, but normally a 24 hour fast by Christians who observe it.

Satan (שָׂטָן Standard Hebrew Satan, Greek and Latin Sátanas, Tiberian Hebrew Šāṭān; Aramaic ܫܛܢܐ Šaṭanā: both words mean "Adversary; accuser") is an angel, demon, or minor god in many religions. Satan plays various roles in the Hebrew Bible, the Apocrypha and the New Testament.

Jhonen Vasquez - Johnny the Homicidal Maniac. Johnny the Homicidal Maniac, popularly referred to as JTHM, ran for seven issues. Early one-page strips featuring Johnny were published in Carpe Noctem magazine. Published as a trade paperback under the name Johnny the Homicidal Maniac: Director's Cut, a hardcover edition is also available. Both paperback and hardcover editions have "Z?" on the cover.

The Baptism of Jesus is the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist. The event is an important moment in the New Testament and is the foundation of the Christian baptism rituals. In the New Testament the baptism of Jesus is covered in Mark 1:9-11, Matthew 3:13-17, Luke 3:21-Luke 3:22, and John 1:29-34. The basic outline in all three synoptics Gospels is the same. They all begin by introducing the figure of John the Baptist and describing his preaching and his ritual of baptism.

Divine Comedy is composed of three canticas (or "cantiche"), Inferno (Hell), Purgatorio (Purgatory), and Paradiso (Paradise), composed respectively of 34, 33, and 33 cantos. The first cantica, Inferno, is by far the most famous of the three, and is often published separately under the title Dante's Inferno.

Alexander Hislop (1807-1862) was a Scottish Protestant minister famous for his outspoken criticisms of the Roman Catholic Church. He wrote several books, his most famous being *The Two Babylons: Papal worship Revealed to be the worship of Nimrod and His wife*. This book was initially published in 1853 as a pamphlet, then greatly revised and expanded and released as a book in 1858.

Kabah Over 4,000 years ago God asked Abraham to build the *Kabah* (house of worship) at Mecca and to call upon all people to make the pilgrimage to the House of God. Thus, it came to be obligatory for every Muslim to go for *Haj* at least once, provided good health and financial position permitted it. Over two million believers from all over the world gather every year in

Mecca to perform this pious duty. The rites of *Haj* take about one week to complete, but the devout spend as many days as possible so that they may become spiritually enriched by the sacred atmosphere. All the acts and sites of *Haj* convey a spiritual message.

The end times are, in one version of Judeo-Christian eschatology and in Islam, a time of tribulation that will precede the Second Coming of the Messiah. Specifically, what is usually referred to as the 'end times' revolves around a cluster of beliefs in Christian or Rastafarian millennialism. These beliefs typically include the ideas that the biblical apocalypse is imminent and that various signs in current events are omens of Armageddon.

Holy water is used in Orthodox rites of blessing and exorcism, and is the water normally used for baptisms. A quantity of holy water is typically kept in a small font placed near the entrance of the church where it is available for anyone who needs it. Orthodox Christians most often bless themselves with holy water by drinking it, and they normally keep some at home for this purpose. Holy water is also sometimes sprinkled on items or people when they are blessed, as part of the prayers of blessing.

Abraxas The word Abraxas (or Abrasax or Abracax) was engraved on certain antique stones, called on that account Abraxas stones, which were used as amulets or charms by Gnostic sects. It was believed that Abraxas was the name of a god who incorporated both Good and Evil (God and Demiurge) in one entity, and therefore representing the monotheistic God, singular, but (unlike e.g. the Christian God) not omni-benevolent.

Stigmata (plural of stigma) are wounds that were, according to the Holy Bible, inflicted on Jesus during his crucifixion. There have been many reports of other individuals who display similar wounds, the causes of which have been subject to considerable debate. Some contend that stigmata are miraculous, others argue they are hoaxes or can be explained medically. The infliction of stigmata is called stigmatization.

Heaven in Protestant Christianity Historically, Christianity has been divided over how people gain entry into Heaven. From the 16th to the late 19th century, Christendom was divided between the Roman Catholic and Orthodox views on the one hand, and the Protestant views on the other. In the Catholic and Eastern Orthodox traditions, entry into Heaven depends upon the Christian receiving God's grace through the activities of the church. This would include sacraments such as Baptism, the Eucharist and Confession.

Trinity The word Trinity comes from a Latin abstract noun which most literally means "three-ness" (or "the property of occurring three at once"). The term Trinity does not appear in the Bible, and indeed did not exist until about AD 200 when Tertullian (who eventually converted to Montanism) coined it as the Latin trinitas and also probably the formula Three Persons, One Substance as the Latin tres Personae, una Substantia itself roughly derived from the Greek treis Prosoponoi, Homoousios in the early third century.

Walpurgis Night (Valborgsmässoafton in Swedish, Vappu in Finnish, Volbriöö in Estonian, Valpurģu nakts or Valpurģi in Latvian, Walpurgisnacht in German) is a holiday celebrated on April 30 or May 1, in Finland, Sweden, Estonia, Latvia and Germany. Walpurgis Night - Origins. The festival is named after Saint Walburga (known in Scandinavia as "Valborg"; alternative forms are "Walpurgis", "Wealdburg", or "Valderburger").

Sabbat neopaganism In the Wiccan form of neopaganism, a Sabbat is one of the eight major seasonal festivals which make up the Wheel of the Year. These include the solstices and equinoxes, and four additional festivals sometimes referred to as the "cross-quarter days". The word derives from Old English "sabat", from Old French "sabbat", from Latin "sabbatum", from Greek "sabbaton" (or sa`baton), from Hebrew "shabbat" - to cease or rest - the same roots as "Sabbath (christian)" or "Shabbat (judaism)". See also "sabbath".

Seraph A seraph (Hebrew שרף, SRF; in the plural seraphim, שרפים, SRFYM) is one of a class of celestial beings mentioned once in the Old Testament (Tanakh), in Isaiah. Later Jewish imagery perceived them as having human form, and in that way they passed into the ranks of Christian angels.

Moloch as metaphor in art. The idol Moloch that devours its follower's children has appeared in at least two modern works of art. In Fritz Lang's 1927 dystopian film Metropolis, the hero, Freder, when he first witnesses the proletariat workers horrible conditions and watches an accident occur, has a delusion where the enormous machines of the city become anthropomorphic, with flaming mouths.

Seven deadly sins The seven deadly sins were first introduced by St. Gregory the Great in Moralia in Job. The sins were derived from the eight evil thoughts as described by Greek monastic theologian Evagrius of Pontus, and the eight principal vices as described by St. John Cassian. The 8 thoughts of evil as described by Evagrius are: gluttony, fornication, love of money, discontent, anger, despondency, vainglory, and pride.

Book of Enoch The Book of Enoch refers to several ancient works attributed to Enoch, the great-grandfather of Noah. Though many scholars consider the books to be pseudepigraphal, various groups, including the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and the Essenes, regard parts or all of the books to be inspired Scripture. The currently known texts are usually dated to Maccabean times (ca. 160s BC).

Zoophilia - Psychological and research perspectives. DSM-III-R (APA, 1987) stated that sexual contact with animals is almost never a clinically significant problem by itself (Cerrone, 1991), and therefore both this and the later DSM-IV (APA, 1994) subsumed it under the residual classification "paraphilias not otherwise specified". The first detailed studies of zoophilia date from prior to 1910.

Backward satanic messages (backmasking) An alleged practice of certain evil people, especially rock musicians, of saying or singing words which, when listened to backward contain evil messages such as "My sweet Satan"* or "Kill yourself." Or they might contain messages such as "it's fun to smoke marijuana"* or "sleep with me, I'm not too young."* Of course, you probably won't hear these messages until somebody first points them out to you. Perception is influenced by expectation and expectation is affected by what others prime you for. Since most people do not listen to their music backward, the belief in such messages seems to be predicated upon one or two false notions. Either [1] the brain can be influenced subliminally by garbled words whose meaning is directly grasped by the subconscious or [2] the conscious mind translates clear speech into reverse speech where the "true" meaning is understood by the subconscious mind. In either case, the subconscious mind allegedly then directs the conscious mind to believe bad things or do bad deeds. There is no evidence that such mechanisms exist. The belief in the existence and efficacy of backward satanic messages probably derives from the ancient practice of mocking Christianity by saying prayers backward at the witch's Sabbath. The



belief is mainly popular among certain fundamentalist preachers who cannot look at anything without wondering how Satan is involved. Perception is heavily influenced by one's belief system. We not only see what we want to see and hear what we want to hear, we see what we expect to see. The Beatles used tapes played backward for musical effect in some of their recordings, though they allegedly put in backward or subliminal messages announcing Paul McCartney's death when he was much alive. Jimmy Page, guitarist and occultist, is said to have inserted the backward message "here's to my sweet Satan" into his "Stairway to Heaven" song. The former was clearly intentional; the latter is said to be accidental by many of those who have listened before being told what to listen for. One practical problem emerged with using this backhanded way to communicate: the only way to hear the messages is to destroy your record. Fortunately, the digital age arrived and eliminated that problem while creating another: now it is first-grade simple to find hidden messages in every kind of speech.

Cross Many people assume that the cross is a Christian symbol. Christians have indeed adopted the cross but its origins date back long before the Messiah was ever born. The cross can be dated back to ancient Babylon and the worship of the sun-gods Mithra and Tammuz. In fact the cross was not used by Christians until the fourth century after Emperor Constantine (a pagan sun-worshipper) had a vision of the cross in front of the sun.

Peter's cross - Satanists are not the brightest folks to begin with, but you would think they would check to see if a symbol already had a meaning before adopting it as their own. Satanist think if they invert a symbol, it will make it evil or if they spell something backwards it makes it cool. The fact is that this symbol has been known as Peter's Cross for the better part of two-thousand years. It is written and widely believed that Peter was crucified upside down by his own request.

ANKH - Also known as the Long Life Seal. While Christians try to say the ankh is not a cross, make no mistake about it, the ankh is indeed another rendering of a cross. This symbol originated in Egypt and symbolizes reincarnation. Egyptians were pagans and worshipped many gods like the sun-god Amen-Rah, and the pagan sun-trinity: Osiris, Isis and Horus. The ankh and the common cross were both used equally in ancient pagan sun-worship.



FISH SYMBOL - Also known as the Ichthys Symbol (Greek for fish). Another adaptation of a pagan symbol into Christianity. The fish was used worldwide as a religious symbol associated with the pagan "Great Mother Goddess." It was meant to represent the outline of her vulva. It is linked to the Age of Pisces and also has associations with the Hindu deity Vishnu but more so with Dagon the fish-god of the Philistines. The name Dagon is derived from dag which means fish. There have also been discoveries of the fish-god in sculptures found in Nineveh Assyria. Dagon is also found in the Scriptures (Judges 16:23-24; 1 Samuel 5:2-5).



TRIQUETRA SYMBOL - Another pagan symbol adopted by Christianity. This symbol used to symbolize the Christian trinity doctrine; the secretive sign of the Aquarian Conspirators; the symbol of the worshippers of the Black Madonna; the symbol plastered on the image of the face of holders of a coming, new universal smart card and we instantly recall that higher-level Masons worship a false god under the adulterous name, Jahbuhlun. The mark of Jahbuhlun is that of the Triquetra which is composed of three 6's, overlaid.

PROTECTION SYMBOL - Also known as the Ritual Circle. In the occult a circle always represents a boundary of power. If you see a symbol enclosed in a circle, more times than not it is a symbol of the occult. It is a common practice for those who claim to have outer body experiences to draw a circle around their bodies before leaving so that nothing else can enter it while they are away.

YIN-YANG symbol Together they are polar expressions of the martial art of t'ai-chi, and the eternal Tao in Chinese philosophy. Yin represents the moon, water and the earth. Yang represents the sun, fire and the heavens. More of the same song and dance but from another part of the world than the usual Babylonian paganism that we are so use to.

Earth symbol Also known as the sun cross, solar cross and as a Hopi medicine wheel. This is the symbol for mother earth in pagan religions such as wicca and other forms of witchcraft. the four sections sometimes represent the four seasons: Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter or the four elements of the earth: Air, Fire, Water, and Earth. I have actually seen this symbol on the Calvary Chapel down the street from my house.

Peace symbol - Also known as the Cross of Nero. Many people are not aware of the origins of this symbol or how it became to symbolize peace. This is the cross of Nero, a broken and inverted cross, enclosed in a circle which represents Nero's vision. Nero believed that there would be world peace without Christianity, thousands of Christians were martyred under the rule of Nero. This is what the "peace symbol" represents regardless of what it means to you.

Anarchy symbol Also known as the Circle-A. Many people do not give it much thought but the anarchy symbol is also of the occult. Enclosed in a circle is the letter A, which represents anarchy. Anarchy is the absence of all law and disobedience to any existing law. This is the nature of Satan our adversary who rebelled against our creator, "Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the law" is the one and law in the Satanic religion. When applied spiritually this doctrine is the doctrine of sin (I-John 3:4).

Gay symbol Also known as the Thaumaturgic Triangle. Ignorance is bliss amongst the homosexual community. The symbol they adopted to represent their sexual orientation has long been used by Satan worshippers to conjure demons from the bowels of hell. The triangle is used as a door and the circle as a boundary of power. Some Satanists admit doing away with the circle in hopes of being possessed.

Pentacle A real popular symbol used by many that dabble in the occult. Many pagans such as those who practice wicca and other forms of witchcraft wear the emblem as a pendant. Some

even go as far as placing them in all the rooms of their homes, especially during pagan holy days such as: Christmas, Easter, Father's Day, Mother's Day, New Years Day, Thanksgiving Day, Valentine's Day, and last but not least, Halloween.

Pentagram Another rendering of the popular symbol, only inverted. Today, the pentagram may be even more common than the upright pentacle. Satanists, a more sinister breed of the underworld usually wear this symbol as a pendant or use this symbol in satanic rituals. It is found at many sites where sacrifices and other rituals have taken place. It is also found as art work on many Satanic heavy metal albums such as Slayer.

Hexagram Another star enclosed in a circle and another popular symbol used by those who practice various forms of witchcraft. This symbol is not as popular with Satanist and may even be used exclusively by those practicing other forms of the occult such as wicca and other forms of witchcraft. Some people confuse this symbol with the Magen David.

Magen David Also known as Solomon's Seal or the Star of David. This symbol used by Yahweh's chosen race (Debarim/Deuteronomy 7:14) is often confused with the hexagram by those not familiar with symbology but the Magen David lacks the all too familiar circle associated with most other popular occultic symbols. Magen is the Hebrew word for shield, this is why it is sometimes called the Shield of David. Legend has it that King David's shield was shaped as such. It is more likely to be associated to King Solomon than with King David as the symbol appears on the handle of King Solomon's Sword. Some critics claim that the Magen David is the Star of Kiyyan (also: Kijun, Kiyuhn, Rephan, Remphan, or Rhemphan) warned of in Scripture (Amos 5:25-27 & Acts 7:43). I am not fully convinced of their claims for several reasons. If it were such a wicked symbol then why don't the pagans wear it, and why don't you see it being sold at Spencers? Every vile creature that walks the earth seems to wear either a cross or a crucifix around their neck but I have yet to see any, not even one of them who will come within ten feet of the Magen David.

Various meanings of "Satanism:" When people think of Christianity, Islam, Judaism, and many other religions, they have at least a general idea of what the religion involves. "Satanism" is an exception. In North America, many people use it as a general-purpose religious "snarl" word. Others consider a wide variety of beliefs and practices as Satanism.

Defining Satanists as followers of a Satanic religion: Most religious historians, mainline Christians, liberal Christians, etc., view Satanism as Satanists themselves do: as a very small religious group that is unrelated to any other faith, and whose members feel free to satisfy their urges responsibly, exhibit kindness to their friends, and attack their enemies. Some have suggested, tongue in cheek, that this form of Satanism is the official religion of the corporate boardroom. There are perhaps ten thousand Satanists in North America. By far the largest Satanic organization is the Church of Satan, founded by Anton LaVey. They generally regard themselves as strong Atheists, Agnostics, or Deists. Membership numbers are kept secret and are quite impossible to estimate.

Defining Satanists as followers of the Christian Satan: Theistic Satanists (a.k.a. spiritual Satanists, Devil worshippers) worship the Christian concept of Satan as an actual deity. 2 An invocation to Satan written by Diane Vera begins: "Satan, Lord of Darkness, King of Hell, Ruler of the Earth, God of this World!"

Defining Satanists as followers of a religion other than Conservative Protestantism:

Fundamentalist and other evangelical Christians generally believe that there are only two powerful supernatural forces in the world: their God and Satan. A few of them believe that if a person does not worship their God and hold their beliefs, then they must be worshipping Satan. The latter are, by definition, Satanists. Thus, they view all religions different from their own to be forms of Satanism. This would include established world religions from Buddhism to Zoroastrianism, and might even include liberal and some mainline Christians. Satanists would then make up in excess of 90% of the world's population -- i.e. everyone who is not a conservative Christian. Using this definition, the term "Satanism" becomes almost meaningless.

Defining all non-Christians as Satanists: Some feel that all non-Christian religions are forms of Satanism. This would imply that all Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims - in fact about 67% of the world's population are Satanists.

Defining all Non-Abrahamic religions as Satanists: Others feel that all religions other than three Abrahamic religions Judaism, Christianity and Islam, are inspired by Satan and are thus a form of Satanism. By this reasoning, about 45% of the people of the world are Satanists.

Defining followers of certain small religions as Satanists: Still others feel that the major world religions are not Satanism. However, they view a wide variety of unrelated religions and practices (such as Santeria, Vodun, other Caribbean religions, New Age, Druidism, Wicca, other Neopagan religions and religious Satanism) to be various forms of Satanism. They often include some non-religious groups and activities -- as varied as the Masonic order, the Occult, astrology, and tarot card reading -- within their definition of Satanism. There would be millions of Satanists in North America by this definition.

Historical beliefs about Gothic Satanism: The public's beliefs in past centuries about Satanism were largely based on religious propaganda. Both the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches in Western Europe and North America created an imaginary religion that has been called "Gothic Satanism." This belief system was originally circulated centuries ago during the "Burning Times" in order to justify the churches' extermination of what were believed to be Satan worshipping "Witches" and other heretics. The churches taught that Witches: These ideas were widely accepted among the public, starting circa 1450 CE. Some investigators believe that these beliefs about Satan worshipers in the late Middle Ages developed from theological debates about theodicy -- the philosophical and religious discussion of how evil can exist in a universe created and controlled by an omnipotent and omnibeneficent God. Others believe that the church wanted to exterminate any residual minority belief systems still in existence, and have exclusive control of the religious life of western Europe. The beliefs in the existence of profoundly evil Satan worshipers with magical powers had largely dissipated by 1792, when the last victim was executed in Western Europe. However, the concept of the evil Witch as a worshiper of Satan had entered into religious legends, fairy tales, children's stories, and more recently into Hollywood horror movies. A few of these beliefs were still regarded as accurate by a significant percentage of the public as late as 1995.

Aalu Alternatively Yaaru, Iaru, and Aaru. In Egyptian mythology, the word for Heaven, the Elysium, a place of ecstasy and delights where you go after dying, Paradise. According to Egyptian lore, when a person died, the deceased expected to appear before Osiris, who would be sitting upon his throne, waiting to pass judgment on him or her. The departed would be led in by the jackal-headed god Anubis, in his role as psychopomp ('conductor of souls'), followed by the goddess Isis, the divine enchantress, representing life, and the goddess of the underworld,

Nephthys, representing death. At the judgment hall there were also 42 divine judges, to assess the life of the one coming before them. The deceased would then be allowed to deny 42 misdeeds, one for each arbitrator. Thoth was the one prosecuting and recording the results.

Amon Also spelled Aamon. In demonology Amon is a Grand Marquis of Hell, a demon commanding forty infernal legions. He is the seventh of the 72 spirits of Goetia (see King Solomon). According to some descriptions, Amon vomited flames and had the head of a serpent with the body of a wolf (and vice-versa). Other demonologists described him as a man with a raven's head. He could discern the past and foretell the future, and supposedly reconciled friends and foes. He was also said to procure love.

Aaronic Order Also known as the Order of Aaron, it is an organization founded in 1942 by Maurice Glendenning in Murry, Utah, after he was excommunicated by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints for receiving and publishing revelations — supposedly directives conveyed by the angel Elias in 1937 — later known as the Levitical Writings. The Aaronic Order mission statement is "to participate in and hasten the preparation of the Body of Jesus Christ for His second coming." Their vision statement is "to restore the Biblical, Levitical ministry to its prophesied fullness in Jesus Christ and to reconcile individuals, families, and fellowships to their places in the Body of Christ."

Abacomancy Also known as Amathomancy (from the Greek amathos, for sand), it is the art and practice of foretelling future events by the observation of omens in patterns of dust (or in the dust), dirt, or sand. The precise origins and method for this mode of prognostication have been lost in time, but it is with certainty, like most divination techniques, quite ancient. In one of the forms of this type of divination, the diviner would use the ashes of the recently deceased. On the tenth night after the death of a person, he who fired the funeral pyre was required to sift some of the ashes, near which a lamp was placed. The whole was then covered with a basket. The next morning the ashes were examined, and the deceased ghost was said to have migrated into the animal whose mark appeared on the ashes.

Abaddon Also Apollyon, Appolyon and Appolion (Greek). Abaddon — literally meaning destruction, ruin or perdition — is the Hebrew name of the demon identified as the 'angel' of the bottomless pit, or the abyss, in Revelation, 9:11, who ties up the Devil for a millennium. Also known as 'The Destroyer', from his role as one of the destroying angels of the Apocalypse. In Job 26:6, and Proverbs 15:11, the word Abaddon arises in conjunction with Sheol. He is further identified as the Devil himself in the 3rd century Acts of Thomas, as well as in John Bunyan's Puritan classic, Pilgrim's Progress. Abaddon/Apollyon is the chief of the demons of the seventh hierarchy, the king of the grasshoppers, or demon locusts (described as having the bodies of winged war-horses, the faces of humans, and the poisonous curved tails of scorpions).

Abraxas Also Abracax, Abrasax, Abanathabla and Ablathanabla. A mystical word, probably of Gnostic or Kabbalistic origins, which conveys gematrically the number 365 and is connected with the solar cycle. The word is also associated with the highest Gnostic deity, represented by the image of a man with the head of a cock and serpents for feet, holding a shield and whip. The image is often found on ancient gems or stones of Basilidian origin, that were commonly used as amulets. These were inscribed with bizarre symbols and formulas and were called Abrasax as well. The Gnostics, a Basilidian sect of the 2nd century, claimed Abraxas as their supreme god, and said that Jesus Christ was only a phantom sent to earth by him. They believed that his name contained great mysteries, as it was composed of the seven Greek letters that formed the number 365, which is also number of days in a year. Abraxas, they thought, had under his command 365

gods, to whom they attributed 365 virtues, one for each day. "Abraxas represented the 365 Aeons or emanations from the First Cause, and as a Pantheus, i.e. All-God, he appears on the amulets with the head of a cock (Phoebus) or of a lion (Ra or Mithras), the body of a man, and his legs are serpents which terminate in scorpions, types of the Agathodaimon. In his right hand he grasps a club, or a flail, and in his left is a round or oval shield."

(E. A. Wallis Budge's *Amulets and Talismans*). Ancient mythologists placed Abraxas among the Egyptian gods. Abraxas was also the Persian sun god, and in Syria he was a form of Iao (aspect or name for Yahveh, Yahweh, or Jehovah). It is said that the name was created to replace the unmentionable name of the Supreme Being. Other occultists, mainly demonologists, thought of Abraxas as a demon, with similar appearance to the Gnostic god of the same name (the head of a king and serpents forming his feet, with a whip in his hand). It was very common for the gods and goddesses of pagan religions and heretic cults to be lessened to the status of demons by Christian writers. In fact, deities of heretic religions were the main source for Christian demons.

Abaris Said to be the teacher of Pythagoras, Abaris was a legendary magician, diviner and hermeticist of Scythia, an ancient culture on the north shore of the Black Sea. Abaris claimed to possess a golden arrow — the "dart of Abaris" — given to him by Apollo (Abaris was one of his priests), by means of which he could travel through the air and become invisible. Pythagoras stole — some accounts say that it was freely given — this arrow from him, and accomplished many wonderful feats by its aid. Abaris was also said to have lived without eating or drinking, besides foretelling the future, pacifying storms and banishing disease. With the help of Apollo, Abaris fled from Scythia to Greece, apparently to evade a deadly plague. In fact, in apocryphal legends, he is said to have visited Greece several times around 770 BC. Abaris was mentioned by several Greek celebrities, including Plato (in connection with the "Thracian" physicians, which he insisted knew the secrets of immortality and cured all disease with incantations, ointments and plants), Herodotus and Pindar. He was surnamed 'the Hyperborean'. Later neoplatonists, including Porphyry and Iamblichus Chalcidensis, also wrote about Abaris. According to other legends, with the bones of Pelops Abaris made a statue of Minerva, which he sold to the Trojans as a talisman descended from heaven. This was the famous Palladium, which protected and rendered impregnable the town wherein it was lodged. A temple to Persephone at Sparta was also attributed to Abaris by Pausanias. Suidas as well credits Abaris with several works: Scythian oracles, the visit of Apollo to the Hyperboreans, expiatory formulas and a prose theogony.

Abatwa In African folklore, a legendary little people from the southern regions, supposedly the tiniest living things in human form, being a mere 5mm tall. A Zulu spirit species, they are clan-like creatures said to be so small they hide under blades of grass and sometimes sleep in anthills. They are also said to be seen riding the ants themselves at times. According to myth, the Abatwa live in the mountains and hills, but are nomadic hunters, having no central village. They follow the game, greedily eat their kill in its entirety, and then move on. When out on a hunt, or traveling to distant lands, they ride horses, usually the entire group upon a single animal, sitting from the neck to the tail, one behind another. If they fail to make a kill, they will devour their communal horse. Although the Abatwa is thought to like aiding humans by giving good advice, they are said to be very shy, sighted only by the very young children, magic wielders, and pregnant women. If a woman in her seventh month of pregnancy happens to see a male Abatwa, it is a definite omen that she will give birth to a boy. If a person sees and talks to an Abatwa, they better be very careful to pretend that they are of the same size, because even though they are a peaceful race, if offended they might shoot the human with tiny, but deadly, poison arrows. In real life, the Abatwa are an aboriginal African people also known as Twa, Bushmen or Bosjesmans, whom are thought to be the primordial inhabitants of Burundi and Rwanda.

Abduscus In demonology, an obscure nature demon whose main duty was to uproot large trees and use them to crush any unfortunate human being that crossed his path. In Judaism it was believed that demons inhabited desert wastes, ruins, and graves and inflicted physical and spiritual disorders on humankind.

Almas Also Almasty, Almati and Albasty. Strange hominid creatures allegedly resembling Neanderthal man that reportedly live in the Caucasus and Pamir Mountains of central Asia, in the area of the republic of Kazakhstan, and the Altai Mountains of southern Mongolia. Mainstream science considers the Almas to be an entirely legendary creature. However, in the Caucasus, Almas (which in the Mongolian language means 'wildman') are well known by the local people, who tell numerous stories of an apparent familiarity between humans and these creatures. Eyewitness accounts dating back hundreds of years describe Almas communicating with humans by means of gestures and their ability to make stone tools. There are even stories of Almas bartering food for trinkets.

Aborigines Tribal or ethnic groups that have lived without migrating for many thousands of years. Aboriginal peoples lived in areas remote from other cultures, and their existence became known to the rest of the world only when outsiders intruded upon their territories. By virtue of their name, the Australian aborigines are probably the best known of aboriginal societies. It is believed that they came from somewhere in Asia more than 40,000 years ago. At the time of the first European settlement about 200 years ago, the aboriginals occupied all of Australia and the island of Tasmania. The estimate of the 18th-century population was at least 300,000, comprising more than 500 tribes speaking about 200 different languages or dialects. About 50 of these dialects are now extinct. Contact with European settlers was catastrophic to the aboriginal population, bringing economic marginalization, a loss of political autonomy, and death by disease. The so-called 'pacification' led to massive depopulation and extinction for some groups. By the 1940s almost all aborigines were assimilated into rural and urban Australian society as low-paid laborers with restricted rights; many aborigine children were taken from their natural parents and given to foster parents to promote integration. In the 1980s there were about 230,000 aboriginals. Of these, only a fourth were pure aborigines still pursuing the traditional semi-nomadic life of hunter-gatherers and following a seasonal, cyclical calendar. Another fourth lived in big cities. The remainder lived in rural areas.

Abacadabra Also spelled Abrakadabra and Abrahadabra. A word with many ties to the occult and the ancient world of Mythology, Numerology, Kabbalism, Magic, Witchcraft, the Gnostics and folkloric medicine; possibly derived from the initials of the Hebraic words Ab, Ben and ruach a Cadesch ('Father, Son and Holy Ghost'). The term has been used for Kabbalistic charms, magical connotations in Gnostic writings, and it could also be related to the Greek word Abraxas, which also happens to be the name of the supreme deity of the ancient Assyrians. It often appeared on amulets, and it is said to have been used by ancient Jewish physicians to cure fevers and certain ailments. The first written record of the word is by the 3rd-century physician Quintus Severus Sammonicus, a Gnostic physician to Roman Emperor Septimius Severus. Sammonicus used the word as a 'shrinking formula' to treat tertian fever, asthma and agues. Abacadabra is often used by stage magicians and conjurers during the performance and culmination of tricks, and by conjuretors to invoke and banish certain spirits.

Vasitri Alternatively known as Salvaje, Achi, and Aigypan. Allegedly, another mysterious primate from South America, this time from the Venezuelan jungles and the Colombian Andes. The Vasitri are described as wild men-like hairy creatures that, according to the local

Amerindians, construct primitive huts and crude weapons. These beings are said to be extremely dangerous, ill-tempered and carnivorous, eating men but carrying off women for breeding purposes. At the banks of the Upper Orinoco, at the valley of Upar near the lake of Maracaybo, at the mountains of Santa Martha and of Merida, at the provinces of Quixos, and at the banks of the Amazon near Tomependa, belief in these creatures is prevalent, particularly among the native peoples. In all these places, so distant one from the other, it is asserted that the Salvaje is easily recognized by the traces of its feet, the toes of which are turned backward. But if there really exists a hominid, monkey or ape of large size in the New Continent, how has it happened that for three centuries no man worthy of belief has been able to procure the skin or the carcass of one? A mystery indeed.

"Satanism", is the worship and imitation of the biblical Satan or Lucifer. It is the antithesis of Judaism and Christianity. Satan is referred as the brother of Christ, the one who was cast out of heaven, and whom the Satanists worship. Condemned by the Bible and the Church, see The Occult. The "emblem", is a pentagram, like the one of witchcraft, but inverted, with the face of Satan on it. It is not witchcraft, although in practice the edges of Satanism and Witchcraft are blurred. The "credo", is summed up in "do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law", coined by Crowley in "The Book of the Law". There are two kinds of Satanism: 1- Those who believe that Satan exists and is a powerful force... with animals and children sacrificed to worship him and get his favors, and the Black Mass as the main rite. 2- Those who believe that Satan does not exist, but it is merely the symbol or personification of fleshy human desires and appetites... and they try to imitate it, with all kind of sins, pleasures and selfishness, lying, stealing, killing... Categories of Satanists: 1- Group secretive Satanists: They believe that Satan really exists. - The "Traditional", hate Christianity, celebrate the Black Mass, in the cup they drink blood of a sacrificial animal or human, to mimic the Mass. - "Nontraditional", from Neo-Platonism, Eastern Mysticism, and Islam, or off-shots of the Kabbalah, Theosophy, Rosicrucianism, Freemasonry... the "blood" they drink is not necessarily a parody of the Catholic Mass, but to partake of the "fire energy" that blood provides. 2- Public Church Satanists: No secret, hold worship services open to the public, based mostly on the writings of Anton LaVey's "Satanic Bible", and they believe that Satan is a symbolic force: The Church of Satan of LaVey, Temple of Set. The Church of Thelema of Crowley, the Order of the Golden Dawn, and derivations of the Ordo Templi Orientis (OTO), may also be included in this category. 3- Youth Gang Satanists, that may or may not believe that Satan exists: "Dabblers" who see Satanism as a symbol of rebellion against any authority. For most, interest in Satanism is a passing fad influenced by drugs, sex, and rock-and-roll, but with serious consequences, like in the spectacular case of Charles Mason, or Andrew Newell who stabbed his mate to death, or Peter McKenzie who sexually abused 13 children. 4- Individual Satanists, often disturbed individuals, neurotic or psychotic, like most Satanists!.

Fetish A Portuguese word meaning "enchantment", is an object or potion or writing given by a witch with false magic powers.

Talisman An Arabic word, "tilsman", meaning "magnet of power", is an object held to have magical or protective powers: A rock, a crystal, a metal, a doll, a cloth... a ring, a bracelet, a chain... throw them away!... Trust in Jesus!... get a crucifix... the rings, bracelets, and colors of Astrology honor Satan... those wore just for adornment or therapy have nothing to do with this.

Amulet An Arabic word, "hamelet", which means "hanging": It is like a talisman against evil or injury, or for good luck: A medal with a chain around the neck, a stone hanging in the neck, a pendent... the difference between an "Amulet" and a "Christian Medal", is that the Amulet

honors Satan and his Demons, placing the trust in them, while the Christian Medal honors God and his Saints, placing the trust in them.

Char A small ornament worn on a chain or bracelet. When worn for its purported magical or luck effects, they are of Satan, like any amulet or talisman.

Superstition It is a believe, practice, or rite, that is maintained despite evidence that it is unfounded or irrational... we all know about them... forget them!, don't place your life on an irrational chance or magic, place it in the hands of the real God... trust in God!

Potions, "Spells", "Curses", "Magic Prayers. A "Christian Prayer" is more powerful than all the prayers of the Witches and Satanists and Santeros put together, because a Christian Prayer has the power of God, who is a million times more powerful and wise than Satan, in whom the prayers of the Witches and Satanists and Santeros are based... and if someone places a "curse" on you, don't be afraid, just an Our Father, or a Hail Mary is more powerful than all the curses put together!... they can't even touch you!... you just live in the "grace of God", not in "sin"!...

Velaciones "Vela" means "candle"; the client is placed on the floor surrounded by candles to keep vigil over him until the candles extinguish, while praying or making curses.

Despojos and "Riegos", are the work of Santeria: **The "Despojos",** are baths taken daily with herbs given by the Santero after using the snail shells divination. The **"Riegos",** is to fill the home with smoke and odors from incense to cast out curses or any bad influence on the home.

Aberration a departure from rational thought or behavior. It means basically to err, to make mistakes, or more specifically to have fixed ideas which are not true. The word is also used in its scientific sense. It means departure from a straight line. If a line should go from A to B, then if it is *aberrated* it would go from A to some other point, to some other point, to some other point, to some other point, to some other point, and finally arrive at B. Taken in this sense, it would also mean the lack of straightness or to see crookedly as, for example, a man sees a horse but thinks he sees an elephant. Aberrated conduct would be wrong conduct, or conduct not supported by reason. When a person has engrams, these tend to deflect what would be his normal ability to perceive truth and bring about an aberrated view of situations which then would cause an aberrated reaction to them. *Aberration* is opposed to sanity, which would be its opposite. From the Latin, *aberrare*, to wander from; Latin, *ab*, away, *errare*, to wander.

ABLE an acronym for Association for Better Living and Education International.

Action phrases word phrases contained as part of the content of engrams which dictate some type of "action" in the mind.

Affinity the degree of liking or affection or lack of it. It is the feeling of love or liking for something or someone.

Affinity-reality-communication (ARC) triangle a triangle which is a symbol of the fact that *affinity*, *reality* and *communication* act together to bring about understanding. No point of the triangle can be raised without also raising the other two points, and no point of it can be lowered without also lowering the other two points.

Analytical mind that part of the mind which one consciously uses and is aware of. It is the portion of the mind which thinks, observes data, remembers it and resolves problems.

Antisocial personality a person who possesses a distinct set of characteristics and mental attitudes that cause him to suppress other people in his vicinity. This is the person whose behavior is calculated to be disastrous. Also called *suppressive person*.

AO abbreviation for Advanced Organization.

Apparency something that seems to be, that appears to be a certain way; something that *appears* to be but is different from the way it looks. In Dianetics and Scientology *apparency* is used to mean something that looks one way but is, in actual fact, something else. For example, a person “gives an *apparency* of health,” whereas he is actually sick. From the Latin, *apparere*, to appear.

Applied religious philosophy: having to do with doing and action. Applying to living — not just a theory, but one where the theory can be used to help you get on better in life. Implies study of spiritual manifestations; research on the nature of the spirit and study on the relationship of the spirit to the body.

ARC: a word coined from the initial letters of *affinity*, *reality* and *communication*.

ARC break: a sudden drop or cutting of *affinity*, *reality* or *communication* with someone or something. Upsets with people or things (ARC breaks) come about because of a lessening or sundering of *affinity*, *reality* or *communication* or understanding. Scientologists usually use the term *ARC break* instead of *upset*, because if one discovers which of the three points of understanding have been cut, one can bring about a rapid recovery in the person’s state of mind.

Assessment: an auditing technique which helps to isolate specific areas or subjects on which a preclear has charge so that they can be addressed in auditing.

Auditing: Scientology counseling, taken from the Latin word *audire* which means “to hear or listen.” Auditing is a very unique form of personal counseling which helps an individual look at his own existence and improves his ability to confront what he is and where he is.

Auditing by List: a technique used in certain auditing procedures.

Auditor: a minister or minister-in-training of the Church of Scientology. *Auditor* means one who listens, from the Latin *audire* meaning “to hear or listen.” An auditor is a person trained and qualified in applying auditing to individuals for their betterment. An auditor does not do anything *to* a preclear, he works together with the preclear to help the preclear defeat his reactive mind.

Beingness: the assumption or choosing of a category of identity. Beingness can be assumed by oneself or given to oneself or attained. Examples of beingness would be one’s own name, one’s profession, one’s physical characteristics, one’s role in a game – each or all of these could be called one’s beingness.

Book One: a colloquial term for the first book published on the subject of Dianetics, *Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health*. A *Book One Auditor* is someone who knows the data in this book and uses it to audit others.

Case: a general term for a person being treated or helped. It is also used to mean the entire accumulation of upsets, pain, failures, etc., residing in a preclear's reactive mind.

Case gains: the improvements and resurgences a person experiences from auditing; any case betterment according to the preclear.

Case Supervisor: a highly trained auditor who is also trained in the technology of supervising auditing. The Case Supervisor reviews all auditing sessions done by auditors under his charge. His purpose is to see that the technology is standardly applied for the greatest possible benefit for the preclear.

CCHR: abbreviation for Citizens Commission on Human Rights.

Charge: harmful energy or force contained in mental image pictures of experiences painful or upsetting to the person, which is handled in auditing.

Claims Verification Board: an official group within the Church of Scientology which facilitates refund requests.

Clay Table Processing: a particular process used in certain types of auditing.

Clear: a highly desirable state for the individual, achieved through auditing, which was never attainable before Dianetics. A Clear is a person who no longer has his own reactive mind and therefore suffers none of the ill effects that the reactive mind can cause. The Clear has no engrams which, when restimulated, throw out the correctness of his computations by entering hidden and false data.

Control: the ability to start, change and stop something. One is successful in his life to the degree that he can start or change or stop the things and people within his environment. For example, a driver who cannot exert control over a car by making it start, move about and stop when he wants it to is quite likely to have accidents. A person who *can* control a car, on the other hand, will be able to arrive where he intends to.

Counter-effort: an effort of something or someone in a person's environment against that person.

C/S: abbreviation for Case Supervisor. Also used to designate a Case Supervisor direction of what to audit on a preclear (as in "he was given a new C/S"), or the giving of such a direction by the Case Supervisor (as in "the preclear was C/Sed for his next action"). *See also Case Supervisor* in this glossary.

CSI: abbreviation for Church of Scientology International.

Data Series: a series of policy letters written by L. Ron Hubbard which deal with logic, illogic,

proper evaluation of data and how to detect and handle the causes of good and bad situations within groups and organizations.

Determinism: the ability to direct or determine the actions of someone or something. Thus something done “on one’s own determinism” would be caused by the person himself, not by a force exterior to him.

Dianetics: comes from the Greek words *dia*, meaning “through” and *nous*, meaning “soul.” Dianetics is a methodology developed by L. Ron Hubbard which can help alleviate unwanted sensations and emotions, irrational fears and psychosomatic illnesses. It is most accurately described as *what the soul is doing to the body through the mind*.

Dramatization: the acting out of an engram in its entirety or in part by an aberrated person in his current environment. Aberrated conduct is entirely dramatization. For example, a woman receives an engram in which she is kicked in the side and told that she is no good, that she is always changing her mind. At some time in the future, this engram could be reactivated and the woman might experience a pain in her side, feel that she is no good or get the idea that she is always changing her mind. This would be a dramatization of the engram.

Dwindling spiral: a condition characterized by continuous worsening, decreasing or shrinking.

Dynamics: the eight urges, drives or impulses of life.

E-Meter: short for *Electropsychometer*, a specially designed instrument which helps the auditor and preclear locate areas of spiritual distress or travail. The E-Meter is a religious artifact and can only be used by Scientology ministers or ministers-in-training. It does not diagnose or cure anything. It measures the mental state or change of state of a person and thus is of benefit to the auditor in helping the preclear locate areas to be handled.

Engram: a recording made by the reactive mind when a person is “unconscious.” An engram is not a memory – it is a particular type of mental image picture which is a complete recording, down to the last accurate detail, of every perception present in a moment of partial or full “unconsciousness.”

Enturbulence: turbulence or agitation and disturbance.

Est Repair Rundown: an auditing action designed to repair the damage done to a person mentally and spiritually by the practice of est (Erhard Seminars Training). Est was an offbeat group which used destructive techniques, and some people new to Scientology are found to have been previously involved with est. It is necessary to undo the harmful effects of est before such persons can make adequate progress in Scientology auditing.

Exteriorization: the state of the thetan being outside his body with or without full perception, but still able to control and handle the body. When a person goes exterior, he achieves a certainty that he is himself and not his body.

Floating needle: a rhythmic sweep of the needle on an E-Meter dial at a slow, even pace, back

and forth, back and forth. A floating needle means that the charge on a subject being audited has dissipated, and is one of the indications of a process being complete.

FSO: abbreviation for Flag Service Organization.

FSSO: abbreviation for Flag Ship Service Organization.

Genetic entity: a term coined in early Dianetics research to denote that part of a human being which takes care of the automatic mechanisms of the body, such as heartbeat, respiration, etc.

Gradient: a gradual approach to something, taken step by step, so that, finally, quite complicated and difficult activities or concepts can be achieved with relative ease.

Grant beingness: to let someone else be what he is. Listening to what someone has to say and taking care to understand them, being courteous, refraining from needless criticism, expressing admiration or affinity are examples of the actions of someone who can grant others beingness.

HASI: an acronym for Hubbard Association of Scientologists International.

Hat: a Scientology slang term for a particular job, taken from the fact that in many professions, such as railroading, the type of hat worn is the badge of the job. The term *hat* is also used to describe the write-ups, checksheets and packs that outline the purposes, know-how and duties of a job in a Scientology organization.

Hatting: the training given to a person so that he or she can successfully perform the functions and produce the products of a specific job, duty or activity. *See also hat* in this glossary.

Havingness: the concept of being able to reach. By *havingness* we mean owning, possessing, being capable of commanding, taking charge of objects, energies and spaces. Specific processes exist in Scientology to help a preclear increase his havingness, and these are appropriately called Havingness Processes.

HCO: abbreviation for Hubbard Communications Office.

HGC: abbreviation for Hubbard Guidance Center.

Hubbard Consultant Outpoint-Pluspoint List: a list of illogics (outpoints) and logics (pluspoints) used in an auditing process to help the preclear locate and handle illogical thinking in the area being addressed.

IAS: abbreviation for International Association of Scientologists.

I HELP: an acronym for *International Hubbard Ecclesiastical League of Pastors*.

Int: short for *interiorization*, the action of going into something too fixedly and becoming part of it too fixedly. *Int* is also used to refer to the auditing procedure which handles the adverse mental and spiritual effects of interiorization.

Invalidate: refute, degrade, discredit or deny something someone else considers to be fact.

Knowledge-responsibility-control (KRC) triangle: a triangle which is a symbol of the fact that *knowledge*, *responsibility* and *control* act together as a whole entity. In order to handle any area of one's life, it is necessary to *know* something about it, take some *responsibility* for it and *control* it to the degree necessary to achieve the desired result. This triangle interacts best when used with high ARC, thus it interlocks with the ARC triangle. *See also* **affinity-reality-communication (ARC) triangle** and *control* in this glossary.

Listing and Nulling: a specialized technique used in certain auditing processes.

Lock: a mental image picture of an experience where one was knowingly or unknowingly reminded of an engram. It does not itself contain a blow or a burn or impact and is not any major cause of upset. It does not contain unconsciousness. It may contain a feeling of pain or illness, etc., but is not itself the source of it. For example, a person sees a cake and feels sick. This is a lock on an engram of being made sick by eating cake. The picture of seeing a cake and feeling sick is a lock on (is locked to) the incident (unseen at the moment) of getting sick eating cake.

Mental image pictures: three-dimensional pictures which are continuously made by the mind, moment by moment, containing color, sound and smell, as well as other perceptions. They also include the conclusions or speculations of the individual. Mental image pictures are composed of energy, have mass, exist in space and follow definite routines of behavior, the most interesting of which is the fact that they appear when somebody thinks of something.

Mest: a word coined from the initial letters of *matter*, *energy*, *space* and *time*, which are the component parts (elements) of the physical universe.

Meter: short for *E-Meter*. *See* **E-Meter** in this glossary.

Missed withhold: a withhold which has *almost* been found out by another, that leaves the person who has the withhold in a state of wondering whether or not his hidden deed is known. *See also* **withhold** in this glossary.

NCLE: abbreviation for *National Commission on Law Enforcement and Social Justice*.

NED: an acronym for *New Era Dianetics*.

New Era Dianetics for OTs (NOTs): a series of auditing actions, delivered as part of the OT levels, developed by L. Ron Hubbard during his research into *New Era Dianetics* in the late 1970s.

NOTs: an acronym for *New Era Dianetics for OTs*. *See* **New Era Dianetics for OTs (NOTs)** in this glossary.

Objectives: short for *Objective Processing*, an auditing action which helps a person to look or place his attention outward from himself.

OCA: abbreviation for Oxford Capacity Analysis.

Operating Thetan: a state of being above Clear, in which the Clear has become refamiliarized with his native capabilities.

Organizing board: a pattern of organization which expresses every function a Scientology church needs to attend to in order to minister to its congregation.

OSA: an acronym for Office of Special Affairs.

OT: abbreviation for *Operating Thetan*. See **Operating Thetan** in this glossary.

Overrun: continue an auditing process or a series of processes past the point of completion.

Overt: a harmful act or a transgression against the moral code of a group. When a person does something that is contrary to the moral code he has agreed to, or when he omits to do something that he should have done per that moral code, he has committed an overt. An overt violates what was agreed upon. An overt can be intentional or unintentional.

Pan-determined: able to view both sides. Pan-determinism is *across* determinism or determinism of two sides. If a person were playing both sides of a chess game, he would be exercising pan-determinism. See also **determinism** in this glossary.

PDH: abbreviation for *pain-drug-hypnosis*, a behavioral modification technique used by military and intelligence services in which pain, drugs or hypnosis, or any combination of these, are administered to drive an individual into a state whereby he can be given suggestions or commands subconsciously. Dianetics auditing can undo the effects of PDH. For more information.

Perceptic: any sense message such as sight, sound, smell, etc.

Postulate: a conclusion, decision or resolution made by the individual himself to resolve a problem or to set a pattern for the future or to nullify a pattern of the past. For example, a person says, "I like Model T Fords. I am never going to drive another car." Years later, no longer consciously aware of this postulate, he will wonder why he is having so much trouble with his Buick; it's because he has made an earlier promise to himself. In order to change he has to change that postulate.

Potential trouble source: a person who is in some way connected to and being adversely affected by a suppressive person. Such a person is called a *potential* trouble source because he can be a lot of trouble to himself and to others. See also **suppressive person** in this glossary.

Preclear: a person who is receiving Scientology or Dianetics auditing on his way to becoming Clear, hence pre-Clear. Through auditing he is finding out more about himself and life.

Process: an exact set of questions asked or directions given by an auditor to help a person locate areas of spiritual distress, find out things about himself and improve his condition.

Processing: another word for *auditing*. See **auditing** in this glossary.

PTS: abbreviation for potential trouble source. See **potential trouble source** in this glossary.

Qual: short for *Qualifications Division*.

RD: abbreviation for *rundown*. See *rundown* in this glossary.

Reactive mind: that part of the mind which works on a totally stimulus-response basis, which is not under a person's volitional control, and which exerts force and the power of command over his awareness, purposes, thoughts, body and actions.

Reality: that which appears to be. Reality is fundamentally agreement — what we agree to be real is real.

Rehab: short for *rehabilitation*, an auditing action which is used to help a person regain a former ability, state of being or more optimum condition which has been discredited, denied or suppressed.

Restimulation: the “awakening” of an old engram, which occurs when a person's present environment contains enough similarities to the elements found in the engram to cause a reactivation of it. When an engram is restimulated, a person can experience similar pains and emotions to those contained in the original incident.

R6EW: the designation for the auditing process used on Grade VI.

RTC: abbreviation for *Religious Technology Center*.

Rundown: a series of related actions in Scientology which culminate in a specific end result. For example, the Drug Rundown consists of several different auditing processes and actions which, done fully and in sequence, result in the freeing of a person from the mental and spiritual effects of drugs.

Scientology: comes from the Latin *scio*, which means “know” and the Greek word *logos*, meaning “the word or outward form by which the inward thought is expressed and made known.” Thus, Scientology means knowing about knowing. Scientology is an applied religious philosophy developed by L. Ron Hubbard. It is the study and handling of the spirit in relationship to itself, universes and other life.

Sea Org: short for *Sea Organization*.

Self-determinism: the condition of determining the actions of self; the ability to direct oneself. See also **determinism** in this glossary.

Service facsimile: a consideration that one must be consistently in a certain state in order to survive. This consideration will cause the individual to deliberately hold in restimulation selected parts of his reactive mind to explain his failures in life. For example, a person may keep an old injury in restimulation so that his family has to look after him.

SHSBC: abbreviation for *Saint Hill Special Briefing Course*.

SMI: an acronym for *Scientology Missions International*.

SP: abbreviation for *suppressive person*. See **suppressive person** in this glossary.

Stable terminal: someone who is reliable, responsible and who can be depended upon to competently perform the duties of his job.

Standard memory banks: recordings in the analytical mind of everything perceived throughout the lifetime up to the present by the individual except painful emotion and physical pain, which are recorded in the reactive mind.

Suppressive person: a person who possesses a distinct set of characteristics and mental attitudes that cause him to suppress other people in his vicinity. This is the person whose behavior is calculated to be disastrous. Also called *antisocial personality*.

Theta: energy peculiar to life which acts upon material in the physical universe and animates it, mobilizes it and changes it; natural creative energy of a being which he is free to direct toward survival goals. The term comes from the Greek letter *theta* (Θ), which the Greeks used to represent *thought*.

Thetan: an immortal spiritual being; the human soul. The term soul is not used because it has developed so many other meanings from use in other religions and practices that it doesn't describe precisely what was discovered in Scientology. We use the term *thetan* instead, from the Greek letter *theta* (Θ), the traditional symbol for thought or life. One does not *have* a thetan, something one keeps somewhere apart from oneself; one *is* a thetan. The thetan is the person himself, not his body or his name or the physical universe, his mind or anything else. It is that which is aware of being aware; the identity which IS the individual.

Time track: the consecutive record of mental image pictures which accumulates through a person's life. It is a very accurate record of a person's past. As a rough analogy, the time track could be likened to a motion-picture film — if that film were three-dimensional, had fifty-seven perceptions and could fully react upon the observer.

TRs: abbreviation for *training routines*, practical drills which can greatly increase a student's ability in essential auditing skills, such as communication.

Unmock: become nothing, disappear, cease to exist.

Whole track: the whole span of the time track. See also **time track** in this glossary.

WISE: an acronym for *World Institute of Scientology Enterprises*.

Withhold: an overt a person has committed but is not talking about; an unspoken, unannounced transgression against a moral code by which a person was bound. Any withhold comes *after* an overt. *See also overt* in this glossary.

WW: abbreviation for Worldwide – the worldwide headquarters of the Church of Scientology at Saint Hill, where management was located until the early 1970s.

Baptism: The first of the seven sacraments, and the “door” which gives access to the other sacraments. Baptism is the first and chief sacrament of forgiveness of sins because it unites us with Christ, who died for our sins and rose for our justification. Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist constitute the “sacraments of initiation” by which a believer receives the remission of original and personal sin, begins a new life in Christ and the Holy Spirit, and is incorporated into the Church, the body of Christ. The rite of Baptism consists in immersing the candidate in water or pouring water on the head while pronouncing the invocation of the Holy Trinity: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Book of the Elect: The book the catechumens for election are to sign for the Enrollment of Names in the Rite of Election. In the Diocese of Richmond, this is done at the parish Rite of Sending just prior to the Rite of Election. Godparents may sign the book, and the name of the bishop is inscribed as well. Candidates do NOT sign the Book of the Elect.

Candidate: One who is already baptized in another Christian tradition and who is now preparing to be received into the full communion of the Catholic Church. At the time of full reception, he or she will make a profession of faith, be confirmed, and receive Eucharist. In the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, “candidate” is also used for those participating in the pre-catechumenate (baptized and unbaptized). It is also used for an uncatechized Catholic who has received neither Confirmation nor Eucharist.

Catechesis: Catechesis is the process of transmitting the Gospel, as the Christian community has received it, understands it, celebrates it, lives it and communicates it in many ways. Catechesis (Greek “to echo the teaching”) is an interactive process in which the Word of God re-sounds between and among the proclaimer, the one receiving the message, and the Holy Spirit! It is a life-long process of initial conversion, formation, education, and on-going conversion. Through word, worship, service and community, it seeks to lead all God's people to an ever deepening relationship with God who reveals himself in Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Catechumen: An unbaptized person who has entered the order of catechumens in the Church through celebration of the Right of Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens. Catechumens are preparing for full initiation at the Easter Vigil through Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist.

Catechumenate: Second period of Christian initiation of adults and children, which involves intense preparation in word, worship, community life, and apostolic works. This should last at least one year, so as to experience a full liturgical year.

Chrism: Oil mixed with balsam and consecrated by the bishop, used to anoint newly baptized persons and newly ordained priests and bishops. Sacred Chrism is also used in the consecration of churches and altars.

Confirmation: One of the ensemble of the Sacraments of Initiation into the Church, together with Baptism and Eucharist. Confirmation completes the grace of Baptism by a special outpouring of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which seal or “confirm” the baptized in union with Christ and equip them for active participation in the worship and apostolic life of the Church.

Doctrine: The formal teachings of the Church.

Easter Season: A period of seven weeks beginning with Easter Sunday and ending with the feast of Pentecost.

Elect: The name given to catechumens who celebrate the Rite of Election on the First Sunday of Lent, signifying their being chosen by God for the initiation sacraments.

Election: The process of selecting those catechumens who are considered ready to take part in the next celebration of the sacraments of initiation. The celebration of the Rite of Election takes place the first Sunday of Lent. The bishop declares in the name of the Church that these catechumens are ready and chosen for the sacraments at Easter. The Book of the Elect is presented to the bishop at this celebration.

Enlightenment: The period of Lent during which the elect are involved in the final stage of preparation for celebrating the rites of initiation. (also called illumination and purification)

Enrollment: The rite of enrolling into the Book of the Elect the names of those catechumens to be elected to celebrate the sacraments of initiation at the next Easter Vigil. While an essential part of the Rite of Election, the actual inscription may take place at the parish Rite of Sending.

Eucharist: The ritual, sacramental action of thanksgiving to God which constitutes the principal Christian liturgical celebration of and communion in the paschal mystery of Christ. The liturgical action called the Eucharist is also traditionally known as the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. It is one of the seven sacraments of the Church; the Holy Eucharist completes Christian initiation. The Sunday celebration of the Eucharist is at the heart of the Church’s life. (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*)

Evangelization: The proclamation of Christ and his gospel (Greek: *evangelion*) by word and the testimony of life, in fulfillment of Christ’s command. In the context of the initiation of adults, evangelization is the task of the church during the pre-catechumenate. It involves the inviting, welcoming, witness, and sharing of faith and the proclamation of the Gospel to inquirers/candidates.

Exorcisms: Prayers for the deliverance from the powers of evil and falsehood, and for the reception of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which are part of the Rites of Scrutiny. (See RCIA #90-94)

Fasting: This is a form of sacrifice by which faithful Christians join themselves to the suffering and death of Jesus by foregoing food for a specific period of time. On Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, Catholics are obliged to fast in a modified way.

Godparent: The sponsor of one who is to be baptized, who assumes a lifelong responsibility to assist the newly-baptized –child or adult – on the road to the Christian life. During the RCIA

process the role is assumed at the Rite of Election. The requirement is that one must be fully initiated, over 16 years of age, and not a parent.

Immersion: Baptism in which the person is partially or entirely submerged in the baptismal waters.

Infusion: Baptism by pouring water over the head of the person.

Initiation: The extended process by which a person enters the faith life of the Church and celebrates the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist.

Inquirers: Those who participate in the pre-catechumenate of a parish. They are “inquiring” into Christianity in the Catholic Tradition.

Lectionary: The book containing the assigned Scripture readings of the liturgical calendar for the celebration of the Eucharist and the other sacraments.

Lent: A six-week period extending from Ash Wednesday to sundown on Holy Thursday. It is a retreat time for the Church in preparation for the Easter Triduum.

Minor Rites: Rites during the period of the catechumenate which includes exorcisms, blessings, and anointings.

Mystagogy: The fourth and final period of Christian initiation of adults, which is from Easter to Pentecost. The U.S. National Statutes envision an extended mystagogy for one year. This centers on catechesis and the meaning and experience of the mysteries of baptismal faith.

National Statutes of the United States: Particular law for the implementation of the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* in the United States approved by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. Located in the back of the book of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults.

Neophyte: One who has been fully initiated at the Easter Vigil. The term comes from the Greek word meaning new plant, as in a new sprout on a limb/branch. The newly baptized person in the final period of Christian initiation: mystagogy.

Ninety Days: A term used to mean the combination of the Period of Purification and Enlightenment and the Period of Mystagogy which corresponds with Lent (40 days) and the Easter Season (50 days).

Oil of Catechumens (OC): Oil blessed by the bishop at the Chrism mass; may be used often in anointing catechumens as a sign of their need for and God’s offer of strength in overcoming difficulties in the faith. Done by a priest or deacon.

Penitential Rite: Celebration for candidates, similar to Rite of Scrutiny, usually celebrated on the 2nd Sunday of Lent, or 4 weeks prior to the Rite of Reception.

Periods (stages): Times of growth in the initiation process: (1) Inquiry or pre-catechumenate; (2) Catechumenate; (3) Purification and enlightenment; (4) Mystagogy.

Pre-catechumenate: First period of the Christian initiation of adults, which is the initial introduction of an inquirer into the Christian way of life in the Catholic Tradition. It is also the period of evangelization on the part of the Church.

Presentations: During the Period of Purification and Enlightenment, the elect are presented with the Creed and the Lord's Prayer through special rites. For pastoral reasons, both presentations can be anticipated during this Period of the Catechumenate.

Purification and Enlightenment: Third Period of the Christian initiation of adults, which usually coincides with the Season of Lent. It is the final period of preparation for initiation at the Easter Vigil.

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA): English title of *Ordo initiationis christianae adultorum*. This is the official collection of rites of the Roman Catholic Church for the process by which adults (including children of catechetical age) enter the faith life of the Church, culminating with the celebration of the sacraments of initiation: Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist. This also includes the rites for the reception of baptized Christians into the full communion of the Catholic Church.

Rite of Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens: The liturgical rite that is the bridge between the pre-catechumenate and the catechumenate for the unbaptized.

Rite of Welcoming the Candidates: The liturgical rite that is the bridge between the inquiry period and the period of pastoral formation that coincides with the catechumenate. It is for those already baptized.

Rite of Election: Presided over by the bishop, this rite inaugurates the final period of preparation for the catechumens (unbaptized) before initiation. It is the bridge between the catechumenate and purification and enlightenment. It is about discernment, God's choosing, the Church's choosing, the testimony of godparents, the assent of the elect, and the enrollment of names. (See **Election** above.) It is for the unbaptized.

Rite of Call to Continuing Conversion: Coincides with election, but is the rite for the already baptized (candidates).

Rite of Scrutiny: Three rites of exorcism for elect (unbaptized) during Lent. (See **Scrutinies** below.)

Sacraments of Initiation: Usually celebrated at the Easter Vigil; includes baptism, confirmation, and Eucharist.

Scrutinies: Rites celebrated with the elect, on the 3rd, 4th, and 5th Sundays of Lent, petitioning for the spirit of repentance, an understanding of sin, and the experience of the true freedom of the children of God.

Sponsors: Persons who accompany the inquirers and remain with them as companions through the catechumenate until the Rite of Election. They may also be chosen as godparents for the Initiation sacraments at the Easter Vigil. Candidates also choose sponsors to accompany them from the Rite of Welcoming until reception into the full communion of the Catholic Church.

Triduum: The “three days” of the celebration of Easter, which begins with sundown on Holy Thursday evening and ends with evening prayer on Easter Sunday evening. This includes the liturgies of Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Vigil and Easter Sunday.

Year-Round Inquiry & Catechumenate: The on-going process of a parish's welcoming inquirers as the Holy Spirit brings them, freed from the limitations of an academic year model. This entails celebrating the various rites (Acceptance, Welcoming, Reception, etc.) several times a year as needed.

Abba: An Aramaic word for father, typically used by a child when addressing their own parent. Jesus used the term when addressing God. "Papa" might be the best translation in English. Not to be confused with a really neat Swedish singing quartet.

Abortifacient **General medical definition:** A drug which causes the [interruption of a pregnancy](#) and the death of an embryo or fetus. (Pregnancy begins when the pre-embryo attaches to the wall of the uterus.). **Common pro-life definition:** A drug which causes the death of any form of human life after conception. The difference in definitions makes dialog concerning [emergency contraception](#) (a.k.a. the morning after pill) very difficult. [More info.](#)

Abrahamic: (a.k.a. Abramic) A group of religions that recognize Abraham as a patriarch. This includes [Judaism](#), [Christianity](#) and [Islam](#). Sometimes, the [Baha'i World Faith](#) is included in the list. Many smaller non-Jewish groups such as Samaritans, Falashas, Karaites, etc, also trace their spiritual roots back to Abraham, but are not often cited as Abrahamic religions.

Absolution: In legal terms, it is the act of a judge or jury declaring a person innocent of a crime. In a religious sense, it involves a person being freed from guilt or sin. In the Roman Catholic Church, a priest can declare the sins of a penitent person to be forgiven if they sincerely plan to avoid such behavior in the future.

Acolyte: (From a Greek word for "*follower*") A layperson who performs minor duties during a religious service.

Activism: Promoting social change. In a religious sense, the term is often used by Fundamentalist and other Evangelical Christians to refer to the expression of the gospel in various ways, including missionary outreach and social reform.

Adhan: The Muslim call to prayer, typically from the minaret at a mosque.

Adoptionism: A belief, universally held within the earliest Christian movement, and still active in the 2nd and 3rd century CE, that Jesus was a normal human being, a prophet, who was born as any other human, and is not a deity. God later gave him supernatural powers at his baptism when God chose Jesus as his "*adopted*" son. Adoptionism was declared a heresy by a number of early church councils.

Advent: From the Latin word "*adventus*" or coming: A period of time before Christmas, beginning on the Sunday closest to NOV-30 when the birth of Jesus is recalled. Advent candles are often lit.

African Independent Churches (AICs; a.k.a. African Indigenous Churches): African-based Christian faith groups which range from variations of Western denominations to syncretistic tribal groups which combine selective elements of Christianity with local existing traditions.

Agape: A Greek word for love that is found frequently in the Christian Scriptures (New Testament) in noun form as "*agape*" and in verb form as "*agapao*." ¹ It is different from erotic love. It is supposed to be the characteristic attitude of Christians toward one another, (John 13:34), and toward all humanity, 1 Thessalonians. 3:12; 1 Corinthians 16:14; 2 Peter 1:7.

Agnostic: a person who believes that, at our present level of knowledge, we cannot know whether or not a God exists. Some Agnostics believe that we can never know whether a deity exists.

Alexandrian School: One of the two great schools of biblical interpretation in the early Church. They incorporated Greek Pagan philosophical beliefs from Plato's teachings into Christianity. They interpreted much of the Bible allegorically. It was established in Alexandria, Egypt in the late second century [CE](#).

Alim (single), **Ulama** (plural): Islamic scholar(s).

Aliyah: A Jewish term which means an immigration of Jews to Israel. An "oleh" is a single Jew immigrating into Israel. (Plural is "olim").

Allah: This is an Arabic word which means "*the One True God*." Most Muslims in the West use *Allah* and *God* interchangeably.

Al-Hijra: An Islamic holy day that recalls the trek by Mohammed and his followers to Medina.

Al-Sajdah: This is the the act of prostration by a Muslim during which seven parts of the body are to touch the ground: the forehead, palms, knees and big toes.

All Saints Day: A Christian day of remembrance of the saints of the faith- both recognized and unknown. It has been observed since 609 [CE](#). The Western church celebrates it on NOV-1; Eastern Orthodox churches celebrate *All Saints Day* in the springtime -- on the Sunday after Pentecost.

All Souls' Day (a.k.a. the *Day of the Dead*), is celebrated yearly on NOV-2. This is a day for prayer and almsgiving in memory of ancestors who have died. Believers pray for the souls of the dead, in an effort to hasten their transition from [Purgatory](#) to [Heaven](#). It is primarily observed by Roman Catholics.

Amen: The word is related to "*Emunah*" in Hebrew, which means faith and/or belief. Adding "Amen" at the end of "...a blessing or a prayer demonstrates a statement of affirmation that the blessing is true and hope that the prayer will be answered." "Amen" is also a near acronym; its four letters stand for the three Hebrew words: "*Aiy'l Melech Ne-eman*" which mean that God is a true and faithful king.

Amillennialism: (a.k.a Nonmillennialism) A belief taught by Roman Catholicism, and some Reformed Protestantism and Baptist churches concerning the end of the world. We are currently in the "*millennium*." End time events described in the book of Revelation and elsewhere in the

New Testament have mostly taken place. The Antichrist is viewed figuratively and not as a real person. This was the universal belief of Christianity up until the 19th century.

Amish: A very conservative Christian group which broke away from the larger Anabaptist movement in the Alsace region in France during the late 17th century. Most Amish now live in the U.S. and Canada -- largely in Indiana, Ohio and Pennsylvania. They isolate themselves from the larger American/Canadian culture. Most are farmers. [More details.](#)

Anabaptists: A European Christian movement at the time of the Protestant reformation, whose origins are a matter of debate. They believed in adult baptism, freedom of belief, separation of church and state, the rejection of war, and other beliefs that were rather advanced for their time. They were terrible persecuted, both by Roman Catholicism and Protestant churches. The [Amish](#) and Mennonites trace their origins to the Anabaptists. Some theologians and historians include the Society of Friends ([Quakers](#)) and Moravians among the Anabaptist denominations.

Anagogy: From the Greek word "anago" - to lead. Interpreting the scriptures, or other writings, mystically, in order to uncover a hidden meanings.

Ancestor worship: The veneration or worship of deceased people by their living kin. It exists, sometimes integrated as part of a world religion, in about 60% of the world's cultures.

Angel: The English word comes from the Greek "*angelos*" (messenger). In the Bible they were described as an intelligent and immortal species, usually presented as being visually indistinguishable from humans -- i.e. with a human body and without wings. They delivered messages from God, and either harmed or helped humans. Satan is described in the Bible as an evil angel. Because the Bible's cosmology asserts that the earth was flat, that it was covered by a metal firmament or dome, and that God resided in Heaven above the dome, angels have often been portrayed as having wings so that they could fly from Heaven to earth and back.

Angelology: The theological study of angels. This is primarily found in Christianity.

Anglicanism: The beliefs and organization of the *Church of England* and the national churches that together form the *Anglican Communion*. The Communion includes the Episcopal Church in the U.S. and the Anglican Church of Canada. The denomination is theologically diverse, having members whose beliefs range from Fundamentalism to liberal Christianity. The Communion is coordinated by the Lambeth Conference which meets once every decade.

Anglo-Catholicism: A movement within the Anglican Communion which promotes a return to pre-Reformation beliefs and rituals, including the mass, confession and monasticism.

Animism: a type of religious belief that all components of the universe, including humans, animals, plant life, rocks, etc. contain some form of life force, soul or spirit. Some are seen as friendly spirits; others as tricksters. "*While animists can be found in almost all Asian countries, they are more than 5% of the population only in Laos. Animists are between 1% and 5% of the population in Burma, India, Indonesia, Kampuchea, Malaysia, and Vietnam.*" ³

Annihilationism: (a.k.a. conditionalism and conditional immortality). From the Latin word "*nihil*" -- which means nothing. This an umbrella term used to refer to a group of beliefs about life after death. They are: After death, [unsaved people](#) will immediately cease to exist in any form. This is taught by most [Adventist groups](#), by the [Jehovah's Witnesses](#) and other Christian

groups. This contrasts with the historical Christian belief that the unsaved will be tormented for all eternity in [Hell](#) without hope of mercy or cessation. Both views can be supported by selected biblical passages. The belief that unsaved people spend an interval of time in Hell. Their length of stay is matched to the frequency and seriousness of their evil deeds. They are then exterminated and cease to exist. This view is also supported by some biblical passages. The belief -- common among Agnostics, Atheists, Humanists, secularists and others -- that after death everyone will automatically cease to exist. After death, we live on only in the DNA that we have passed on to the next generation, and in the influences that we have had on other people and society.

Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary: This is a Christian holy day which recalls the Archangel's announcement to Mary of her pregnancy.

Annunciation: This refers to the announcement to Joseph (in Matthew 1:20) and to Mary (Luke 1:26-35) of Jesus' future birth.

Antedeluvian: The interval of time preceding the great flood of Noah, described in Genesis 2:6-8. Some Christians believe that the climate was more uniform than it is at the present, and that the earth was surrounded by a gigantic vapor cloud. Essentially all geologists reject these beliefs.

Anthem: A Christian term for a hymn whose words come from the Bible.

Anthropology: The study of humanity and human cultures.

Anthropomorphism: The representation of a non-human as a human. God in the earlier parts of the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) is described in human terms, as having a body. Sometimes anthropomorphism is extended to animals who are assumed to have human feelings.

Antibaptists: (not to be confused with [Anabaptists](#)): Christians who deny the validity of baptism. Most believe that water baptism has been replaced by spirit baptism. Christians who do not recognize earlier baptism that convert's from other denominations had received.

Antichrist: An individual whose appearance is prophesized in two books of the Christian Scriptures (1 John and 2 John). He is expected by some Christians to appear near the [End Time](#), when he will act as Satan's chief representative. The pope, Ronald Reagan, Bill Gates, Hitler, Stalin, and many other people have been called the Antichrist. So has at least one computer.

Anticult Movement (ACM): A mainly secular movement which opposes new religious movements (NRMs) because of their perceived deceptive recruiting practices and mind-control techniques which they believe permeates new faith groups. Many small ACM groups coalesced into several large ACM organizations starting in the early 1970's. Their beliefs that many NRMs drive their members to suicide and reduce their followers to near-zombie status has been widely accepted among the public. However, most sociologists and other academics reject these teachings. [Counter-cult organizations](#) -- groups that oppose NRMs on theological grounds -- are considered by some to be part of the ACM. [More details](#).

Antidisestablishmentarianism: Being opposed to the belief that there should no longer be an official church a the country. The word is sometimes quoted as the longest word in the English language. The longest word in any language may well be the Welsh name of a town in Wales: **Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwllllantysiliogogoch.**

Antinomianism: The belief that once a believer is [saved](#), they are not bound to follow moral laws. The belief that a saved believer can freely sin because he is forgiven of past and future transgressions.

Antiochan School: One of the two great schools of biblical interpretation in the early Church. They incorporated Greek Pagan beliefs from Aristotle's teachings into Christianity.

Anti-semitism: Hatred, prejudice, oppression, or discrimination against Jews or Judaism. Actually, the term is usually spelled with a capital "S" in "*Semitic*." Semites originally meant the descendents of Shem, which include both Jews and Muslims in the Middle East. Now, the term is used mainly to refer to Jews. Alan Dershowitz, in his book "*The Case for Israel*" defines anti-semitism as "*taking a trait or an action that is widespread if not universal, and blaming only the Jews for it.*"

Antitrinitarians: Christians who deny the Trinity.

Apocalypse, apocalyptic: A style of mainly Jewish and Christian writing that was common from about 200 [BCE](#) to 200 [CE](#). The writings prophesized the destruction of evil and triumph of good. Sometimes narrowly used to refer to the [Book of Revelation](#) in the Bible.

Apocatastasis: The belief that all living entities will eventually attain Heaven, including individuals sent to Hell, Satan, demons, etc. Hell will thus eventually be cleared of all of its inhabitants. This is considered a heresy by most Christian denominations. One meaning of the term "universalism" is similar to "Apocatastasis," and is a *lot* easier to pronounce.

Apocrypha: A collection of fourteen books written after the last book of the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) and before the first book of the Christian Scriptures (New Testament). It is accepted by the Roman Catholic Church as part of the inspired canon of the Bible, but is rejected by most Protestant denominations.

Apologetics: A systematic defense of a belief system. It is derived from the Greek "*apologia*" which means to create a defense. See 1 Peter 3:15. Most apologetics texts are directed to members of another religion, or to secularists. However they tend to be read in practice by the faith group whose beliefs are defended. See [Polemics](#). In Christianity: **Classical Apologetics:** uses rational arguments to prove that God exists, and relies on evidence to support biblical claims and miracles. **Presuppositional Apologetics:** starts with the assumption that God exists and that the Bible is true. They argue from this that their particular belief of the Trinity, salvation, Heaven, Hell, etc. is valid. **Evidential Apologetics:** uses evidences such as miracles, fulfilled prophecies, etc. to prove that God exists and that the biblical account of Christ and his message are valid and trustworthy.

Apologet: A Christian who gives an intellectual defense of their religion.

Apostate: From the Greek *apo - histanai* ("*depart from a stand.*") A person who was once affiliated with a faith group, but has since "fallen away" and left the group. One group's apostate is generally another group's convert. Very severe penalties exist in some countries of the world against individuals who abandon the state religion in favor of another faith. It can theoretically mean execution in some [Islamic countries](#). The Roman Catholic church stopped burning European apostates at the stake in 1792 [CE](#).

Apostle: A Christian term to refer to Jesus' immediate followers. An apostle must generally a man was personally chosen by Jesus, and to have seen him. Sometimes, the term is used to refer only to the twelve disciples, or to the twelve disciples and Paul. Other times, it has been used to refer to the 70 disciples selected by Jesus. In Romans 16:7, Paul refers to a [female apostle, Junia](#), as "*outstanding among the apostles.*" (NIV)

Apostle's Creed: A summary of Christian beliefs. Many Christians believe that the Apostles personally wrote the creed so that they could coordinate their missionary efforts as they spread out through the known world. However, there is evidence that the creed was written near the end of the second century [CE](#), about a century after the time of the apostles.

Apostolic succession: The Catholic belief that the twelve apostles ordained bishops who ordained their successors in an unbroken sequence up until the present day.

Apparition: From the Latin word "*apparere*:" to appear). A paranormal incident involving the appearance of a non-existent entity or object. A visual apparition is generally called a ghost.

Appollinarianism: An early Christian belief promoted by Apollinarius (b 310) who lived in Syria. He believed that Jesus was entirely divine and had no human nature. The belief was declared a heresy, first at the Council of Alexandria (378 CE) and later at two subsequent Councils.

Archangel: a member of the highest rank of angels. Only two are mentioned in the Bible: Gabriel and Michael.

Archbishop: (Derived from a Greek word for "chief overseer"). A bishop who has administrative responsibilities over an archdiocese.

Archdiocese: A diocese -- a geographical area -- that is particularly large or has an important past. Its priests are under the direction of a single archbishop. The term is used by the Roman Catholic church, the Greek Orthodox churches, and the Anglican Communion.

Archon: A [Gnostic](#) term which refers to the [Demiurge](#) -- the creator of the material world -- and his angels.

Arhat: A Buddhist saint who has liberated themselves from samsara: the endless cycle of life, death and rebirth into the world. They typically lead a monastic live.

Arianism: An early Christian heresy named after Arius (250-336 CE). He taught that Jesus was not in existence for all time, but was created by God near the end of the first century [BCE](#). He also taught a form of monotheism in which there is only one person in the Godhead -- the Father -- and not a Trinity. The church at the time was evenly divided over whether Arianism was truth or a heresy. Constantine's vote swayed the balance, and it became a heresy.

Armageddon: A battle that is prophesized to occur in the plain of Megiddo, Israel. Jesus and Satan, and their armies, will fight a final battle (as stated in the biblical [Book of Revelation](#)).

Arminianism: A set of Christian beliefs suggested by Arminius, a theologian from the Netherlands, in reaction to [Calvin's five points](#). He maintained that Everyone has free will and can chose to be saved; God selected some individuals to be saved on the basis of his foreknowledge of who would respond; Jesus died for all; People can resist the call of God. One

cannot lose one's salvation unless they abandon it. Calvinists regard these as a heresy. The controversy continues to the present time, because both Calvinists and Arminians can justify their positions through reference to biblical passages.

Aryan: A term used by the German Nazi government to refer to Caucasians of the Nordic type. Originally, the term referred to persons who speak an Indo-European language.

Asa, Es. Жsir: The name for the Gods in Norse Heathenism, either as individuals or as a collective.

Ascended Masters: A [New Age](#) belief that there are spiritual, non-physical, entities who live on an astral plane and can communicate spiritual truths to humans through [channeling](#).

Ascension: This refers to the Christian belief that Jesus ascended to heaven to sit at God's right hand. According to two gospels, Mark and Luke, Jesus ascended to heaven on the same day as his resurrection. Acts explained that it occurred 40 days later.

Ascension, feast of: A Christian holy day celebrating Jesus' ascension up to heaven. It is celebrated on a Thursday, 39 days after Easter Sunday.

Ascension of Abdul Baha: A celebration by the Baha'i world faith of Abdul Baha's spirit rising to heaven.

Ascension of Baha'u'llah: A remembrance by the Baha'i world faith of the death of its founder, Mirza Husayn Ali, and the ascension of his spirit to heaven.

Asceticism: The belief that a conflict exists between one's body and spirit. By renouncing the needs and desires of the body, one can attain a higher spirituality. This concept is found in many religions and faith groups, from [Christianity](#) to [Native American spirituality](#).

Ashoora: A one-day fast in which Muslims recall the death of Imam Hussain, the grandson of the Prophet of Islam. He sacrificed his life and the lives of many of his family members and friends in Karbala Iraq, in order to preserve the teachings of Islam. ۶

Ashram: A Hindu term for a religious retreat center where a student can learn under the guidance of a guru (teacher).

Ash Wednesday: This is the first day of Lent, observed by Christians. It is held on the Wednesday which is 40 days prior to Easter.

Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary: A Roman Catholic holy day which commemorates the Virgin Mary's death and direct ascension to heaven. The declaration on 1950-NOV-1 that the Virgin Mary's body and soul directly ascended to heaven. This event does not appear in the Bible. However, it has been argued on the basis that Jesus would not have allowed his mother's body to decay in the earth.

Astrology: a belief that the positions of the planets affect events and states of being on earth. It was developed independently in Greece and India circa 300 [BCE](#).

Atheism: According to many Atheists: having no belief about a deity. According to most non-Atheists, actively denying that a deity exists.

Atheist: A person who believes in Atheism.

Atlantis: An sunken island. generally believed to be in the Atlantic ocean, which some people assert once held an advanced civilization.

Atonement: In general, an act that unites enemies as friends. In Christianity, the doctrine that Christ's death has the power of canceling the sins of those Christians who are "*saved*."

Atonement, limited: One of the five points of Calvinism: Christ died to atone for certain sins of specific individuals -- only those who are elected by God to be saved. He did not die for the all sins of all humanity.

Attributes of God: God, as viewed by followers of Judaism, Christianity and Islam is traditionally thought to be omnipotent (all powerful), omniscient (all knowing), omnipresent (present everywhere) and omnibeneficent (all loving). The [theodicy paradox](#) addresses the apparent impossibility of God holding these four attributes simultaneously. Other attributes include holy, good, wise, and just.

Aura: An energy field believed by some to surround humans or objects. Some people believe that they can detect an aura visually and determine an individual's emotional and physical state from its color and variation. ⁵

Authority, Bible: Biblical authority is the belief -- near universally held among conservative Christians -- that: "*the Bible, as the expression of God's will to us, possesses the right supremely to define what we are to believe and how we are to conduct ourselves.*" ⁷ Steven Ibbotson states: "*The Bible is authoritative because it is God's inspired word to humanity.*" ⁸ Religious liberals commonly discount some sections of the Bible as authoritative because they are judged to be [profoundly immoral](#) when compared to today's religious and secular moral standards.

Authorized Version: Synonym for the *King James Version* of the Bible.

Autosoterism: The belief that a person is responsible for their own salvation which is attained through their good works.

Avatar: A Hindu concept of a God adopting a human or animal form. A God-man Krishna is an avatar of Vishnu.

Ayyam-I-Ha: The first intercalary day, required to balance the Baha'i calendar. Members of the Baha'i world faith engage in acts of hospitality and charity towards others on this day.

Babel, tower of: A tower mentioned in Genesis 11. The Bible describes how there was only one language used prior to construction of the tower. God was offended by the construction, and caused its builders to speak in different languages. Almost all linguistic experts, except those who are conservative Christians, consider the story to be a myth.

Backmasking: A type of [subliminal message](#) in which a second audio track is recorded backwards on top of a record's music. It is a common belief among the public that such messages

bypass the conscious brain, enter the subconscious and motivate the individual to take certain actions. One rock group actually inserted a backmasking section on one of their records as a joke. There is no evidence that backmasking works.

Bahá'í World Faith: A world religion, founded in 1844 CE by Baha'u'llah (Glory of God) in Iran. Its roots are based in Islam. With the exception of its beliefs about homosexuality, and the makeup of its *Universal House of Justice*, it promotes democracy with equal rights to all, regardless of gender, race, nationality, etc. It has spread across the world. Its followers experience heavy oppression in Iran.

Baphomet (a.k.a. Sigil of Baphomet): A pentagram (a five pointed star) with one point downwards and two upwards, within a circle. A goat's head is drawn within the star. This is used by many Satanists as a religious symbol.

Baisakhi: The [Sikhs'](#) New Year's celebration.

Baptism: The English words "*baptize*" and "*baptism*" are derived from a Greek root: "*baptizr*," which means "*to immerse*," "*to dip under*," or "*to wash*." Within Christianity, it is usually performed by a member of the clergy in a church setting, thus welcoming an individual into the church. Denominations disagree about the method (immersion or sprinkling), the age at which the ritual is done, and additional consequences of baptism. Some Christian groups maintain that baptism is required before a person can be saved; some say that only those baptized in their denomination or in a certain way can be saved. Still others consider baptism to be merely an indication that a person had been saved in the recent past.

Baptism for the dead: This is a procedure that was employed among some Christian groups during the second century CE. Today, it is followed by members of [The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day saints](#) -- the Mormons. Ancestors who died outside the church can be baptized by their descendents who are alive today.

Baptists: A group of Protestant Christian who, according to religious historians, originated in the English Separatist movement of the 1600s. However, some Baptists believe that they can trace their history directly back to the New Testament period. In the U.S., they consist of dozens of denominations that do not baptize infants, but who baptize individuals by immersion after they have personally professed their faith. Baptist congregations are independent; full authority resides in the membership of each church. The largest American Protestant denomination, the Southern Baptist Convention, deviated from centuries of tradition by expelling congregations who had decided to welcome sexually active gays and lesbians as members.

Beget: To father, or sire. Etymology is: Indo-European "ghend" > Old English "begetan" > Middle English "biyeten" > Modern English "Beget."

Begotten: A past participle of beget.

Beltane: One of the four major Sabbats celebrated annually by Wiccans and other Neopagans on the evening of APR-30. It is based on an ancient Celtic seasonal day of celebration.

Bhagavad-Gita: The "*Song of the Lord*" -- a holy text revered by followers of Hinduism and Iskcon.

Bible: This word has many meanings: The holy text used by Christians. It includes [Hebrew Scripture](#) (Old Testament), [Christian Scripture](#) (New Testament). Some faith groups also include a group of writings called the Apocrypha. The word originated in the Greek word "*biblos*," which means "*book*." The Greek word came from the ancient Phoenician port city of *Byblos* (now *Jubayl* in Lebanon). It is sometimes used to refer to the holy texts of other religions. It is sometimes used to refer to an all-embracing book on a specific topic, from computers to fly fishing to astronomy.

Bible Code: A book by Michael Drosnin which promoted the concept that the Bible contains prophecies which are hidden by a special code. This belief became popular during the 1990s, but collapsed when it was found that similar codes could be extracted from any book of similar length.

Biblical authority: This is the belief -- near universally held among conservative Christians -- that: "*the Bible, as the expression of God's will to us, possesses the right supremely to define what we are to believe and how we are to conduct ourselves.*" ² Steven Ibbotson states: "*The Bible is authoritative because it is God's inspired word to humanity.*" ³ Religious liberals commonly discount some sections of the Bible as authoritative because they are judged to be [profoundly immoral](#) when compared to today's religious and secular moral standards.

Biblical worldview: A personal perspective on humanity, deity and the rest of the universe based on the Bible. There are many such worldviews, reflecting various conservative, mainline, liberal, Gnostic, post-Christian and other belief systems. The Barna Group defines a conservative Protestant biblical worldview as including eight beliefs: [Absolute truth](#) exists. The source of moral truth is the Bible. The Bible is [without error](#) in all of its teachings. That eternal spiritual [salvation](#) cannot be earned through works while on earth. Jesus led a [sinless life](#) while on earth. Everyone has a responsibility to share their religious beliefs with others. [Satan](#) is a living force, not just a symbol of evil. [God](#) is the creator of the universe, omnipotent, omniscient who still rules the universe today.

Biblicism: Having a particular regard for the Bible as the Word of God and the [ultimate authority for religious belief and morality](#).

Bibliolatry: Worship of a book, particularly the Bible. A term of criticism levied against individuals who give an excessive regard to the text of the Bible.

Bibliology: This word has a secular and a Christian meaning: Secular: A discussion of books. Christian: The study of the Bible and the doctrines derived from it.

Birth of the Bab: A [Baha'i](#) holy day honoring of the founder, Mirza 'Ali-Muhammed, (1819-1850 [CE](#)). He assumed the title **Bab** ("*the Gate*.")

Birth of Baha'u'llah: A [Baha'i](#) annual celebration of the birth of their teacher and Messiah, Mirza Husayn-'Ali-i-Nuri (1817-1892). He was the Manifestation predicted by the Bab.

Birth of Guru Nanak Dev Ji: A day when [Sikhs](#) commemorate the birthday of their founder.

Bishop: (From the Greek word episkopos: supervisor). In the early church, he was a chief priest at a church. Later, the role became that of a priest with administrative duties over a group of churches within a geographical area called a diocese.

Bitheist: Synonym for duotheist; a person who believes that there are two deities -- typically one female and the other male, as in [Wicca](#), or one all good and the other all bad, as in [Zoroastrianism](#).

Black magic: The use of religious rites and rituals to harm another person. One example from the Bible was when Elisha issued a curse against 42 children who were bothering him. The children were torn to shreds by she-bears. See 2 Kings 2:23-24.

Black Mass: An imaginary inverted form of the Roman Catholic mass involving black candles, desecrated materials stolen from a church, prayers recited backwards in Latin, etc. Such rituals have been performed by members of the [Church of Satan](#) as a publicity stunt.

Black Muslims: A group of Muslim organizations for African-Americans, including the *Nation of Islam*.

Black theology: The belief that Israel, as described in the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament), was a nation of blacks. Jesus was black; his purpose was to liberate fellow blacks from oppression by white Gentiles.

Blasphemy: Swearing in the name of God, denying the existence of God, saying evil things about God, asserting incorrect beliefs about God, etc. One religion's affirmation of their God is another religion's blasphemy about their God.

Blessed be: A frequently used greeting-blessing by Wiccans and other Neopagans.

Blood Atonement: A group of theories that attempt to explain how Jesus' torture-death resulted in a mechanism by which people's sins can be forgiven. Other explanations, sometimes called "bloodless atonement" theories, account for the forgiveness of sins on the bases of Jesus' teachings and life. A [belief in the early Mormon church](#) introduced by Brigham Young. It has since been abandoned by some Mormon denominations. Some crimes were considered so serious that the perpetrator's salvation required that he be killed and his blood mixed with the earth.

Blood libel: A false belief which has endured since the 1st century [BCE](#). It states that members of a religious group [kidnap, abuse, ritually murder and sometimes eat the body of a member of another religion](#). Groups creating this groundless fable include ancient Greek and Roman Pagans, Christians, Nazis, and Muslims. Innocent religious groups victimized by the fable include Jews, Christians, Wiccans, Druids and other Neopagans, and Roma (Gypsies). The hoax exists today mostly among some Muslims (against Jews) and some Fundamentalist Christians (against Wiccans, Satanists and other religious minorities).

Blyt: Service of the Gods; kinship between the Gods of Norse Heathenism and the people.

Bodhi: A Buddhist term which means to have achieved enlightenment; to understand the ultimate reality.

Bodhisattva: A Buddhist term to describe a person who is embarked on the path to enlightenment.

Bodhi Day: The day when [Buddha](#) decided to sit under the bodhi tree, and remain there until he reached enlightenment.

Body of Christ: This often refers to the physical body of Yeshua of Nazareth (a.k.a. Jesus Christ.) Other times, it refers to the "*invisible church*" which is made up of true Christians, past and present. Unfortunately, there is no consensus concerning [who is a "true" Christian](#), so that there is no agreement over the exact makeup of this group.

Bon Festival: This is a day when the followers of [Shinto](#) honor the souls of their ancestors. People visit graveyards.

Book of Life: In [Christianity](#), a list of saved individuals which is maintained by God.

Book of Mormon: One of four texts considered to be divinely inspired and authoritative scripture by the [Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints](#) (the Mormons) and other Mormon denominations. Mormons believe that Joseph Smith, their founder, translated the Book of Mormon from golden plates left by an early American society. Some researchers believe the Book to have been written by Smith, and partly based on an earlier book "*View of the Hebrews*" by Ethan Smith (no relation).

Book of Shadows: A personal diary of a Wiccan or other Neopagan in which she/he records their ritual activities.

Born again: The process by which a person repents of their sins and trusts Jesus of Nazareth as Lord and Savior. Conservative Protestants believe that this is the only way that one can get to [heaven](#). Some of these denominations do not require that a person repent first.

Brahma: The creator God and member of the Hindu trinity of deities, which also includes Shiva and Vishnu.

Brahmin: A member of the priestly class in Hinduism -- the highest caste in India.

Brainwashing: (a.k.a. thought control, mind control, coercive persuasion). A non-violent method that uses mind control techniques to convince a person to abandon some of their basic beliefs and adopt the beliefs of the indoctrinator. The [anti-cult movement](#) teaches that many small religious groups, which they call cults, engage in brainwashing. Sociologists and mental health researchers who are not involved in the anti-cult movement generally reject the concept.

Branch Davidians: Popular name for a doomsday, [destructive cult](#), the *Students of the Seven Seals*, which was led by David Koresh. Dozens of their members died when their compound burned to the ground in Waco, TX.

British Israel movement: A belief that the ten lost tribes of Israel -- those conquered and assimilated by the Assyrians circa 722 BCE -- became the British people, and sometimes the inhabitants of the former British Empire, including the U.S. and Canada.

Buchmanism: The *Moral Rearmament* movement founded by Frank Buchman (1878 - 1961). He organized the *Oxford Group* in 1929, which became *Moral Rearmament*, an inter-faith group, in 1938. Its goal was to change society one person at a time, by promoting absolute purity, unselfishness, honesty and love.

Buddha: A Buddhist term used to refer to Prince Siddhartha, (560 - 480 [BCE](#)) after his enlightenment.

Buddha Day: A celebration of the birthday of the [Buddha](#).

Buddhism: A world religion, founded in the 6th century [BCE](#) by a Hindu: Siddhartha Gautama, His followers called him "the Buddha" or "the enlightened one." It has about 300 million followers, almost all located in Asia. Buddhism is experiencing a rapid growth in North America. It is perhaps the least violent of the world's major religions.

Bull: From the Latin word "*bull*" a seal. A papal statement in which he speaks *ex cathedra* on a matter of belief or morality. Such a statement is regarded by Roman Catholics as infallible.

Burning Man Festival: An annual gathering in Black Rock Desert, NV. Creative individuals create artistic works, dance, chant, sing, etc. At the end of the festival, a wooden image in the form of a man is burned. This is apparently derived from the burning of a wicker statue of the spirit of vegetation by the ancient Celts. That statue also was in the form of a man.

Cabala (also spelled Cabalah, Caballa, Caballah, Cabbala, Cabbalah, Cabballa, Cabballah, and various spellings starting with the letters K or Q): A [Jewish](#) mystical tradition with roots in Palestine during the 1st century CE and which developed during the 12th century. It uses occultic (hidden) knowledge to interpret the Torah. In the early 21st century, it is enjoying a surge in popularity.

Caliph: Muslim term for community leader.

Calvinism: A system of Christian belief laid down by John Calvin. It emphasizes predestination -- that certain people are fated to be saved and others are selected by God to be not saved and spend eternity in Hell. The selection is not done on the basis of any action that they have performed during their life on earth.

CAN: An acronym for the [Cult Awareness Network](#).

Canon: The *Canon of Scripture* in Christianity refers to the set of books selected from among the books of the Hebrew Scriptures, the dozens of gospels, and many dozens of epistles, to form the Bible. Some canons contain just the 39 books of the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) and 27 books in the Christian Scriptures (New Testament). Other canons include the Apocrypha. Some liberal theologians have recommended that the canon be opened for additional writings.

Canon law: A term used primarily within the Roman Catholic church to refer to a collection of church laws.

Canonization: The process by which a Christian becomes a saint.

Cardinal: Bishops in the Roman Catholic church who advise the pope. They meet as a group to elect a new pope when needed.

Cardinal Doctrines of Christianity: Lists of beliefs of the foundational beliefs that all Christians should believe in. Although lists differ, they often include some of the following:

biblical [inerrancy](#), the deity of Jesus, the [virgin birth](#), Jesus' bodily [resurrection](#), the Trinity, the [Atonement](#), criteria for [salvation](#).

Catechism: From the Greek "katecheo" -- to sound aloud. A training program to educate a person in the fundamentals of Christianity. It is often organized in a question and answer format.

Catholic: This came from the Greek word *Katholikos* which means "throughout the whole" or "*universal*." This implies a world-wide faith, rather than a local one. The Nicene Creed, recited in the churches of many Christian denominations, speaks of "*one holy catholic and apostolic church*." Many faith groups refer to themselves as Catholic: the Roman Catholic Church, centered in the Vatican; Anglo-Catholics (within the Anglican Communion); and Evangelical Catholics (among Lutherans).

Catholic Charismatic Renewal: The acceptance of certain Pentecostal beliefs and practices within the Roman Catholic church. This has also happened within Protestant denominations, where it is generally referred to as *Charismatic Movement*.

Celibate, Celibacy: This is a word in transition. In the past, it has simply meant to be unmarried. More recently, it has evolved to mean the act of sexual abstinence. We recommend that the word never be used, unless it is carefully pre-defined. We recommend "*unmarried*" and "*sexually inactive*" or "*a virgin*" as preferred, unambiguous terms.

Celibrant: A minister or priest -- or in some denominations, a member of the laity -- who leads a worship service which includes communion.

Cessationism: The belief that [tongues](#), and other special gifts enjoyed by believers in the early Christian movement faded in the early fourth century CE, and are thus not present today.

Chakra: This is a term used in some traditions in Buddhism and the New Age to refer to seven points of energy concentration throughout a person's central nervous system -- their in their brain and along their spine.

Chalice: A special drinking cup used in some Christian communion services to hold wine. Among Wiccans and other Neopagans, it is a goblet used to hold either a beverage or water for ritual use.

Channeling: A practice common among New Agers in which the spirit of a master teacher is contacted in order to receive guidance and knowledge.

Charismatic movement: The adoption of certain Pentecostal beliefs and practices within Protestant denominations. The same phenomenon has occurred within the Roman Catholic Church where it is called the *Catholic Charismatic Renewal*.

Chiliasm: The belief that Yeshua of Nazareth (Jesus Christ) will reign on Earth for 1,000 years.

Chiromancy: The prediction of a person's past and future through palm reading.

Christ: From a Greek word meaning to rub down an athlete with lineament. It refers to a Hebrew word (Messiah in English) that means "*an anointed one*," e.g. a king of Israel or a prophet. Jesus' real name was Yeshua of Nazareth.

Christadelphianism: A small Christian religious group with non-traditional beliefs. They teach that Jesus was a created being, that the Holy Spirit is a power or energy rather than the third personality in the Trinity. They deny the traditional concepts of [heaven and hell](#).

Christian: This term was derived indirectly from the Greek word for Messiah. It has [many meanings](#): Census offices consider any person or group to be Christian if they devoutly, seriously regards themselves to be Christian. Thus, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, Roman Catholic, and members of the Unification Church are Christians. Many groups, particularly conservative Christians, regard many of these denominations as "[cults](#)" and not part of Christianity. Webster's New World Dictionary: "*A person believing in Jesus as the Christ, or in the religion based upon the teachings of Jesus.*" Concise Oxford Dictionary: "*Person believing in, professing or belonging to the religion of Christ.*" (They don't define exactly what the religion of Christ is, or which of the thousands of denominations and sects represent this religion.).
Evangelical/Fundamentalist usage: often used to refer only to fellow conservative Christian faith groups or to "saved" individuals.

Christian Atheism: see: [Death of God Theology](#)

Christian evidences: A branch of [Apologetics](#) that deals with attempts to prove that Christianity and/or the Bible is true. Much effort is expended by conservative Christians to prove that creation, the great flood, the tower of Babel, virgin birth, resurrection, Exodus, attack on Canaan etc. happened exactly as explained in the Bible. Their expectation is that no evidence from archaeology, geology, cosmology, astronomy or any other science will disprove the [inerrancy](#) of the Bible.

Christian Identity: A small, racist, radical group within Christianity which has adopted a belief similar to that of British Israelism. They teach that the ten lost tribes of Israel became the Anglo-Saxon race. Many Identity groups teach that Eve engaged in sexual relations with the serpent in the Garden of Eden, and that the Jews were the product of that union.

Christian Science: A Christian denomination founded in 1879 in Boston, MA, by Mary Baker Eddy. It promotes spiritual healing, that sickness and matter is not real, and that one should avoid medical help. The life expectancy of Christian Scientists appears to be significantly shorter than for the general population.

Christology: The study of the personality, attributes and/or life of Yeshua of Nazareth, a.k.a. Jesus Christ. The term is derived from two Greek words, for "*messiah*" and "*formal study*."

Christmas: This is held on DEC-25, the nominal date of the birth of Yeshua of Nazareth, after whose life the Christian religion is patterned. The western church uses the Gregorian calendar and the eastern church uses the Julian calendar. So Christmas is celebrated on two different days.

Chupah: A Jewish wedding canopy which represents the home that the groom is expected to maintain.

Church: The Greek word ekklesia (to call out) in the Bible is generally translated as "church." It may refer to all those, living or dead, who are Christians. it may refer to a specific Christian group in a specific area.

Circumcision of Jesus: A Christian holy day held in remembrance of Jesus' circumcision.

Civil religion: A set of religious beliefs shared by most citizens about "*the sacred nature, the sacred ideals, the sacred character, and sacred meanings of their country – its blessedness by God, and its special place and role in the world and in human history.*"¹ The term was created by Rousseau in his writing "*On the Social Contract*" 1762.

Coming, second: (a.k.a. Parousia): The belief that Jesus will descend to earth as described in the [biblical book Revelation](#), leading a massive army. As the 21st century approached, approximately one in four American adults believed that this would happen during their lifetime.

Communion: A Christian ritual, sometimes called the Eucharist, or Mass, or Lord's supper. A group of believers or a group of denominations. The *Anglican Communion*, for example, is a group of national churches who share many beliefs and practices in common.

Communion: The sharing of bread and wine (or a wine substitute) during a Christian service. At the time of the early church, only baptized Christians were allowed to be present during communion. When Pagans started to spread the rumor that cannibalism was involved, this part of the service was opened to the public. Alternative names for communion are: Eucharist, Divine Liturgy, Last Supper.

Comparative religion: The study of world religions to determine their points of similarity and differences. In practice, this is difficult to do on an impartial basis. Students often consider their own branch of their own religion to be "true," and all other branches of their religion, and all other religions to be "false."

Completed Jews: A term used by conservative Christians to refer to Jews who have embraced Messianic Judaism -- a blend of Jewish tradition and ceremonies with Fundamentalist theological beliefs about Jesus Christ and the Trinity.

Concestor: An animal species, typically long extinct, which is the ancestor to two later-evolved species. For example, according to the theory of evolution, the concestor shared by humans and chimpanzees lived about six million years ago. There are 40 concestors between humans and the first life forms which lived about 3.8 billion years ago.

Concreated holiness: This is the belief that when God created Adam, that Adam's will was created holy. His natural inclination was thus to behave in a holy manner.

Conditionalism, Conditional immortality: Synonyms for [annihilationism](#).

Confucianism: An indigenous system of thought which originated in China about 500 [BCE](#). It is considered by some to be a religion, by others a humanistic philosophy. Founded by Confucius (551-479 BCE)

Conservative: Within Christianity, this is one wing of the religion, composed of Fundamentalists, other Evangelicals, Pentecostals, Charismatics, and members of most independent churches. The term contrasts with mainline and liberal Christians.

Consubstantiality: The belief that Jesus is of the same substance (homoousion in Greek) as God the Father. This belief was promoted by those who taught that God, Son and Holy Spirit formed a Trinity. Opposing them was Arius who regarded this as a Pagan polytheistic concept. He taught that Jesus was of similar substance (homoiousion in Greek) to God the Father. The difference of

one letter (o,i) caused a great deal of angry debate in the church; the two sides were evenly matched. Constantine applied political pressure to have homoousion accepted at the Council of Nicea. This has been the teachings of almost all Christian faith groups ever since.

Consubstantiation: The belief, as taught by Martin Luther, that the elements during communion are actually bread and wine which coexist with the body and blood of Jesus.

Contemplation: In a religious sense, the practice of meditation on spiritual matters.

Contextualization: A method of analyzing the Bible which attempts to differentiate between the meaning of the text and "*the cultural and historical context in which it is given.*"² The result is that when one tries to interpret the meaning of a biblical passage in terms of today's culture, the meaning of the text may have to change. For example, in Genesis 9:1. humans are urged to be fruitful and multiply. That made sense in days when there were so many childhood diseases, and warfare. The opposite command -- to limit one's fertility -- might make more sense today.

Conversion: the act of changing one's beliefs from one religion to another.

Conversionism: the belief that lives of all humans need to be changed by way of a "[born again decision](#)" in which they repent of their sins and accept Jesus as Lord and Savior.

Corpus Christi: A Roman Catholic holy day which commemorates the Eucharist - a ritual in which they believe that a wafer and wine become the actual body and blood of Jesus Christ.

Cosmogony: beliefs about the origin of the universe. While 95% of scientists and most North American adults believe that the world and the rest of the universe is billions of years old, many conservative Christians believe in a universe less than 10,000 years of age.

Cosmogony: (From the Greek: "cosmo" meaning universe; "gony" meaning origin): A religious or scientific model of the origin of the universe. The two most common models in North America are creation science, theistic evolution and naturalistic evolution.

Cosmology: (From the Greek: "cosmo" meaning universe; "logos" meaning study). Beliefs about the structure of the universe. Many religious texts have a pre-scientific view of the makeup of the earth, the solar system and the rest of the universe.

Council, ecumenical: A series of meetings of the bishops of the Christian Church to settle doctrinal and organizational matters, in which the decisions were accepted by the entire Church.

Counter cult movement (CCM): A group made up mainly of Fundamentalist and other Evangelical Protestant organizations which opposes and criticizes new religious movements (NRMs) because of the latter's unorthodox and/or novel theological beliefs. [More details.](#)

Counter reformation: A reform movement within the Roman Catholic church taken shortly after -- an in response to -- the Protestant Reformation.

Coven: a local group of [Wiccans](#) or other Neo-pagans. During the "burning times" when Christian groups were tracking down and exterminating Witches, it was believed that each coven held 13 members. This was and is not true; covens can be of any size, but are most often perhaps about a half-dozen.

Covenant: "*Berith*" in Hebrew and "*diatheke*" in Greek: An agreement between two persons which are obligatory on both parties. Most commonly used to refer to various covenants between God and the Hebrews. Jews believe that these covenants are permanent; some Christians believe that God unilaterally abrogated them and selected Christians to be the new chosen people.

Covenant Theology: A Christian concept which teaches the unity of the Hebrew Scriptures and Christian Scriptures (Old and New Testament). The covenants of the Hebrew Scriptures are not done away with the arrival of Christ on Earth; they are still binding on humans today. Ancient Jews were not saved by animal sacrifice. Such rituals were only symbolic of Jesus' self-sacrifice. See also [New Covenant Theology](#).

Creed: From the Latin word "*credere*" -- to believe. A short statement of religious belief, usually motivated by a desire to emphasize church teaching as opposed to a heresy. There are a number of [creeds within the Christian religion](#): the Apostles creed, Nicene creed are the most popular. However, the former is little used in Eastern Orthodox churches.

Criticism: When referring to the Bible, this refers to a method of analyzing its text: Lower criticism is the analysis of the text in order to understand its meaning and detect any forgeries, mistranslations, etc. Higher criticism is an attempt to determine when the passage was written, who wrote it, where it was written, what their purpose was, whether it was imported into the Bible from another source, etc. One example of the results of higher criticism is the [documentary hypothesis](#) concerning the authorship of the first five books in the Hebrew Scripture, which most mainline and liberal theologians accept.

Cross, sign of: A movement, commonly used among Roman Catholics, in which the right hand touches the forehead, chest, left shoulder, and right shoulder in sequence. Orthodox believers cross themselves from right to left.

Crucicentrism: Making the [substitutionary atonement by Christ](#) on the cross central to a Christian belief system.

Crucifix: A religious symbol representing Jesus nailed to the cross. Most crucifixes lack accuracy because they portray a partly clothed man nailed through the palms. The Romans crucified people naked, with their wrists nailed (or their arms tied) to the crossbar.

Crucifixion: A method of carrying out the death penalty which involved physical abuse of the victim, stripping him of all clothing, tying or nailing his arms and legs to a cross or stake, and abandoning him to die. The corpse was often partly eaten by scavengers. The body was generally denied a proper burial; it was tossed on a garbage heap. Crucifixion was widely used by Romans to execute slaves or rebels.

Crystals: These are materials which have their molecules arranged in a specific, highly ordered internal pattern. This pattern is reflected in the crystal's external structure which typically has symmetrical surfaces. Many common substances, from salt to sugar, and from diamonds to quartz, form crystals. They can be shaped so that they will vibrate at a specific frequency and are widely used in radio communications and computing devices. Many [New Agers](#), [Wiccans](#), and other [Neopagans](#) and others believe that crystals possess healing energy.

Cult: From the Latin word "*cultus*" -- meaning worship. Cult is a word with [many religious meanings](#) (and some secular as well) which should be used with great care to avoid

misunderstanding. We recommend the neutral term "*new religious movement*" be used in its place. Even better is to refer to a religious group by its name: **Traditional theological usage:** a style of worship and its associated rituals. It can be applied to any faith group. **Sociological usage:** a small religious group that exists in a state of tension with the predominant religion; e.g. Christianity in Pakistan. **General religious usage:** a small, recently created religious group; not a variant of an established religion. Often headed by a single charismatic leader. **Evangelical usage:** a religious group that considers themselves to be Christian but which denies one or more historical beliefs of Protestant Christianity. **Counter-cult movement usage:** Same as Evangelical usage. **Anti-cult movement usage:** a small, evil religious group, often with a single charismatic leader, who engage in deceptive recruiting, brainwashing and other mind control techniques. **Popular belief:** A doomsday, dangerous, destructive religious movement whose members risk their life to belong.

Cult apologist: Derogatory term used to refer to: Academics who investigate new religious movements and often report that they are harmless. Members of new religious movements who defend their groups against criticism from the [anti-cult movement](#) and/or [counter-cult movement](#)

Cult Awareness Network: Originally, an anti-cult group which targeted new religious movements. They were forced into bankruptcy because of their criminal activities linking the parents of members of new religious movements with kidnappers and re-programmers. Their assets were purchased by the *Foundation for Religious Freedom*, which teaches tolerance of other faith groups.

Curate: In the Anglican communion, an assistant pastor.

Dalai Lama: The spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhism.

Daoism: see [Taoism](#)

Dar-e-Mehr: A North American term used by the [Zoroastrian](#) faith to refer to their house of worship. It literally means "*a portal to all that is good: charity, devotion, kindness and love.*"

Dasa Laxana: A [Jain](#) holy day which recalls the ten important goals for a follower of Jainism.

Day of reckoning: Judgment day as described in the Bible: a time when all will be judged and sent either to [Hell or Heaven](#).

Day of the Covenant: [Baha'is](#) recall the the covenant contained in the last will and testament of Baha'u'llah.

Day of the Lord: A time when Christians believe that God will destroy all evil and establish his kingdom on earth.

Deacon: From the Greek word diakonos (servant). Originally a church administrator. Currently, the term may refer to a low-ranking member of the clergy, a lay minister, or a lay administrator.

Dead, cult of the: Worship of the deceased. Unlike ancestor worship, cult of the dead involves the worship of the deceased by all, not just by the kin of the ancestors.

Dean: Most commonly used as an assistant to the bishop who runs the cathedral.

Death of God Theology: (a.k.a. Christian Atheism) This is a belief that became popular in the 1960s among some Christian theologians. Perhaps the most famous promoter of this concept was J.A.T. Robinson, a bishop of the Church of England. He wrote in his book *Honest to God* that the transcendent God described in the Bible is an outdated myth

Debate, religious: A formal discussion of the truth or advantages of one or more faith groups or theological positions. See [dialogue](#)

Decalog: Synonym for the [Ten Commandments](#).

Deconversion: A term used most often by Atheists and Agnostics to describe an individual's loss of faith in a religion with which they had identified.

Deist: a person who believes in the existence of a remote, unknowable deity, usually male, who created the universe, but has not been involved with it since. Most of the politicians who founded America were Deists.

Deity: a generic term used to refer to one or more supernatural beings. It can refer to a single God, as is Judaism and Islam; a pair of gods, as in Zoroastrianism; a Trinity as in Christianity and Hinduism; a God and a Goddess as in Wicca and other Neopagan religions, etc. Plural form is "*deities*."

Demiurge: "*public craftsman*" in Greek. The name of the creator according to the philosophy of Plato. A creator-god viewed by [Gnostics](#) as defective and inferior to the supreme deity. This is the God of the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament), a deity who they view / viewed as fundamentally evil, jealous, rigid, lacking in compassion, and prone to genocide.

Demon: Originally an angel, it joined with Satan to oppose God. Many conservative Christians believe that a person can be possessed by a demon; some think that only non-Christians can be possessed. Mental health professionals abandoned the concept of demonic possession centuries ago.

Demoniac: An individual who is possessed by a demon.

Denomination: an established religious group, which has usually been in existence for many years and has geographically widespread membership. It typically unites a group of individual, local congregations into a single administrative body.

Deontological: a system of ethics based on fixed rules which need to be followed in order for a person to be ethically and morally justified in their decisions. The [Ten Commandments](#) or the 613 Mosaic Laws in the Torah are two examples. One's duty is to follow these defined rules of conduct, regardless of the practical consequences. Antonym: [teleological](#).

Deosil: The clockwise direction. The term is often used in describing Neopagan rituals.

Depravity, total: (aka **Total inability**) The doctrine, primarily held by conservative Christians, that every part of a person has been hopelessly damaged by sin. None would seek out God unless God first intervenes in their life. "*Man is spiritually dead and unable to save himself or even believe without God's help.*" ¹ This is one of the five points of Calvinism. See Romans 3:9.

Deprogramming: A criminal method of forcing a person to abandon their religious or other beliefs, usually through kidnapping, forcible confinement, and psychological pressure.

Devil: Christian synonym for Satan: an all-evil former angel.

Dharma: This term has multiple meanings: The teachings of the Buddha, truth; that which is established, customary, or proper; natural law - the way the universe works; one's duty and responsibility, etc.

Dharma Day: This celebrates the first teaching of the Buddha after his enlightenment. (Not to be mistaken for Tuesday, when Dharma and Greg situational comedy is broadcast. Sorry for the humor. ;-)

Dialog: In a religious sense, dialog refers to people from two or more religious traditions meeting as equals to explain and explore their religious beliefs and practices together. The aim is not conversion, debate, or proselytizing; it is to improve understanding, mutual respect, and personal growth. Dialog tends to be rare when compared to instances of [debate](#).

Diaspora: The forced exiles of the Jewish people from Palestine by the Babylonians in the sixth century [BCE](#) and by the Roman Empire in the middle of the 2nd century [CE](#).

Diatessaron: The belief that the four Christian Gospels are in harmony with each other. The term is often used to refer to the writing of a very popular gospel by Tatian (120 - 173 CE) based on Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

Dichotomy: The concept that a person is made up of a body and a soul, or a body and a spirit.

Didache: a very early, short book describing Christian rituals and beliefs.

Diocese: a geographical area under the jurisdiction of a bishop.

Diophysite: A person or group which believes in Diophysitism.

Diophysitism: This is the belief that Christ had two natures: both divine and human. This concept won out after extensive debate at the church council at Chalcedon in 451 [CE](#). It is imbedded in the Chalcedonian Creed. An opposing belief is [Monophysitism](#).

Diocese: A geographical area in which a group of priests are under the direction of a single bishop. The term is used by the Roman Catholic church, the Greek Orthodox churches, and the Anglican Communion.

Disciples: In Christian usage, followers of Jesus. At one time, Jesus had 12 disciples; at another time, 70 are mentioned. Although those followers who were mentioned by name often in the gospels were evenly split between women and men, only conflicting lists of male disciples survive.

Disfellowshipping: A practice of some Christian faith groups in which a member has certain privileges removed in order to force them to give up certain behaviors and beliefs. Within the Mormon church, a disfellowshipped member has certain privileges removed, but still remains a

member. Among the Jehovah's Witnesses, a person is shunned. This can have devastating consequences to persons in a high-intensity religious group whose entire support system involves fellow members.

Dispensation, Dispensationalism: This is the concept that all of human history has been divided into seven distinct periods of time or dispensations. They are often called: innocence, conscience, human government, promise, law, grace and the Kingdom. God focused on the Hebrews during some dispensations and on the church during others. Dispensationalists see a major role for the state of Israel in the future.

Dispensationalist premillennialism: See [premillennialism](#)

Displacement, theology of: Alternative term for [supercession](#).

Disappointment, great: The term is used to refer to the failed prophecy of William Miller who predicted that Christ would return to earth in 1844.

Disassociate: a term used within the [Jehovah's Witnesses](#) to refer to an apostate who has been severed from the organization..

Disestablishment: Cancellation of the official status of a faith group as a country's official church. There is a growing support that the state church in Britain, the Church of England, be disestablished.

Disestablishmentarianism: The belief that there should no longer be an official church in the country. The word **antidisestablishmentarianism** is sometimes quoted as the longest word in the English language. The longest word in any language may well be the Welsh name of a town in Wales: **Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwllllantysiliogogoch**.

Dissociate: a mental condition in which the mind detaches itself from external activity. A psychological term widely used in the treatment of persons who allegedly suffer from [Multiple Personality Disorder](#) (MPD) a.k.a. Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID). This is a controversial topic. Most mental health professionals believe that MPD/DID is either extremely rare or nonexistent. Belief in MPD/DID is rapidly declining.

Divination: Any method of predicting future events. Astrology, bird entrails, tarot cards, runes, even the shadow of a groundhog near the end of winter have been used as tools of divination. Divination was practiced by many persons mentioned in the Bible (Joseph, high priests, Daniel). Some types of [divination are condemned by the Bible](#).

Diwali: A Hindu Festival of Lights. Gifts are exchanged; fireworks are enjoyed

Docetism: From the Greek word for "image." An early belief about Christ in which Jesus was believed to be a spirit who merely appeared to be a human.

Doctrine: From the Latin word "*doctrina*" (doctor) and the Greek "didaskolos" (teaching). A body of beliefs that is taught. Within the field of religion, there is often the assumption that a member must agree with all aspects of the group's doctrine. The 1,000 or so Christian faith groups in North America teach many different sets of conflicting doctrine. Many consider their own doctrines to be absolutely true, and other groups' doctrines to be in error.

Documentary Hypothesis: The belief that the Pentateuch (the first five books in the Bible) were not written by Moses, but by four anonymous authors - traditionally called J, E, P and D. Also involved were one or more redactors who edited the writings into their present form. Conservative Christians generally deny the hypothesis, and believe that Moses wrote all five books.

Dogma: From the Greek word "*dogma*" (a decree). A revealed truth defined by a faith group. It is important to realize that one group's dogma is often another group's [heresy](#).

Donatism: An early Christian leader from North Africa, Donatus, promoted the belief that the validity of a sacrament was dependent on the moral character of the priest who performed it. Two church synods later declared this to be a heresy.

Doomsday cult: a religious group which is focused on the anticipated end of the world in the near future. Often referred to as a [destructive cult](#).

Dormition of the Theotokos: On this day, the Greek Orthodox Church commemorates the death, burial, resurrection and ascension into heaven of the Virgin Mary.

Downgraders: A term used to refer to Christian theologians and clergy during the 1880s who were reacting to the widespread public skepticism against miracles at the time. They instead taught the moral leadership of Jesus, and were called "downgraders" as a result.

Dowsing: A type of divination, typically using a forked branch or two sticks. They are used most often to locate underground sources of water. Although belief in the effectiveness of dowsing is widespread, carefully controlled studies have shown it to be useless.

Druids: A professional class of individuals in ancient Celtic society who had various teaching, priestly, legal, and ambassadorial functions. They are often portrayed as engaging in human sacrifice. However, the only source for this belief are a single reference in the wartime writings of Julius Caesar, who relied on hearsay.

Dualism: The belief that entities and concepts often appear in pairs - typically one good and the other bad. The religion of Zoroastrianism recognizes one all-good deity and one who is all-evil. Most conservative Christians believe that two, very powerful, supernatural powers influence the world: God and Satan.

Dual Covenant: This is the theological concept that God has continued his covenants with the Jewish people, and has established a new, parallel covenant with the followers of Christianity. Opposing this belief is the concept of [Supercessionism](#): that God has unilaterally terminated his covenants with the Jews, and transferred them to Christians. The latter belief led to a great deal of [persecution of Jews](#) by Christians; it is now rejected within Christianity except for some conservative Protestant denominations.

Duotheist: Synonym for bitheist; a person who believes that there are two deities - typically one female and the other male, as in [Wicca](#), or one all good and the other all bad, as in [Zoroastrianism](#).

Dussehra: Hindus celebrate the victory of Lord Rama over the Demons.

Easter: This is the most important holy day of the Christian calendar. Easter Sunday commemorates the day in the springtime when the resurrection of Jesus is believed to have occurred. The date is calculated by one formula by most Eastern Orthodox churches, and by another formula elsewhere in Christianity. Easter Sunday falls on the first Sunday after the first full moon after MAR-20, the nominal date of the Spring Equinox. It can be on any Sunday from March 22 to April 25th. Eastern Orthodox churches sometimes celebrate Easter on the same day as the rest of Christianity. However if that date does not follow Passover, then the Orthodox churches delay their Easter - sometimes by over a month.

Ebionites: (From the Hebrew root "*Ebion*" which means poor, oppressed or humble.) A group of Jewish Christians. Some theologians believe that before Paul came on the scene, the Ebionites formed the original Christian movement, including the people who knew Jesus best: his disciples and family. They were led by Peter and James. They rejected Paul's writings, believing him to be an apostate from the Mosaic Law. They denied the deity of Jesus, viewing him as a the final and greatest prophet. Most rejected the virgin birth, and believed that Joseph and Mary were Jesus' parents. The members were scattered during uprisings circa 70 and 134 [CE](#), and died out by the 5th century.

Ecclesiology: A field of study related to a faith group or groups own function, organization, structure, practices, and nature.

Eclectic tradition: A set of beliefs and/or practices which has been selected as the best from the full diversity of those available. Eclectic Wicca, for example, involves selecting portions from a number of established Wiccan traditions in order to create a faith tradition that an individual Wiccan feels most comfortable with.

Ecumenical: From a Greek word meaning *worldwide*. Any movement which attempts to bring together various denominations or traditions within a single religion. The term is used most commonly to refer to [Christian intra-denominational efforts](#).

Eid ul-Adha: [Muslims](#) celebrate this Feast of Sacrifice at the conclusion of the Hajj. It recalls Abraham's willingness to ritually murder his son in response to a command of God.

Eight adversities: A term used in Buddhism to refer to rebirth: in Hell, as a hungry ghost, as an animal, in Uttarakuru (a very pleasant place where there is little motivation to practice the Dharma), in a long-life heaven, also where one is not motivated), with a disability, as an intelligent but skeptical person, or in the period - like today - between a Buddha and his successor.

Eightfold Path: A Buddhist list of the path which one must follow to escape suffering. They include: Panna (Wisdom): Right view and right thought. Sila (Morality): Right speech, action and livelihood. Samadhi (Meditation): Right effort, mindfulness and contemplation.

Eisegesis: The process of taking a preconceived belief and interpreting a biblical passage in a way that supports that belief. This is a very common phenomenon, although the interpreter is not generally conscious of the process.

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Election, unconditional: The second of Calvin's five points of theology. The doctrine states that God has decided, totally on the basis of his own, unknown criteria, to select a small minority of humans and lead them to a saving knowledge of the gospel. The majority of humans are not elected. Without God's help, the gospel is incomprehensible to them; they will never be saved; they will spend eternity in Hell without hope of mercy or an end to their torture. Some Christians believe that God elects that minority of humans for salvation that he knew would eventually choose Him.

Emerging church: This is another of those predominately Christian religious phrases which mean different things to different people. In general, it refers to a response by devout individuals to engage a rapidly changing culture in positive ways. Some are searchers who feel that they have outgrown the denomination and the religious beliefs of their youth. Others are searchers who are not affiliated with any denomination, and who are seeking for themselves a more spiritual, meaningful, and purposeful life.

Endless punishment: The belief that the unsaved will be punished by severe tortures (worms, unbearable heat, horrendous thirst, whips, etc) for all eternity without any hope of mercy or cessation. The book of [Revelation](#) describes Jesus as being present in Hell; whether he is there to supervise or merely observe the torture is unclear.

Enlightenment: A Buddhist term which means to have grasped the ultimate reality and escaped the endless repetition of birth, life, death and rebirth. A name given to the *Age of Reason* in the Americas and Europe during the 17th and 18th centuries. It was marked by great advances in science, democracy, industry, human rights and religious tolerance.

Eparchy: a geographical area under the jurisdiction of a bishop in an Orthodox church.

Epiclesis (aka Epiklesis): A Greek word for invocation, in the sense of calling upon, or making an appeal to, or addressing someone. In Christian worship, epiclesis refers to the invocation of the Holy Spirit.

Epiphany: Christians recall the visit of the Magi to the baby Jesus on JAN-6. (aka: **12th day of Christmas, Twelfth Night & Three Kings' Day**). Eastern orthodox churches celebrate **Theophany** on this day in commemoration of Jesus' baptism. "Epiphany" means "*to make known*" or "*to reveal*." Christians believe that the Magi made the divinity of Jesus known to the world.

Episcopal: Part of the name of the Episcopal Church, USA - the national church in the U.S. which is affiliated with the Anglican Communion. Any religious denomination governed by bishops.

Epistemology: The study of the nature of knowledge.

Equinox: The date and time when the sun crosses the equator. On that day, the daytime and nighttime are both very close to 12 hours. This happens about March 21 and September 21. Many religious holy days are synchronized to the equinoxes, including the Jewish Passover, and

Christian Easter. Wiccans, other Neopagans, Native Americans and followers of many aboriginal religions worldwide celebrate the equinoxes.

Eschatology, eschatological: The study of the eventual outcome of the world, from a religious perspective. In the case of conservative Christians, this typically involves discussion of the [rapture](#), the Anti-Christ, Jesus' second coming, the war of Armageddon, etc. Eschatology plays a minor role in liberal Christianity.

Esoteric: A type of hidden knowledge that is generally known only by a few individuals and not by the general public.

ESP: An acronym for [Extrasensory Perception](#).

Essentialism: Defining a group of people by one - or a small set of - fixed properties. Gender, religion, race or sexual orientation are the most common properties. It assumes that there is no possibility of variation within the targeted group, or potential for change. See [racism](#), [sexism](#), [religism](#) and [homophobia](#).

Eternal generation, Eternal Sonship: A belief that Jesus Christ has been the Son of God continuously, from before the creation of the world to the present time. Some Christians have alternative beliefs, stating that Jesus became the Son of God at the time of his ascension, or resurrection, or baptism, or birth.

Ethical Culture: A movement founded in the U.S. by Felix Adler (1851 - 1933). He advocated replacing religious beliefs and codes with a secular ethic.

Ethics: The study of human values and moral conduct. See also *Normative Ethics* and *Metaethics*.

Eucharist: See [Communion](#)

Eugenics: Programs by which humans are carefully selected for breeding in order to maximize certain qualities. The German Nazi government instituted a Mutterkreuz (mother's cross) program which encouraged women to have many "Aryan" children, for which they could receive crosses.

Euthanasia: (Greek for "good death.") An ambiguous term with meanings ranging from "physician assisted suicide" for terminally elderly persons in intractable pain, to the German Nazi programs of murdering old and handicapped persons. We recommend that the term never be used, and that a specific term be used in its place.

Evangelical: "Evangelical" is not a well-defined term with a universally accepted meaning. It normally refers to a major portion of the conservative "wing" of Protestant Christianity. In a study comparing Evangelical and mainline denominations, a Princeton University study included the following as Evangelical denominations: Assemblies of God, Southern Baptists, Independent Baptists, black Protestants, African Methodist Episcopal, African Methodist Episcopal Zion; Church of Christ, Churches of God in Christ, Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, National Baptist Church, National Progressive Baptist Church, Nondenominational, Pentecostal denominations, and the Presbyterian Church in America. Evangelicals tend to take very

conservative views on social matters, like [access to abortion](#), [equal rights for gays and lesbians](#), etc. Many Evangelical congregations serve parishioners who are mainly of a single race. [Fundamentalists](#) comprise the most conservative wing of Evangelicalism. Most Evangelicals tend to be less anti-scientific and less literal in their interpretation of Biblical passages than are Fundamentalists. Evangelicals generally believe in the historical doctrines of the Christian church: The original writings of the Bible, were [inerrant](#) (without error). Jesus Christ was born of a [virgin](#). [Atonement](#): that through Jesus' death, the relationship between God and Man (which had been damaged by Adam and Eve's sin) has been restored. [Resurrection](#): that after Jesus' death and burial, he arose again. Second coming: that Jesus return to earth is imminent. Incarnation: that God appeared on earth in human form, as Jesus. Justification: an act of God in which any person who accepts that they have sinned and who believes in the atonement of Christ is forgiven of their sins and brought into a close relationship with God. Regeneration of the spirit: that a new believer undergoes a spiritual rebirth. [Inspiration](#): that the authors of the Bible were inspired by the Holy Spirit. God exists as a Trinity, consisting of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. [Satan](#) is a created being, was once an angel but is now an all-evil tormentor of humanity. [Salvation](#) is attained by repentance of one's sins and trusting Jesus as Lord and Savior. [Heaven and Hell](#) exist; the former is a place of eternal reward; the latter is a place of never-ending torture without mercy or any hope of cessation. There are many additional beliefs regarded as important by various Evangelical organizations. For example, the *Southern Baptist Convention* requires its employees to sign a loyalty oath which includes the belief that the authors of the Gospels were in fact named Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Some Evangelical institutions refuse to hire faculty who believe that women should be eligible for ordination. The name "evangelical" was originally used to refer to those faith groups which followed traditional Christian beliefs, in contrast with two other movements: philosophical rationalism and legalistic Christianity. The *Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, and *Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod* total about 6 million members and are not part of the present-day Evangelical movement. [More information on the definition of Evangelical](#)

Evangelize: To explain ones beliefs to another in the hope that they might wish to adopt them. The word is sometimes used as a synonym for "*Proselytize*" - to actively attempt to convert another person to your beliefs.

Evil one: A Christian synonym for Satan: a fallen angel.

Evolution, Naturalistic: (From the Greek "*evolutio*" meaning unrolling or turning out). The term has multiple meanings. It is often necessary to examine an essay, speech or article carefully in order to determine which meaning is being used. Strictly speaking, it is deals only with life forms on earth; the term refers to gradual change over long periods of time of plant and animal species due to natural processes and forces, including the appearance and extinction of many species. In a popular sense, it is one of many cosmogonies (models of origins) commonly accepted in North America. It states that the earth, including its life forms, and the rest of the universe formed over the past approximately 14 billion years due to natural processes and forces. People often discuss the evolution of: the universe, of individual stars, solar systems, earth formation, species of life on earth, etc. Also in a popular sense, the term is used to refer to anything that changes over time, such as the evolution of religious beliefs, political concepts, economic models, child discipline methods, etc.

Evolution, Theistic: One of three main cosmogonies (models of origins) commonly accepted in North America. It accepts the observations of naturalistic evolution but states that God guided

and used evolution as a method of forming the multiplicity of species of life, the rest of the Earth and the rest of the universe.

Evolutionist: *A term used by Evangelical Christians to refer to over 99% of earth and biological scientists who use and support the theory of [evolution](#) in their professional work.* The term is not used by scientists themselves.

Exclusivism: The belief that one's truth (or faith group or religion) is the only truly [valid truth](#) (or faith group or religion). This is a very common belief among monotheistic faiths, and among other religions as well. It has historically been a foundation of religiously motivated oppression, mass murder, [mass crimes against humanity and genocide](#). Alternative beliefs towards other religions are [inclusivism](#) and [pluralism](#). [More details](#).

Excommunication: The enforced separation of a Christian from her or his denomination, done for the good of the individual and the faith group, with the intent of changing the individual's behavior so that they can be welcomed back. Unfortunately, in many high-intensity/high commitment religious groups, where a member's entire support network consists of fellow members, excommunication can lead to depression and occasional suicide.

Exegesis: Analyzing passages from a document - often the Bible - to understand what it meant to its author and others in the author's culture.

Exaltation of Christ: This consists of Christ's resurrection, ascension to heaven, sitting at the right hand of God, and second coming.

Existentialism: This is both a philosophical and literary movement which teaches that: Individual existence takes precedence over abstract concepts; humans are totally free and responsible for their own actions; no absolute values exist that are not grounded in human experience.

Exodus: A mass movement of people from an area or country. It often refers to the alleged departure of Hebrews from slavery in Egypt, variously dated as 1440 to 1290 BCE. "*Exodus*" is the name of the second book in the Pentateuch - the first five books of the Hebrew Scriptures.

Exorcism: The act of driving one or more evil spirits from the body of a person.

Externalist: A Buddhist term for an individual who follows a non-Buddhist religion.

Extraction evangelism: A technique of drawing non-Christians individuals out of their culture of origin and converting them to conservative Protestantism. This has been criticized for its destructive effect on those families in which only some members convert to Christianity.

Extrasensory Perception: (acronym ESP) The ability of a person to sense the world using powers beyond the five senses. This often takes the form of reading cards being dealt in another room, viewing events in a remote location, sensing auras, predicting the future, etc. A prize of over one million dollars awaits anyone who can prove that they have some form of ESP.

Extreme Unction: A sacrament of the Roman Catholic church in which a dying person is anointed with oil that has been consecrated by a bishop. Its purpose is to obtain the remission of

sins and to restore the person to health. To our knowledge, the efficacy of extreme unction to make a person healthy has never been scientifically evaluated.

Faith group: a general, inclusive term that might be used to refer to a religion, denomination, sect, or cult.

Faith-formula movement: (a.k.a. Word of Faith movement, Health & Wealth Gospel, Positive Confession, Name it and Claim it, and). A group of conservative Protestant para-church ministries which focus on "anointed" ministers and the health, wealth, and success of their viewers and donors. MinistryWatch estimates that their total income is in excess of a half billion dollars annually.

Faith tradition: A synonym for "*faith group*."

Fall of mankind: The belief, based on a literal translation of Genesis, that when Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden they lost communion with God and brought themselves and all their descendants (including the present and future generations) into a condition of sin and misery. Many religious liberals reject this belief, and interpret Genesis symbolically to indicate the rise of Adam and Eve from a pre-human state to full humanity, becoming aware of the differences between good and evil - that is, developing a moral sense.

"Fall-sin-redemption" model. This is a key theological belief about sin and salvation that is held by many Christians. It consists of a series of beliefs: Adam and Eve disobeyed God in the Garden of Eden when they [ate of the fruit of the tree](#) of knowledge of good and evil. By their actions, sin entered the world for the first time, and produced a gulf between God and our first parents. Through the concept of imputation, Adam and Eve's sin has been assigned to their children, their grandchildren, and all the way down to present-day humanity. Not a single person since our first parents has avoided sin. Because of the incarnation in which God took human form in the body of Jesus, and because of [Jesus' sinlessness](#), he had the power to forgive sin. Persons can be saved today by repenting of their sin, and trusting Jesus as Lord and Savior. They will then attain [Heaven](#) when they die. They become a new creation. Through a process of sanctification God helps them change and become more like Christ. The other alternative is to not trust Jesus; they will then be tortured in Hell for all eternity. Many liberal Christians reject this model. In part, this is because they view the Garden of Eden story as a religious myth, and Adam and Eve's actions as symbolizing [the rise of humanity - not its fall](#).

Familiar spirit: An evil spirit who can allegedly possess the body of a human, and communicate with them. Belief in evil spirits is widespread among many religious conservatives, but has been abandoned by mental health experts for over a century.

Fantasy Role Playing Games: (acronym RPG) A game like *Dungeons and Dragons*[™] in which individuals play the roles of characters that they have chosen. Typically, these characters live in a pre-scientific, often medieval society, and are subjected to many challenges. Some conservative Christians have expressed concern that some characters are non-Christian; some parents are concerned about stories of suicides among RPG players. Studies have indicated that players tend to be more stable and less likely to commit suicide.

Faqih: Muslim term for a man skilled in Shari'ah law who has the authority to issue fatwas.

Fast; Fasting: The act of doing without food and/or water for an interval of time - generally to attain a spiritual goal. Muslims are expected to fast completely between sunrise and sunset

during the lunar month of Ramadan. The practice is widespread among followers of many religions, including Native American Spirituality, Islam, Christianity, etc.

Fatalism: The belief that any effort to improve oneself or the world is useless because everything is predetermined by blind, irrational forces.

Fatwa: This is an Islamic term that literally means "*an answer to a question.*" Traditionally, it has been a recommendation, an opinion issued by a Muslim scholar on a specific subject.

Feminist Theology: A rejection of the patriarchal, sexist, homophobic, and other teachings in the Bible which are considered immoral by today's religious and secular ethical standards. It promotes a theology which stresses human rights, sexual enjoyment, feminine ordination, and equality. It often involves re-writing the Bible in gender-neutral terms.

Feng Shui: A belief, originating in Taoism, that structures and objects need to be properly aligned in order to promote health and functioning.

Filioque: The *Niceno-Constantinopolitan* or *Constantinopolitan Creed*, which was written and adopted at the Council of Nicea in 325 [CE](#), and then modified by the Council at Chalcedon in 451 CE was later modified during the sixth century [CE](#) with the addition of the filioque. This phrase states that the Holy Spirit proceeded from the Father and the Son. The Eastern Orthodox churches have historically rejected the filioque, citing John 15:26 as proof that the Holy Spirit proceeded only from the Father. Friction over the filioque was a major cause of the split between the Roman Catholic Church and Eastern Orthodoxy in 1054 [CE](#).

Five hindrances: A Buddhist list of feelings that prevent one's spiritual progress: Lust, aversion, sloth, restlessness, and skepticism.

Five poisons: A Buddhist list of five harmful influences commonly found in life: ignorance, hate, pride, craving and envy.

Five precepts: A Buddhist list of activities to avoid: Killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying and the taking of intoxicants.

Five ways: These are the five proofs of the existence of God as derived by Thomas Aquinas from Greek Pagan metaphysical thought.

Flying bishops: This is an Anglican term used in the Church of England and the Episcopal Church, USA. It refers to bishops that are nominated to provide Episcopal duties in parishes which refuse to accept women as priests. The parishes have to petition their bishop for such alternative arrangements.

Foreknowledge: An attribute of God that he is able to know all things: past, present and future.

Form criticism: A method of analyzing biblical verses which involves studying the literary forms used in the passage. It often seeks to uncover the oral traditions behind Bible passages.

Fortune telling: A method of divination: predicting the future. Often performed using cards, tarot cards, runes, palm reading, tea leaf reading, etc.

Four constituents: In Buddhism, the fundamental components which make up the universe: earth, water, wind and fire.

Four noble truths: A Buddhist list of basic truths about suffering - that: Suffering exists. It comes from one's attachment to desires. It can be overcome by ceasing one's attachment to desire. The Eightfold Path is the way to achieve freedom from suffering.

Free will: When used by Christian theologians, means the ability of an individual to freely choose to repent of their sins and accept Jesus as Lord and Savior. This is denied by Calvinists, who say that God cannot be truly sovereign if humans have free will.

Friday, good: The Friday before Easter Sunday. This commemorates the execution of Jesus by the Roman Army.

Freemasonry: A spiritual, fraternal order for men which originated in guilds of stone cutters. Freemasons see Freemasonry as supplementing and not in conflict with their religious belief. They are heavily involved in charitable works, like the Shriner's hospitals. Many conservative Christians view Freemasonry as anti-Christian and condemn membership in the Masonic Order. Freemasons, like dozens of other groups ranging from the Roman Catholic Church to Quakers have been accused of [ritual abuse](#). However, no hard evidence has been found to confirm this.

Freethinker: This originally referred to persons who doubted the Trinity - the concept that a Godhead existed composed of a Father, Son and Holy Spirit. They supported the concept of a single indivisible deity. The meaning of the term has since changed its meaning to include persons who reject religious beliefs in general, and who follow her/his [own spiritual and ethical path](#).

Free will: The ability of humans to choose their own courses of action.

Frum: A religiously observant Jew.

Fundamentalist: Within Christianity, this is a term used since the 1920's to refer to the most religiously conservative group within Protestant Christianity. Within Judaism, Islam and other religions, the term is used to refer to the extreme conservative wing who Karen Armstrong defines as "*embattled forms of spirituality, which have emerged as a response to a perceived crisis*"¹ - namely the fear that modernity will erode or even eradicate their faith and morality. Its roots within Christianity can be traced to the late 19th Century as a reaction against liberal movements of Biblical criticism and analysis. A 1909 publication "*The Fundamentals: A testimony to the truth*" proposed five required beliefs for conservative Christians; they are listed above under "[Evangelicals](#)", items 1 to 5. Fundamentalists generally believe that other wings of Christianity, and other religions, are false. The largest Protestant denomination in the U.S., the *Southern Baptist Convention*, has recently transitioned to Fundamentalism. *Bob Jones University*, the *General Association of Regular Baptists*, the *Moody Bible Institute* and other organizations are also Fundamentalist. Among the most generally known leaders are Jerry Falwell, Bob Jones and Hal Lindsey. See the term "[Modernism](#)." The term has three additional meanings in general usage that cause great confusion: A "snarl" word, used by some non-Fundamentalists to imply intolerance, bigotry, lack of flexibility and an anti-intellectual bias. When applied by the Western media to [Muslims](#), it often means "anti-American". Sometimes it means "*radical Fundamentalist Muslim terrorist*." who form a very small percentage of

Muslims. When used by conservative Muslims themselves, it refers to a person who strictly follows the teachings of Mohammed, and who promotes the concept of theocratic government.

Furu: An important, but not a foundational belief, within Islam. A believer can reject such a belief and still remain a Muslim.

Futurism, Futurist: Attempts to predict the future. In Christianity, the term applies particularly to the interpretation of biblical books such as [Daniel](#) and [Revelation](#) in order to foretell events in our future.

Gaia: Greek goddess of the Earth. A belief that the earth is a living entity who adapts the environment to promote life.

Gap theory: The belief that there is a large interval of time between the first and second verses in the book of Genesis. By insertion of a gap at this point, Genesis is brought more closely into harmony with the conclusions of the vast majority of biological and earth scientists who believe that Evolution is a fact and that the earth is about 4.5 billion years old.

Gehena: A Greek word which refers to the Hebrew word gehinnom, the valley of Hinnon. This was the garbage dump for Jerusalem, a place of continuous fire, where the bodies of crucified criminals were tossed. According to Luke 12:4 and other passages, this is [Hell](#). God casts the body and souls of the unsaved here after their death, to be tortured forever without any hope of mercy.

General Revelation: A Christian term partly derived from Romans 1:19-20. Paul taught that the existence of the world is proof of the existence of God and of some of his attributes. Further, it teaches that these beliefs are obvious to everyone - whether they be Christian or not. With advances in science, the existence of the world and its life forms can be explained in naturalistic terms. Thus, the Romans passage does not necessarily apply to contemporary individuals who have become convinced of the reality of evolution.

Genizah: A place in a synagogue set aside to store both worn-out and heretical or disgraced Hebrew books or papers.

Gentile: This term originated in the Latin word "*gent*" which meant "*of the same clan*." It became "*gentil*" in Middle English. Today, it has a variety of definitions: In Judaism: a non-Jew. In the Christian Scriptures (New Testament) the Greek word "Hellenes" - which means "Greek" - has been translated as "Gentile." It refers to any non-Jewish nation or group. See: Acts 16:1, 3; 18:17; Romans 1:14). In Mormonism: a person who is not a Mormon. In Hinduism: a person who is not a Hindu. In some other applications, it refers to a person who does not acknowledge the existence of one's God.

Genocide: (Derived from *genos* (race) and *cide* (to kill)). A term created by Raphael Lemkin in the mid-1940s. It refers to the planned, systematic extermination of an entire ethnic, national, racial, or religious group. Most genocides in the 20th and 21st century have had a strong religious component. The murder of about 200,000 Muslims by Serbian Orthodox Christians during the 1990s is the most serious religiously-motivated genocide in recent years. Rwanda is an exception.

Geocentrism: The belief that the sun revolves around the earth. This was all the rage in Galileo's day. Religious News Service reported in 2006-MAR that the belief is having a comeback among conservative Christians because of its support in the Bible. Commentators are having difficulty deciding whether this news report is a satire, or is serious.

Geomancy: The procedure of selecting a site for a building, grave, etc. based upon unseen forces in nature. The goal is to achieve harmony with the natural surroundings.

Ghetto: The term originally referred to a type of inner-city concentration camp for Jews. First developed by the Roman Catholic Church, the concept was later adopted by Hitler during the German Nazi regime. The term now refers to any concentration of a specific group in a city, as in "*student ghetto*."

Ghost: A form of spirit being. Many faiths, from Aboriginal religion to some groups within Christianity believe that they are the spirits of dead people. Hard evidence of their existence is scant or non-existent.

Gilgamesh epic: A flood story from ancient Pagan Babylon with many points of similarity to the Genesis flood. Religious liberals conclude that the Genesis account of the flood of Noah was derived from this Pagan source. Religious conservatives conclude that the Genesis flood story is precisely true, and that the Gilgamesh epic is a distorted record of the actual flood.

Glossolilia or "*speaking in tongues*". In the first Centuries CE, it meant the ability of a person to communicate in a foreign language that they had never learned. e.g. a person raised speaking Greek and unable to speak any other language would suddenly be conversing in Aramaic. At the present time, it refers to a person who suddenly, in a state of religious ecstasy, starts speaking sounds that sound like language but do not represent any known tongue. The manifestation of glossolilia is an expected development in all Pentecostal believers and is a sign of the grace of God. It is also a common practice among charismatic Christians. [More details](#) are available.

Gnosis: A Greek word which literally means "knowledge." Insight or enlightenment capture the meaning of Gnosis better.

Gnosticism: This is pronounced with a silent "g"; it is derived from the Greek word *gnosis* (knowledge). Its Christian form originated in the Middle East and Greece during pre-Christian times. The movement has been composed of many groups with differing beliefs. One common concept is that there are two Gods: one *Supreme Father* who is from the "good" spirit world, and one *Demiurge* (the Jehovah in the Bible) who created the evil material world. [Salvation](#) comes through knowledge and liberation from the material, earthly world to attain a higher level of spirituality. Christian Gnosticism was one of the three main movements in early Christianity; the other two being Jewish and Pauline Christianity. Many Gnostic sects were the victims of genocide by the early Christian Church. The movement has survived to the present day and is rapidly growing in numbers.

God: A supernatural being, generally male. Various religions assign different attributes and qualities to God, such as a body, omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, love, hate, tolerance, intolerance, etc.

God, false: The deity worshiped by another religion. One faith groups' God is another faith group's false God.

Goddess: a female supernatural being.

Good works: Activities that are legal, pure of motive, and helpful to other persons. Romans 3:12 and other passages state that no unsaved person can perform good works. Many passages in Paul's epistles imply that [salvation](#) cannot be obtained by good works. Many passages in the synoptic gospels appear to teach the opposite.

Gospel: This has three main meanings: One of the four books at the start of the Christian Scriptures which give an account of Jesus' life and which were accepted into the official canon of the Christian Scriptures (New Testament); e.g. the Gospel of Mark. One of the many dozens of books about the life of Jesus, of which only four made it into the official canon; e.g. the Gospel of Thomas. The message, found mainly in the writings of Paul, that the person's belief that Jesus was resurrected will cause God to forgive their sins.

Grace: an Christian expression meaning "*the free and unmerited assistance or favor or energy or saving presence of God in his dealings with humanity...*".³ Grace is a gift of God and is not considered to be deserved by the individual. According to the Bible, those to whom God does not give grace cannot understand the gospel message.

Grace, Irresistible: One of the five points of Calvinism: the doctrine that every individual who God has elected (chosen) will come to a saving knowledge of Jesus. None can resist.

Great rite: An act of ritual sex performed by many Neopagan traditions. It may involve actual sexual intercourse by a committed couple in private; alternatively, it may be symbolic in nature.

Guided imagery: A therapeutic technique in which a facilitator tells a story which describes a scene or a passage through a group of scenes. It has been used by athletes in training, by physicians to help their patient's body cure itself, or simply to produce relaxation. It is a suggestive, quasi-hypnotic process that can, under certain circumstances, [generate false memories](#) without either the facilitator or client being aware of the process.

Gurdwara: Literally "*the gateway of the Guru.*" This is a [Sikh](#) religious meeting place.

Guru: Literally "*one who dispels darkness*" or one who is "*heavy*" with the weight of vast knowledge. A revered spiritual teacher who guides students towards enlightenment. It is a term commonly used in Eastern religions. It is also used to refer in a secular sense to refer to an expert in some field, like an "economic guru."

Hades: A Greek term generally translated "Hell" in the King James Version of the Bible. Beliefs about Hades are divided: Some Christians believe that Hades is a place where the spirits of unsaved persons and of believers who died before the ascension of Christ temporarily reside until the day of judgment. Then, the unsaved will be thrown into the lake of fire; the believers will attain heaven. Others believe that Hades and Sheol are Hell where the unsaved are tortured for all eternity.

Hadith: Sayings and practices of Mohammed. They were collected after his death.

Hajj: A pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina in Saudi Arabia which every Muslim is expected to perform at least once during their lifetime, if they are physically and financially able.

Hajji: A Muslim who has performed a Hajj. The term is used as a pejorative by U.S. troops in Iraq.

Halacha: Jewish law, derived from the 613 laws of Moses in the Hebrew Scriptures.

Halal: A set of Islamic dietary laws which regulate the preparation of food.

Hallelujah: A shout or song of praise to God. "*Hallel*" means "*praise*." "*Jah*" is an abbreviation of "*YWH*." It appears in many places throughout the last third of the book of Psalms. It is occasionally used as a first name, most commonly for girls.

Halloween: Secular meaning: an annual children's celebration on the evening of each OCT-31. Children dress up in costumes and go to homes in their neighborhood to collect candy. **Pagan meaning:** Wiccans and other Neopagans celebrate the major Sabbat of Samhain on this day. It is the end of the Wiccan year, marking the transition between the warm and the cold season.

Christian meaning: All Hallow's Eve, a Roman Catholic observance of the night before All Saints' Day. **Satanic meaning:** One of three major seasonal days of celebration - the other two being Walpurgisnacht (APR-30) and the member's birthday.

Handfasting: A Neopagan wedding. Some religious traditions assign it a length of a year and a day. It can be registered with the government as a marriage if the priest/priestess performing the handfasting is registered to perform weddings.

Haram (a.k.a. haraam): An Islamic term for a forbidden action.

Harg: A stone altar in Norse Heathenism.

Health & Wealth Gospel: (a.k.a. Word of Faith movement, Positive Confession, Name it and Claim it, and Faith-formula). A group of conservative Protestant para-church ministries which focus on "anointed" ministers and the health, wealth, and success of their viewers and donors. MinistryWatch estimates that their total income is in excess of a half billion dollars annually. ²

Heathen: Originally people of the heath or moor. Originally, it was a Christian term to denigrate followers of the old, pre-Christian Religion. Followers of Asatru and other ancient reconstructed aboriginal religions have embraced the term.

Heaven: In the Old Testament, Heaven referred to the region where God lived. It was above the firmament which was believed to be a solid covering located a few hundred feet above the earth. In Christianity and Islam it is the abode of God, the Father's House, where selected individuals go after death to be with God. Faith groups differ in their belief about who will attain heaven after death.

Hebephile: This is a word whose meaning is changing. In the past, it referred to an adult who is sexually attracted to post-pubescent person under the age of 18. Currently, it is evolving to mean a person who sexually molests post-pubescent persons under the age of 18. See [pedophile](#).

Hell: one of two destinations for an individual after death in the [Christian](#), [Muslim](#) and some other religions. Various groups within Christianity believe that a person goes there because of their beliefs or their actions, or some combination of beliefs and actions. Up to the early part of

the 20th century, Hell was generally believed to be a place of eternal punishment and torment. Lately, more groups describe it as a simple isolation from God. Liberal religious groups generally treat biblical passages on Hell as symbolic. See also [Universalism](#). In the King James Version of the Bible, the Hebrew word *sheol* and Greek word *hades* (two very different concepts) are both generally translated as *Hell*.

Hellenism: A general term referring to the influence that Greek Pagan culture had on other societies in ancient times. Judaism was profoundly influenced by Hellenism after the conquest of Palestine by the Greeks in the second century [BCE](#).

Henotheism. belief in many deities of which only one is the supreme deity. This may involve: One chief God and multiple gods and goddesses of lesser power and importance. Ancient Greek and Roman religions were of this type. One supreme God, and multiple gods and goddesses who are all simply manifestations or aspects of the supreme God. [Hinduism](#) is one example; they recognize Brahman as the single deity. Some [Wiccans](#) believe in a single deity about which they know little. They call the deity "*The One*" or "*The All*." They recognize the God and Goddess as the male and female aspects of that supreme deity. One supreme God who rules over a country, and many other gods and goddesses who have similar jurisdiction over other territories. Liberal theologians believe that the ancient Israelites were henotheists; they worshipped Jehovah as the supreme God over Israel, but recognized the existence of Baal and other deities who ruled over other tribes.

Heptateuch: A pair of Greek words for "seven" and "container." It refers to the first seven books of the Hebrew Scriptures - the [Penteteuch](#) and the books of Joshua and Judges. Some theologians believe that these books should be considered as a unit because they believe that the books were composed from the same literary sources.

Heresy: beliefs that are forbidden by the policy-deciding body of a faith group. Heresy is a relative term, because one group's heresy is frequently another group's required belief or dogma, and vice-versa. Consider, for example, the criteria for salvation [as taught by three Christian groups](#): the Roman Catholic Church, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons), and Fundamentalist protestants. One group's required belief may also be the same group's condemned past heresy (and vice-versa). Heresies are inevitable in religion because there does not appear to be any mechanism by which religious disagreements can be resolved - either through reason or by [assessing the will of God](#).

Heresiologist: An individual who studies heresies.

Heresiology: The study of heresies.

Heretic: a person who believes in one or more heresies.

Hermeneutics: The word was derived from the Pagan Greek myth of Hermes. A study of methods used to interpreting the Bible.

Hermeticism: A Pagan religion that started in Egypt in the 2nd or 3rd century [BCE](#). Its followers believed that its beliefs were revealed to their founder Hermes by his divine father. They taught that a person on earth is a mortal god and that God is an immortal man. It was one of the main competitors to early Christianity. Some religious historians trace certain [Mormon](#) beliefs to Hermeticism.

Heterosexism: "...An ideological system that denies, denigrates, and stigmatizes any non-heterosexual form of behavior, identity, relationship, or community. Heterosexism is reflected by personal assumptions that everyone in the world is, or should be, heterosexual."

Heterosexual: A person who is sexually attracted only to members of the opposite sex. *Conservative Christian definition: a person who is sexually active with members of the opposite sex, and not with members of the same sex.*

Hexateuch: A theological term for the first six books of the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament): The [Torah](#) (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy) and the book of Joshua.

Higher criticism: The study of a section of the Bible to determine who wrote it, when it was written, its literary structure and its meaning.

Hijab: A scarf that many Muslim women use to cover their hair.

Hijrah: The flight of Muhammad and fellow believers from Mecca to Medina in 622 CE. The Islamic calendar dates from this time.

Hinduism: The third largest religion in the world, after Christianity and Islam. It is a henotheistic faith which exists in many hundreds of variations. It has about 750 million followers and is largely concentrated in India and Sri Lanka. Hinduism does not have a single founder, a specific theological system, a single system of morality, or a central religious organization. It consists of "*thousands of different religious groups that have evolved in India since 1500 BCE.*"

Holistic health, holistic medicine: Medical care involving the treatment of the whole person - body, spirit and mind. Many holistic techniques have never had their efficacy or safety evaluated.

Holocaust: From the Greek: "holos" (completely) and "kaustos" (burned sacrificial offering). When capitalized, the term usually refers to the Shoah, (a.k.a. Shoa and Sho'ah) the killing of five to seven million of European Jews by the Nazi government during World War II. Sometimes used to refer to the total Nazi extermination program, which included Jews, Roma (a.k.a Gypsies), Russians, Poles, other Slavs, [homosexuals](#), [Jehovah's Witnesses](#), etc. totaling ten to fourteen million humans. The Roma refer to the event as the Porajmos (devouring).

Holy Spirit (a.k.a. Holy Ghost): The third person in the Christian Trinity. Some faith groups consider him to be an active force. Historically, Christianity has taught that the Holy Spirit is a person, along with God the Father, and Yeshua of Nazareth (Jesus Christ).

Homeopathy: An alternative treatment of disease involving the consumption of natural materials that simulate the symptoms of the disease. These materials are first diluted in pure water to such an extent that there are generally no molecules of the original material left. The efficacy of this treatment is rejected by most medical experts. It has the potential of causing harm, because individuals may seek a cure through homeopathy, and ignore the potential for a cure from a physician. The latter generally involve medication and/or treatments whose efficacy and safety have been proven.

Homophobia: Any attitude, action or institutional structure which systematically treats an individual or group of individuals differently because of their [sexual orientation](#). See also [sexism](#), [racism](#), and [religism](#). The most common forms of homophobia in North America is

discrimination against homosexuals and bisexuals in employment, accommodation, ordination, church membership, and freedom to marry. However, it occasionally is manifested against heterosexuals. A secondary meaning is the belief that persons of one sexual orientation - normally heterosexuality - is inherently superior to persons who have other orientations. A tertiary meaning is fear or loathing of persons with a specific sexual orientation.

Homosexual: This term has at least two conflicting meanings: It is sometimes used to refer to **sexual feelings - what a person is:** Gays, lesbians, sociologists, psychologists, researchers into human sexuality, members of liberal and some mainline faith groups normally define this as: One of three normal and natural sexual orientations experienced by adults, involving an [exclusive, permanent, and unchosen](#) attraction to members of the same gender. It is probably set up by a person's genetic coding, and enabled by some unknown event in the environment in early childhood. *Usage by Evangelical/Fundamentalist and some mainline faith groups:* A form of **sexual behavior - what a person does:** A *perverted, abnormal and unnatural attraction to members of the same gender, hated by God, that can be [changed through prayer and counseling](#). It is caused by bad parenting or sexual molestation during childhood. It is chosen during teenage years, and is extremely addictive. Homosexuals can be attracted to members of the same gender only, or to persons of both genders.*

Houris: A [Muslim belief](#) that beautiful, virgin women who present in Paradise (Heaven)

Hudud: Punishments within Islam for spiritual or religious crimes.

Humanism: A term with a variety of meanings, ranging from a study of the humanities (languages, literature, philosophy, history, etc.) to secular humanism (see below).

Humanism, Secular: a non-theistic philosophy which promotes man as the measure of all things. It had its roots in the rationalism of the 18th Century and the free thought movement of the 19th Century.

Hyper-Calvinism: The belief by some followers of [Calvinism](#) that a person has no responsibility for their own salvation; it is all up to God to choose who will be saved and be destined to live eternity in Heaven, and who will not be saved and will spend eternity being tortured in Hell.

Hypnotism, hypnosis: A therapeutic technique in which the patient is placed in a trance. This places the patient in an extremely suggestive state in which [false memories](#) can be created.

Hypostatic union: The concept that Yeshua of Nazareth (Jesus Christ) has two natures: one fully divine and one fully human. This is the belief system - one of many - about the nature of Jesus that was adopted by the early Christian church and has remained the majority belief.

I Ching: A Chinese technique of predicting the future, based on a book by the same name - one of the five foundational books of Confucianism. Yellow stocks or rods are cast in order to select one of 64 hexagrams (patterns of six lines which may be broken or continuous).

Idol: This has two main meanings: A drawing, statue, or other representation of an item in heaven or earth, that is used for worship. Anything in life that takes a position of priority over one's relationship with God.

Ihram: Clothing worn by a male Muslim during the Hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca). It consists of two pieces of plain, white, unsewn cloth.

I.H.S.: An acronym for Isis, Horus, and Seb - the Egyptian trinity consisting of the Mother, the Child and the Father. The first three letters of the name Jesus, the Greek version of Yeshua.

Illuminati: (a.k.a. the enlightened ones) A group or individual who claim to be unusually enlightened. A secret philosophical and political society established by Adam Weishaupt in Germany in 1776. They promoted free thought and democracy. A game involving trading cards. A sinister organization believed to consist of evil men who control world finances, and whose goal is world domination through world government. Many consider this group to be non-existent.

Imam: A Muslim term for a national leader or the leader of worship in a mosque.

Immaculate Conception: The belief that before the birth of Mary (the mother of Jesus) was born, she was preserved from original sin at the time of her conception, circa 20 [BCE](#). It is widely but incorrectly believed to refer to Jesus' conception, circa 5 to 8 BCE.

Immanence: the concept that deity is very much associated with creation, is all-present in the world, and is close to believers.

Immerse, immersion: Baptists and some other Christian groups generally translate the Greek words baptizo and baptisma as implying the total immersion of a convert during baptism. Many other Christian denominations believe that the words can also imply washing, without any specific description of the method. Thus, a baptism by sprinkling is biblically valid.

Imminence: the belief that an event is about to occur in the near future. e.g. the Second Coming.

Immorality: Behavior which transgresses a given system of morals; incorrect behavior. Liberal and conservative Christians differ in many matters over what is moral, even though both sincerely believe that their positions are biblically based. Moral standards change over time, even within a given religious group. Church schisms were common in the mid 19th century over slavery because parts of a denomination considered slavery to be profoundly immoral, while other believers believed that it was condoned, regulated and accepted by the Bible. Major moral shifts over the past 150 years have involved slavery, inoculation of children, birth control, abortion, sexism, racial segregation, discipline of children through the use of pain, and homophobia. God has traditionally been considered to be immortal, there having been no point at which he has not existed. Humans who have been saved have traditionally been considered to be immortal in that they will continue to exist in Heaven after death. Most Christian groups teach that the unsaved are also immortal in that they will continue to exist in Hell for all eternity after death. Other faith groups teach [annihilationism](#).

Impeccability: The concept that [Jesus Christ could not have sinned](#), even if he had wanted to.

Imputation: Adam and Eve's sinful disobeying of God's instruction when they [ate the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil](#) has been assigned to their children, their grandchildren, and all the way to present-day humanity forever. [Holding one person responsible for the sins of another individual](#) is rare in the field of religion and in secular moral systems. However, it is quite common in the Bible.

Inability, total: Alternative term for *Total Depravity*.

Incarnation: The concept that God became a man and dwelt among other humans. This was rejected by the Gnostic Christians, the Ebionites and other Jewish Christians, but accepted by Pauline Christians.

Inclusion: In general usage, inclusion means to allow people into a group; i.e. excluding nobody. In relation to [salvation](#), the "*Gospel of Inclusion*" means a belief that everyone - or almost everyone - will be saved, will attain [Heaven and avoid Hell](#). This is a heresy according to conservative Christians, and an accurate interpretation of the Bible according to liberal Christians.

Inclusivism: The recognition that one's belief system is the only true and valid one. Beliefs of other religions contain some truth, and their followers are deserving of respect, even though those beliefs might be in conflict with one's own view of the truth. Opposing beliefs are [exclusivism](#) and [pluralism](#). [More details](#)

Incubus: A male demon who would visit women at night and engage in sexual activity. This belief was commonly held during the late Middle Ages and Renaissance. There were also female demons, called succubi who were believed to visit men.

Indulgence: The practice by which a person could pay money to the church or do a good deed and obtain remission of the temporal punishment due to sin. After the Protestant Reformation, cash no longer became an acceptable way to obtain an indulgence.

Inerrant: When applied to a sacred text like the Bible, *inerrancy* is the belief that, as originally written, its contents are infallible, totally free of error and totally authoritative. Many religions, particularly their conservative wings, believe in the inerrancy of their sacred texts.

Inerrancy, limited: This is the belief that the Bible is only inerrant on matters of moral, spiritual and religious truth. That is, biblical passages that describes cosmology, origins of life, the Earth and the rest of the universe, place names, some events, etc. are not necessarily accurate.

Infallible: When applied to a sacred text like the Bible, *infallible* means that the text is fully trustworthy. i.e. it does not deceive the reader into falsehood. There are [problems with this concept](#), because even within the conservative wing of Christianity, Bible experts reach many different conclusions about [divorce](#), [hell](#), the [millennium](#), [Book of Revelation](#), and [creation/evolution](#), etc. Since these theologians' beliefs are mutually exclusive, most must be wrong. Since they were all derived from the Bible, the concept of biblical infallibility is suspect. Within the Roman Catholic Church, the belief that the pope can speak on matters of faith and morals without error. This belief was promulgated in 1870. The pope stripped Hans K ng of his credentials as a teacher of Catholic theology, largely because of his questioning of the doctrine of Papal infallibility.

Infidel: a person who does not believe in your particular religion, denomination or religious tradition. Similar to "Unbeliever" but more of a "snarl" word.

Initial evidence: A doctrine formed from the Book of Acts. It holds that speaking in tongues is the initial evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Both the *United Pentecostal Church* and

the *Assemblies of God* believe this doctrine. The, UPC further believes that this experience is essential to salvation. i.e. if you haven't spoken in tongues, you haven't been saved. 2

Inquisition: An organization within the Roman Catholic Church which was responsible for the elimination of heretics. They were the final court of appeal for those charged with heresy. Those who could be proven to be heretics were turned over to the civil authority for execution. This arm of the church was created in 1542 as the "*Sacred Congregation of the Universal Inquisition.*" It went through two name changes, being called the "*Congregatio pro Doctrina Fidei*" (*Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith*) in 1965. "Sacred" was dropped in 1983. It was headed by Cardinal Josef Ratzinger until his election as pope in 2005.

INRI: An acronym for the Latin phrase "*Iesus Nazarenus Rex Iudaeorum*" which means: "*Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews*"

Inspiration: When applied to a sacred text like the Bible, *inspiration* means that the God affected the thought processes of the writers and prevented them from writing any material that was in error. A logical result of inspiration is that the original text of the Bible was inerrant.

Intention: The belief in the Roman Catholic church that the efficacy of the administration of a sacrament is dependant on the priest having the proper intent.

Intercession: An activity of Christ in which he advocates to God the Father the in favor of saved individuals

Interdict, Interdiction: A prohibition by the pope that can deprive individual persons, groups, communities and even nations of all priestly ministry. Thus, they no longer had access to the sacraments of the church.

Interfaith (a.k.a. inter-faith): An attempt to initiate dialog, cooperation, and understanding among individuals of two different faiths. It is also used to refer to a relationship or marriage between people of different faiths. It is occasionally used as a synonym for "[multi-faith](#)." Unfortunately, the term "faith" is defined differently by various religious groups. For example, some conservative Protestants regard a marriage to a person who is not of their denomination to be an interfaith marriage. Other conservative Protestants would regard liberal Christians, Roman Catholics, Mormons, etc. as being of a different faith. Still other Christians interpret "interfaith" as involving another religion, as in a Christian-Buddhist exchange.

Interfaithism: A belief that all religions are equally valid; they all lead to God. This word is used almost entirely among conservative Protestants. One of the two main meanings of the word "[pluralism](#)" is a synonym for "*interfaithism*."

Interreligious: A synonym for "*interfaith*."

Intincture: To some Christians, this is the communion practice in which the believer takes the bread or host, carries it to the wine, dips it, and then consumes it. In the Roman Catholic church, intincture involves the priest dipping the host in the wine and placing it on the tongue of the communicant.

Irresistible Grace: This is the fourth of *The Five Points of Calvinism*: the belief that it is impossible for a person whom God has [elected](#) to avoid coming to a knowledge of God.

Irtidrd: Literally: "*turning back*". In Islam, this is the act of apostasy - leaving Islam for another religion or for a secular lifestyle.

Islam: The second largest religion in the world. It has over 1,164 million followers, about 20% of the world's population, and is rapidly growing. It is based on the Qur'an, which is said to have been dictated to the Prophet Mohammed by the angel Jibril (a.k.a. Jibreel; Gabriel in English) in 622 [CE](#). This is the largest of the purely monotheistic faiths. Members are found in large numbers throughout Africa, the Middle East and Asia.

Islamic: Synonym for "Muslim," a follower of Islam.

Islamists: These are Fundamentalist Muslims who are attempting to replace secular governments with Islamic theocracies. Mainstream Islamists do this by peaceful means of persuasion. Violent, extremist, radical, militant Fundamentalist Islamists use violence and terrorism as their main means of effecting change.

Islamophobia: Fear of Muslims, hatred of Muslims, or a desire to limit the civil liberties of Muslims. This word corresponds to sexism, racism, homophobia, and xenophobia in areas related to gender, race, sexual orientation and nationality. It is often caused by a person attributing the actions of a few extreme, violent, Fundamentalist Muslim terrorists to the entire population of Muslims.

Isogesis: Reading something into a document. One starts with a belief and searches a document for supporting passages. Often used with reference to the Bible. A potential hazard is that the interpreter may quote a verse out of context with considering the rest of the passage or the rest of the Bible.

Ka'bah: A structure that Muslims believe was originally constructed by Abraham and his eldest son. Millions of Muslims orient themselves towards the Ka'bah every day during prayers.

Kabala (also spelled Kabalah, Kaballa, Kaballah, Kabbala, Kabbalah, Kabballa, Kabballah, and various spellings starting with the letter C and Q) A Jewish mystical tradition, See Cabbalah.

Kama: From the Sanskrit word for love and desire. Kama is the Hindu God of love and erotic desire.

Karma: the integrated collection of good and evil that a person accumulates during one's present and former lives. It is believed by Hindus, Buddhists and some others that the amount and type of karma will determine a person's state when they are reincarnated in their next life. Similarly, the sum total of one's acts in previous lives determines one's current life. During their lives, most people have performed good and bad deeds and thus have generated good and bad karma. Thus their next life will be a mixture of misery and unhappiness. Although the term normally applies to individuals, there exists group karma, family karma and even national karma. Some New Agers and Neopagans believe in Karma, but tend to restrict its effect to a person's present lifetime.

Kenosis: A Greek word which means "emptying." Paul used the term in [Philippians 2:7](#) to describe his belief about the process by which Yeshua of Nazareth (Jesus Christ) discarded his supernatural powers and became human.

Ketubah: A Jewish marriage contract which specifies the groom's obligations to the bride.

Khutba: A Muslim term referring to a Friday sermon in a mosque.

Kippah: (also spelled kippa): A head covering traditionally used only by male Jews. "...*the Code of Jewish Law says, 'It is forbidden to walk four cubits without a head covering!'*"¹
Synonym: yarmulke.

Koine: "*The common Greek language as distinct from Classical Greek.*"¹ The Septuagint and the Christian Scriptures (New Testament) were written in Koine Greek.

Koinonia: A Greek word (pronounced Koy-no-NEE-ah). It was used in the Christian Scriptures (New Testament) to describe the early Pauline Christian church. It means "*communication,*" "*fellowship*", or "*communion.*"

Koran: The name of the God-inspired text of Islam. Most Muslims prefer an alternative spelling: Qur'an.

Kosher: A set of Jewish dietary rules specified in the Hebrew Scriptures and practiced by many Jews.

Krishna: The eighth or ninth incarnation of a Hindu god Vishnu.

Ksana: A Buddhist term for a short interval of time; about 13.3 millisecond. It takes 4,500 ksanans to equal one minute.

Last supper: The meal that Jesus and his disciples took just before Jesus' arrest. The term is also used to refer to [communion](#).

LDS: Acronym for the [Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints](#).

Lectionary: A series of Bible passages that are read throughout the year in a church service. Often, the sermon is based on the passage just read.

Legalism: The belief that one's salvation depends upon strictly following religious laws and rituals. The belief that salvation is at least partly dependent on one's good works.

Lectio divina: Latin for "*divine reading.*" It is an ancient method of prayer, in which the person meditates on a short passage of the Bible or other written material and waits for God to speak to them through the words of the text.

Lent: A period of spiritual preparation for Easter. It starts 40 days before Easter Sunday in the Roman Catholic church. It starts eight weeks before Easter in the Eastern Orthodox churches. In the early Church, recent converts were taught in preparation for their baptism.

Levirite marriage: From the Latin word "*levir*" - husband's brother. The practice, required by Mosaic law, by which a widow and her former-husband's brother were required to marry. This inevitably involved serial rape in many cases. A child born to the couple would be credited to the former husband.

Liberal Christianity: A religious movement that holds beliefs which are opposite to those of conservative Christians: Emphasizes human rights, the findings of science, and the higher criticism (analysis) of the Bible; Largely disregards biblical miracles, the infallibility, [inspiration](#) and [inerrancy](#) of the Bible, the Virgin birth; Ignores [passages in the Bible which are immoral](#) by today's standards - e.g. those dealing with human slavery, oppression of women, religious intolerance, torture of prisoners, genocide, burning some hookers alive, etc.

Liberation theology: The interpretation of religious faith from the perspective of the poor, oppressed and victimized. It seeks God in a world of injustice. Found most often within Christianity.

Lilith: (a.k.a Lillith): Originally, she was a female demon who formed part of Babylonian and Canaanite Pagan religion. She was incorporated into the religion of the ancient Hebrews and is mentioned in Isaiah 34:14. The *Revised Standard Version* of the Bible refers to her as a Night Hag. She was believed to be a female demon that seduced men, terrified children at night, etc. Some later Jewish sources identified her as the first wife of Adam, created at the same time as he was. She didn't submit to Adam's will and was banished from the Garden of Eden. Eve then became Adam's second wife. Some modern-day feminists have adopted Lilith as a heroine.

Limited atonement: This is the third of *The Five Points of Calvinism*: the belief that Jesus did not die to save all humans. He died only for the sake of specific sins of those who are saved. Sometimes called "*Particular Redemption*."

Literary criticism: With reference to the Bible, a method of analyzing passages "*that seeks to discover the underlying literary sources, stylistic features, type or genre of literature, authorship, unity, and date of a text, for their value in interpreting the text's meaning in its original historical context.*"

Liturgy: From the Greek word "*leitourgia*" meaning "service." Forms and content of public service for church worship as defined by various faith groups.

Logos: An ancient Pagan Greek term meaning "*word*" or "*reason*", and used to indicate the concept that the universe was governed by a higher form of intelligence. St. Paul and other Christians have used it to describe Jesus as the "*Logos of God*" - the concept that the eternal thoughts of God were made incarnate (endowed with a body) in Jesus.

Lord's Supper: See [Communion](#).

Lower criticism: The analysis of available evidence to determine the original text of the Bible.

Lucifer: Angel of light. Sometimes considered a synonym for Satan.

Lutheranism: The group of denominations that trace their roots to Martin Luther and the German Reformation in the early 16th century. In the U.S. the largest Lutheran denomination is the liberal *Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* (ELCA). Second largest is the conservative *Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod*.

LXX: Roman symbol for the number 70. An abbreviation used to refer to the Septuagint translation of the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) into Koine Greek. The translation was

allegedly made by 70 or 72 individuals. This was the version of the Hebrew Scriptures used by the Christians in the primitive Christian church.

Magic, Magick: The use of blessings, spells, incantations etc. to change outcomes of events. [Wiccans](#) and other Neo-pagans are limited to what is popularly called "White Magic" which is devoid of control, domination, harm or manipulation. [Satanists](#) are free to return harmful magic as vengeance for any harm done to them by others.

Mainline or Mainstream: This is a term that is often used to refer to Christian denominations which are more liberal than [Evangelicals](#). It is not a well-defined word with a universally accepted meaning. In a study comparing Evangelical and mainline denominations, a Princeton University study included the following as large mainline groups: American Baptist Churches in the USA, Episcopal Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Presbyterian Church (USA), United Church of Christ, and the United Methodist Church. ¹ Some theologians and commentators divide Christianity into three groups: Evangelical, mainline and liberal.

Mala beads: This is a string of beads - 108 is a common number - of uniform size. There is one larger bead, called the guru mother or focal bead. They are sometimes called "*prayer beads*," "*worry beads*" or "*Buddhist rosaries*". The beads can be made from a variety of materials, such as sandalwood, teak, glass, bone, gemstones, and coconut. The beads are used as counters to help Buddhists, Hindus, and yoga practitioners repeat their mantra a certain number of times. They can also help a person stay focused during meditation.

Mandala: An object that one can focus on during meditation. It is usually a painted diagram that shows the unfolding of the cosmos.

Mandap: A sacred wedding tent used by Hindus.

Manicheanism: A religion which synthesized elements of Buddhism, Christianity, Gnosticism, and Zoroastrianism. It was founded by Mani (a.k.a. Manicheus) in Mesopotamia during the third century [CE](#). He believed in two equal deities. One is the Judeo-Christian God who is good, and is responsible for human souls and minds. The other is Satan who is evil and is responsible for human bodies, passions and emotions. It considered sexuality to be evil. Its followers practiced asceticism.

Manifestation. The founder of the [Christadelphians](#), John Thomas, taught his belief about deity. Rejecting the Trinity, he wrote that "*...the Father is God and Jesus is God; and we may add, so are all the brethren of Jesus gods; and a multitude which no man can number*."

Mantra: A word or phrase which is repeated continually in order to achieve relaxation or meditation.

Mara: The Buddhist devil.

Marianist: A group of Christians in the 5th century CE who believed that the Virgin Mary is the "*queen of heaven*." They believed in a Trinity composed of God, Mary and Jesus Christ.

Masjid: This is a [Muslim](#) term for a [mosque](#) - a house of worship.

Masonic order: See [Freemasonry](#)

Materialism: The belief that only material, physical objects exist. Such items as thoughts, soul, and spirit are properties of the human mind.

Meditation: "Meditation can be considered a technique, or practice. It usually involves concentrating on an object, such as a flower, a candle, a sound or word, or the breath. Over time, the number of random thoughts diminishes. More importantly, your attachment to these thoughts, and your identification with them, progressively become less.

Medium: An individual who claims to be able to make contact with the spirits of dead people.

Mennonites: A faith group which originated within the Anabaptist movement. They hold a variety of theological beliefs, but are all opposed to infant baptism and warfare.

Messiah: Derived from the Hebrew "*meshiach*" which means "*consecrated person*" or "*anointed one*." It is translated as the Greek word "*Christos*," and the English "*Christ*." In the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament), the Messiah was an anticipated "anointed one": a king of Israel and military leader who would lead the Jewish people to independence from foreign oppression and occupation. The concept of a Messiah who was executed and later resurrected does not appear in the Hebrew Scriptures. According to the Talmud: "*The only difference between the world today and the world after the messiah comes is that when the messiah comes we will be free of foreign subjugation.*" In Christianity, a title used to refer to Yeshua of Nazareth: Jesus Christ - considered the Son of God and second personality of the Trinity.

Messianic Judaism: A conservative Christian religion which blends Jewish tradition and ceremonies with Fundamentalist theological beliefs about Jesus Christ.

Metaethics: A study of ethical systems to determine whether they are based on objective foundations.

Methodist: An individual, congregation, or denomination whose spiritual heritage can be traced to the teachings of John Wesley. He was an 18th century English preacher, who was influenced by the Pietist movement which started in the 17th century. "*Methodist*" was first used as a derisive title to refer to the very strict daily schedules observed by members of the *Holy Club* - a religious society which Wesley organized in Oxford.

Midrash: From a Hebrew word "*darash*," meaning "*to seek out*." According to Rabbi Donna Berman, "*Midrash uses [allegory](#) and additional narrative to fill in the gaps left by an often terse biblical text. Midrash is creative and imaginative. It can take the form of artwork, dance, music, as well as poetry and prose.*" Midrash can also refer to a book which contains a compilation of Midrashic teachings.

Mihrab: This is a niche in the wall of a mosque. It points in the direction of Qibla - the direction of the shorter great circle route to the Kaaba in Mecca, Saudi Arabia.

Minaret: A tower located beside a mosque. It is often used when Muslims are called to prayer.

Mind control cult: a [religious group](#) which uses severe domination and manipulation to rigidly control its followers. Some in the [anti-cult movement](#) believe that members of these groups lose

their will to think clearly and almost become zombies. There is little or no evidence of that actually happening.

Millennium: Religious meaning: an interval of 1000 years after Armageddon when, according to Revelation, Jesus Christ will rule on earth. Secular meanings: the beginning of a year ending in "000" or "001" as in "2000" or "2001."

Millennialism: The belief that current society will disintegrate and be replaced with a perfect new world. Some 24% of American adults believe that Jesus Christ will return to earth during their lifetime; most believe that this event will usher in a new world order.

Mind control: A spiritually abusive environment in which followers of a faith group are manipulated in order to reduce their ability to think critically. The goal is to turn the membership into near robots who are incapable of independent reasoning and judgment. There is no consensus on whether new religious movements utilize mind control techniques. The existence of mind control is a major part of the belief system of the [anti-cult movement](#) (ACM). Those in the ACM teach that new religious movements (which they call "cults") widely practice mind control and other psychologically abusive methods. Sociologists and psychologists who have studied new religious movements generally deny that it exists.

Mind sciences: A religious movement which believes that humans are divine beings who can change reality through their mind and thoughts.

Minimalism, minimalists: A group of historians, archaeologists and theologians who view the biblical account of creation, the flood, the tower of Babel, the patriarchs, the exodus as religious myth without any historical reality. They believe that the histories in the Hebrew Scriptures were of recent creation.

Minyan: A quorum of ten or more male Jewish adults - the number required to conduct a communal worship service.

Miracle: An event in which God suspends one or more natural laws and makes an impossible outcome happen. The stopping of the apparent movement of the sun across the sky, as mentioned in the Bible, is regarded by some as a miracle.

Missal: A Roman Catholic book which contains all of the mass prayers and readings for three years of Sundays and two years of weekdays.

Modalism: The belief that God is a single entity who has appeared in different modes at different times. He appeared as the Father in the Old Testament, as Jesus during the first century [CE](#), and has since taken the form of the Holy Spirit.

Modernism: In a religious sense, the term refers to a movement which started in the 19th century which was skeptical of traditional Christian dogma, such as the inspiration and [inerrancy](#) of the Bible. Modernists applied rationalistic thinking to studies of the Bible and of religious belief. The Bible was studied as a historical document rather than as the Word of God. The [Fundamentalist](#) movement within Christianity was created largely as a response to modernism.

Mohammed: See: [Muhammad](#), the preferred spelling.

Moksha: A Hindu term that means liberation and release from [samsara](#) - the changing world and the cycle of birth and rebirth. "...*this liberation seemed to involve some sort of absorption into the Universal Spirit or the Absolute and the loss of one's individual identity.*"

Monarchianism: A Christian heresy which taught that God is a single entity and that Jesus was a pure man, born of a [virgin](#), who was adopted by God.

Monastery: A building where an intentional religious community lives according to a lifestyle which often includes vows, religious exercises, contemplation, meditation, and prayer.

Monism: The belief that what people perceive as deity, humanity and the rest of the universe is in fact all of one substance - that divisions among the body, mind, flesh, spirit, material, physical are not real. All are simply aspects of one being.

Monolatry: Belief that multiple deities exist, although only one is to be worshiped.

Monophysite: A person or religious group which believes in Monophysitism. The *Ethiopian Church* holds to this belief and is thus regarded by many Christian denominations as heretics or schismatics. They prefer the term "**non-Chalcedonian**" rather than "monophysite."

Monophysitism: A belief that Jesus Christ only had a single nature, and that it was divine. This contrasts with [Diophysitism](#) and the [hypostatic union](#).

Monotheist: One who believes in the existence of only one deity, usually male. See also henotheism.

Morality: A system which differentiates between right and wrong conduct. In practice, it often refers to sexual conduct.

Moral Rearmament: An inter-religious group organized by Frank Buchman to reform the world, one person at a time. It was founded in 1929 as the Oxford Group and renamed Moral Rearmament in 1938. It promoted absolute prity, unselfishness, honesty and love.

Mormonism: A group of denominations including *The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* and the *Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints*. Founded by Joseph Smith in New York state in 1830, they teach that Jesus spent time in Central and South America after his crucifixion, spreading the gospel to Aboriginal peoples throughout the Americas. Smith stated that as a result of an angelic visitation, hw was shown the location of golden plates containing the *Book of Mormon*, one of the denominations' sacred texts. He also found the Urim and Thummin which enabled him to translate the plates into English. Both latter dissapeared. They abandoned the [practice of polygyny](#) during the 19th century and racial discrimination within the priesthood in 1978. They have about 11 million members worldwide and are growing rapidly.

Mortal sin: A Roman Catholic classification of serious offenses against God or the church. Unless cleared by through confession and absolution, it would cause an individual to end up in Hell after death. Lighter offenses are called venial sins, and can be expiated by various good works and activities.

Mosque: "Masjid" is the name used by Muslims to refer to their house of worship. Mosque is the English version of that term. It literally means "*place of prostration*." There are about 1,209 masjids in the U.S. and on the order of 100 in Canada.

Muhammad: Within Islam, he is considered the final and greatest prophet. He is the founder of Islam.

Multi-faith (a.k.a. multifaith): An attempt to initiate dialog, cooperation, and understanding among individuals of many different faiths. It is occasionally used as a synonym for "[interfaith](#)." Unfortunately, the term "faith" is defined differently by various religious groups. For example, some conservative Christians regard a person who is not of their denomination to be from a different faith. Other conservative Christians would regard liberal Christians as being of a different faith. Still other Christians interpret "multifaith" as involving other religions, as in a Christian-Jewish-Muslim exchange.

Multiverse: A concept accepted by some scientists that our universe is only one of "*multiple universes bubbling, colliding and budding off each other*."

Murtadd: Literally: "*one who turns the back*." In [Islam, this refers to an apostate](#) - one who rejects the religion.

Murtad Fitri: Literally: apostate - natural. A person born of a Muslim parent who later rejects Islam.

Murtad Milli: Literally: apostate - from the community. A person who converted to Islam and later rejected the religion.

Muslim: a follower of Islam. It is sometimes misspelled "Moslem" which is offensive to some Muslims.

Mystery religion: This term is most often used to refer to a group of religions in ancient Greece and Rome which existed in competition with the official state religions. They "*...offered personal salvation through initiation into an enlightened group bound by some special secret, often involving the promise of an afterlife, a recompense for present miseries. Hence mystery religions had great appeal to the powerless and dispossessed.*" , Some consider the primitive Christian movement to have been a mystery religion. Contemporary faith groups, such as [Gnosticism](#), [Mormonism](#), [Wicca](#), other [Neopagan](#) groups, etc., are sometimes called mystery religions today.

Mysticism: The belief and practice of a third form of knowledge - one which is beyond sense knowledge and knowledge by inference. "*The immediate feeling of unity of the self with God; it is nothing, therefore, but the fundamental feeling of religion, the religious life at its very heart and centre.*" Otto Pflieger, 19th-century scholar.

Mysticism: The third major way of knowing reality - the other two being faith and science. Mysticism involves "*...inward perception of the mind, internal illumination, or special revelation...*"

Myth: A traditional story that is not literally true, but which generally portrays fundamental spiritual and religious truths. There are probably on the order of 500 creation myths among the

many faith groups in the world. Most, or all, do not represent reality. But many contain much wisdom.

Name it and Claim it: (a.k.a. Word of Faith movement, Health & Wealth Gospel, Positive Confession, and Faith-formula). A group of conservative Protestant para-church ministries which focus on "anointed" ministers and the health, wealth, and success of their viewers and donors. MinistryWatch estimates that their total income is in excess of a half billion dollars annually. ²

Naturalism: The belief that phenomena in the universe are explained by natural laws, and that there are no supernatural forces at work.

Naturalistic Evolution: The belief that new species of animals develop from existing species over a very long interval of time, in response to purely natural forces and processes - i.e. without the intervention of a deity.

Near-death Experience: (acronym NDE): An often profoundly moving experience that is sometimes felt by persons who have clinically died and been brought back to life. It often involves the perception of traveling through a tube towards a light. It is often associated with warm feelings of acceptance and love. Some neurologists believe that the NDE does not reflect reality, but is a normal hallucinogenic experience generated by a brain that is being starved of oxygen.

Necromancy: An attempt to communicate with the spirits of the dead. This is forbidden in the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament).

Nenju: Buddhist meditation beads.

Neo-orthodoxy: (a.k.a. Barthianism) A movement within Christianity which was a reaction against liberalism, and based on the leadership of Karl Barth (1886-1968). He taught that God is "*so far transcendent above man that there could be no communication between man and God.*" God cannot be described in human language. Humans can only communicate with God through the Bible, in spite of its human origins. Barth accepted the theory of evolution and higher criticism.

Neopagan: (a.k.a. Neo-pagan, Pagan): A person who follows a religion which is reconstructed from, or based upon, an ancient Pagan religion. e.g. the [Druidic](#) religion is based on the faith and practices of the ancient Celtic professional class; followers of [Asatru](#) adhere to the ancient, pre-Christian Norse religion; [Wiccans](#) trace their roots back to the pre-Christian era in Europe. Other Neo-pagans follow Roman, Greek, Egyptian and other traditions. No Neopagan tradition recognizes an all-evil deity similar to the Christian and Islamic Satan. Neopagans respect other religions and the right of people to follow the faith of their choice. *Conservative usage: a form of [Satanism](#). Neopagans hate Christianity.*

Neo-Pentecostalism: A synonym for the Charismatic movement.

Neotheism (Open Theism a.k.a. or Open view of God): A belief that God is not omniscient. In particular, God does not know what will happen in the future with precision. Supporters of this belief back up their position with biblical quotations.

New Age: Although it is often referred to as a religion, the New Age is in reality an almost completely decentralized and unorganized spiritual movement. It is composed of metaphysical bookstores, seminar leaders, authors, teachers and user/believers of a variety of techniques, such as channeling, past life regressions, pyramid science, crystal power, etc. It is a free-flowing spiritual movement - a network of believers and practitioners - where book publishers take the place of a central organization; seminars, conventions, books and informal groups replace of sermons and religious services. *Conservative usage: closely coordinated groups including occultists, Wiccans, Satanists, astrologers, channelers, spiritists, etc.*

New Covenant Theology: A Christian concept which teaches that God's revelations in the Christian Scriptures (a.k.a. New Testament) possesses a distinctively "new character." Jesus is seen as having changed God's laws as they had been earlier revealed in the Hebrew Scriptures (a.k.a. Old Testament). The laws of Moses are seen as temporary revelations to be superseded with Jesus' disclosures. See also "[covenant theology](#)."

New Jerusalem: A holy city, described in Revelation 21:1-2, descending to earth 1000 years after the battle of Armageddon.

New Thought: A group of metaphysical Christian faith groups including [Unity](#), Religious Science, Science of Mind, Divine Science, [Christian Science](#), etc.

Nikah: Muslim term for marriage.

Nililist: One who rejects almost every type of assertion about the nature of the universe. Usually attributes no significance to humankind or to any meaning for existence.

Nirvana: This is a Buddhist term which means a state of mind where all suffering and dissonant emotions which give rise to suffering have ceased and one is released from samsara - the endless cycle of birth, life, death and rebirth.

Normative Ethics: a study into ultimate values and how people should live their lives. Normative principle: The belief, held by Lutherans and Anglicans that whatever is not specifically forbidden in the Bible is allowed in the church's practice, worship and organization.

Numerology: The use of numerical analysis to uncover hidden knowledge. One of the most famous examples of numerology involves the reference to the [number of the beast - 666 - in Revelation 13:18](#). This has led to numerous interpretations.

Occult: There is no generally accepted meaning for this term. The term has been used to refer to such unrelated topics as astrology, palm reading, the Masonic Order, [Satanism](#), tarot card reading, New Age Spirituality and [Wicca](#). Some definitions include: A group of mostly unrelated spiritual and/or magical activities, the detailed knowledge of which is kept secret from the general public. A set of mostly unrelated divination and/or spiritual practices or activities which are not part of a person's faith or of any large world religion. An activity which involves elements of divination, evil sorcery, magic and/or supernaturally gained concrete experiences or truths. Conservative usage: Satanism the core element of the occult; most of the remaining occult groups are either forms of Satanism or are recruiting groups for Satanism. All Occultic groups are anti-Christian. Rituals are based on demonic powers and fakery. Heavy metal rock music, [fantasy role](#) games etc. are often considered occult pastimes .

Old Catholic Church: This is a Christian denomination which split from the Roman Catholic Church in 1723 because of the Vatican's condemnation of Jansenism and its refusal to allow the democratic selection of an archbishop. Other Roman Catholics joined in 1870 in protest to the decree of papal infallibility. They allow their priests to marry.

Oleh: A Jewish term referring to a Jew who is immigrating into Israel. **Olim:** Plural form of "Oleh."

Omnibeneficence: The concept that God is all-good.

Omnipotence: The concept that God has infinite power; he is able to do anything that he wishes that is consistent with his own personality.

Omnipresence: The concept that God is in all places at all times.

Omniscience: The concept that god is in possession of all knowledge. The [theodicy paradox](#) addresses the apparent conflict involved in God having the above four attributes simultaneously.

Oneness Pentecostalism (a.k.a. Jesus Only): A movement within Pentecostalism which rejects the Trinity and adopts a belief system similar to [Monarchianism](#). They believe that one must be baptized in the name of Jesus only in order to be saved. If one does not speak in tongues, then they have not been saved.

Open Theism (a.k.a. Neotheism or Open view of God): A belief that God is not omniscient. In particular, God does not know what will happen in the future with precision. Supporters of this belief back up their position with biblical quotations.

Opus Dei: From a Latin phrase meaning "*the work of God*." The informal name of *The Personal Prelature of the Holy Cross and Opus Dei*. It is a very conservative Roman Catholic lay organization organized in 1928, whose members have a strong dedication to the Vatican.

Original Sin: "*Fallen man's natural sinfulness, the hereditary depravity and corruption of human nature because of Adam's fall.*"¹ That is, Adam and Eve's transgression when they ate of the forbidden fruit opened a gulf between God and humanity. Pollution from that sin has been inherited by all of Adam and Eve's descendents to the present day.

Orthodox: In a religious sense: When written in lower case, it generally means a traditional or historical belief. When written in upper case, it generally refers to Eastern Orthodoxy.

Orthodox, Eastern: One of the major divisions within Christianity (the others being Roman Catholicism, Anglicanism and Protestantism). It consists of 15 autocephalous churches. Each is headed by a bishop; most are related to a specific country, as in Serbian, Russian and Greek Orthodox. The Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches had been drifting apart in belief, practice and ritual for centuries before they formally split in 1054 CE. Each now regards themselves to be the only true Christian church.

OSAS: This is an acronym for "*Once Saved, Always Saved*." It is the belief, common among many conservative Protestants, that once a person repents of their sin and trusts Jesus as Lord

and Savior, then they are forever [saved](#) and will attain heaven after death. They cannot lose their salvation by changing their belief or by engaging in an evil activity.

Ouija Board: A game using a board which is marked with letters, numbers and the words "yes" and "no." A pointer on a raised platform selects a character or word. One or two players place their fingers on the platform, which moves -- apparently by magic. Many conservative Christians believe that this game is profoundly evil and dangerous and that the pointer is moved by demonic forces. Scientists who have studied the physics of the board have generally concluded that the pointer is unconsciously moved by the players.

Out-of-body Experience: (acronym OBE): See [Near-death experience](#).

Pacifism of Islam: The belief in Islam that war is an abnormal activity opposed to the will of God. It is sometimes forced on Muslims. When entered into must be limited, humane, and involve minimal damage to the land and possessions.

Padre: This is the word for "*father*" in the Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish languages. Its origin can be traced to the Latin word "*pater*," which also means father. It is often used to refer to a member of the Christian clergy, particularly one who is a military chaplain.

Paedobaptism: Baptism of infants.

Pagan: This word has many unrelated meanings. Some definitions are: Wiccans and other Neopagans sometimes use *Pagan* as a synonym for *Neopagan*. Religious and social conservatives often use the term as a general-purpose "*snarl*" word to refer to cultures and religions very different from the speaker's. a person who is neither [Christian](#), a [Muslim](#) or a [Jew](#). an animistic, spirits-and-essences filled belief system, usually polytheistic. It is based upon direct perception of the forces of nature and usually involves the use of idols, talismans and taboos in order to convey respect for these forces and beings. The ancient religions of Egypt, Greece, Rome, and other civilizations are often referred to as Pagan religions. Societies surrounding the ancient Israelites are often referred to as Pagan.

Pagoda: A religious building, especially a multistory Buddhist tower in the Far East, erected as a memorial or shrine.

Palm reading: Attempting to foretell a person's future and reveal their past through an analysis of the lines on a person's hand. Fortune tellers generally have great confidence in this technique. Many conservative Christians consider it a dangerous form of divination forbidden in the Bible.

Panentheism, Panentheist: (From the Greek pan-en-theos which means all-in-God) Like Pantheism, Panentheism includes the belief that God is in everything. The belief that the entire universe - substances, forces and laws -- is God - the universe is God's body. But, in addition, God is seen as transcending the universe. This belief is seen in Process Theology and in some components of [New Age](#) belief. Leading Panentheists in the present and recent past are John Cobb, Charles Hartshorne, Shubert Ogden, and Alfred North Whitehead.

Pantheon: A group of Gods and/or Goddesses worshiped by a single religion. One example was the Greek pantheon. The term originated with the name of a building: the Pantheon -- a circular temple built in the first century [BCE](#) in Rome, and dedicated to all of the deities.

Parachurch: A religious organization that operates outside of a denomination or sect. Their membership, catchment area, and message often cut across denominational lines. Typical examples are Promise Keepers, Focus on the Family, the Family Research Council.

Parousia: From the Greek word "*parousia*," meaning "*presence*." The second coming when many Christians expect Jesus Christ to return to earth. This is a major focus of most conservative Christians.

Parthenogenesis: Virgin birth.

Partial life: This is a Jewish term to refer to the status of a fetus. In [Jewish law, a fetus normally becomes a full human person](#) when its head emerges from the birth canal. Before that event, the fetus is considered of lesser importance than a full human being. The same term has many other meanings in biology and manufacturing.

Particular Redemption: This is the third of *The Five Points of Calvinism*: the belief that Jesus did not die to save all humans. He died only for the sake of specific sins of those who are saved. Sometimes called "*Limited atonement*."

Passover: This is the most important feast of the Jewish calendar, celebrated at the first full moon after the Vernal Equinox. The name "*Passover*" was derived from the actions of the angel of death as described in the book of Exodus. The angel "*passed over*" the homes of the Jews which were marked with the blood obtained from a ritual animal sacrifice. The same angel murdered the first-born son and first-born animals of every Egyptian family whose doorway was not so marked.

Past life regression: A therapeutic technique in which the patient is urged to imagine going back in time, past their birth, into a former lifetime. It is a suggestive treatment method that can easily [generate memories of events that never happened](#) without either the patient or therapist being aware of the process.

Peccability: The concept that Jesus Christ [could have sinned](#) if he had wanted to.

Pedobaptism: The practice of baptising an infant. Most conservative Protestant denominations defer baptism until later in life when a person becomes born again.

Pedophile: From two Greek words: "*pedo*" means "*child*;" and "*philia*" means "*love for*." This is a word whose meaning is changing. In the past, it referred to an adult who is sexually attracted to pre-pubescent children -- often those who fall into a specific age range, like 5 or 6. Currently, it is evolving to mean a person who sexually molests pre-pubescent children. See [hebephile](#).

Pelagianism: A concept proposed by Pelagius (circa 356 to circa 418) who denied the existence of original sin inherited from Adam. He taught that a soul created by god cannot inherit sin from an ancestor. Thus humans are born morally neutral. They can fall into habits of sin but can overcome sin through mental effort. He promoted adult baptism in place of infant baptism. His beliefs were declared heretical by the Christian movement.

Penance: A Roman Catholic sacrament in which sins are forgiven by a priest.

Pentacle: a five pointed star inside a circle -- most commonly used by [Wiccans](#) and other [Neopagans](#). Some [Satanists](#) invert the pentacle so that one point is downwards and two upwards; they often add a goat's head to the inverted pentacle.

Pentagram: a five pointed star. [Wiccans](#) and other [Neopagans](#) are the main North American groups who use a pentagram as a religious symbol. They orient the star with one point upwards, two downwards. The points of the star are often interpreted to refer to earth, air, water, fire and spirit. [Satanists](#), who are numerically much smaller group than Wiccans, sometimes use an inverted pentagram.

Pentateuch: See [Torah](#)

Pentecost: In Christianity, a holy day celebrated 49 days after Easter Sunday. It recalls the visitation of the Holy Spirit to 120 Christians 50 days after Jesus' resurrection. They [spoke in tongues](#). This is usually regarded as the date of the birth of the Christian church. In Judaism, a festival which was called "*Pentecost*," because it was observed 50 days after Passover. (The Greek word for 50th day is "*pentecoste*.")

Pentecostals: those Christian individuals, churches and denominations who believe in the *Holy Spirit Baptism*, a second manifestation of the power God of which follows an individual's conversion to Christianity. It is evidenced by glossolilia, or "[speaking in tongues](#)". Services are highly emotional. There are about 50 Pentecostal denominations in North America, including the *Assemblies of God*, *Church of God in Christ*, *Association of Vineyard Churches*, the *Full Gospel Baptist Church Fellowship*, *United Pentecostal Church International*, *Church of God in Christ* and the *Pentecostal World Conference*. This is the fastest growing family of denominations in Christianity. Its roots can be traced to the *National Holiness Movement* which came into being after the Civil War, and to the Baptist, Methodist denominations. Most denominations allow women to become at least junior pastors. Jim Bakker, Benny Hinn, Jimmy Swaggart and Pat Robinson are among the most famous Pentecostal leaders. BeliefNet estimated that there are about 24 million Pentecostal followers in the U.S. in early 2001.

Perfectionism: The belief that a person can attain a state of sinlessness.

Perseverance of the Saints: This is the fifth of the five points of Calvinism: It is the belief that whoever is saved and will remain saved forever. "*Once saved, always saved.*"

Pharisees: A Jewish religious party composed of the synagogue rabbis and their followers. They formed one of about two dozen Jewish religious groups during the 1st century [CE](#).

Physico-theology: A 17th and 18th century approach to the belief in God derived from observations of physics in nature. William Derham wrote a book with the same name in 1711. He said: "Let us ransack all the globe, let us with the greatest accuracy inspect every part thereof...pry into them with all our microscopes and most exquisite instruments, till we find them to bear testimony to their infinite workman."

Pietism: "...a religious reawakening in the Lutheran and Reformed churches in Germany and the Anglican church in England during the 17th and 18th centuries. Pietism stresses conversion and a personal experience of salvation, Bible study, devotional life, evangelical witness and a continuous openness to new light. There is also an emphasis on Christian social responsibility..."

Pluralism: In a religious sense, the term has two quite different meanings: The belief that multiple religions or secular world views are all legitimate and valid. Each is "true" when viewed from within its own culture. This contrasts with [exclusivism](#) and [inclusivism](#). The fact that religious diversity exists within in a country or the world.

Plurality: In a religious sense: A situation in which many different religions or world views exist in a country.

Pneumatology: The theological study of the Holy Spirit -- one person within the Christian Trinity.

Progrrom: Christian attacks on Jews, generally in Europe and Russia. Unlike the Holocaust, they were sporadic not systematic. They lasted for centuries.

Polemics: A systematic defense of a religious belief system from attacks from within the same religion. See [Apologetics](#).

Politically correct: Treating other people's religion, culture, etc. with sensitivity. Normally used as a term of denigration.

Polyandry: The extremely rare practice in which a woman is married to more than one husband.

Polygamy: An umbrella term encompassing both polyandry and polygyny.

Polygyny: The practice whereby a man has more than one wife. This was seen in many places in the Bible. It is still practiced in predominately Muslim countries where a man can generally be married to up to four wives -- but only if he can treat them equally. This is seen in many Western U.S. states among some fundamentalist Mormon denominations. It is legal -- sort of -- in British Columbia, Canada.

Polytheist: one who believes in the existence of more than one deity. A polytheist often believes in both Gods and Goddesses. Often confused with "*henotheist*."

Porajmos: (in English: the Devouring): The systematic extermination of about 400,000 Roma (a.k.a. Gypsies) during World War II by the Nazi German regime. The total Nazi extermination program, totaled ten to fourteen million humans, included Jews, Roma, Russians, Poles, other Slavs, [homosexuals](#), [Jehovah's Witnesses](#) etc. .

Positive Confession: (a.k.a. Word of Faith movement, Health & Wealth Gospel, Name it and Claim it, and Faith-formula). A group of conservative Protestant para-church ministries which focus on "anointed" ministers and the health, wealth, and success of their viewers and donors. MinistryWatch estimates that their total income is in excess of a half billion dollars annually.

Postmillennialism: (aka Post-millennialism): The belief that we are now living in the Millennium period. After this is over, Jesus will return to earth and conduct the final judgment. This was the near universal belief system of Protestants during the 17th and 18th century. It has since been replaced by Pre-millennialism among conservative Christians.

Post Modernism: (a.k.a. Postmodernism): The term means different things to different people. Some use it as a general purpose "snarl" word to attack all religiously liberal thought. Others

define it as a belief that there are no [absolute social/religious/cultural truths](#). Relative truths exist, but they are only valid for a given culture at a given time. Other traditions, religions, eras, races, genders, cultures, and groups believe/believed in other, often conflicting, truths. All of these alternative "truths" are valid, at least to the group that follows them. Postmodernism has been adopted by some liberal Christians, but is regarded as a serious error by all or essentially all conservative Christians.

Prayer: The act of attempting to verbally communicate with the supernatural. It is found in almost all the religions of the world. It is sometimes [communal](#), as during a church service; it is sometimes done in private. Its purpose within Christianity is to [assess the will of God](#) for one's life, to praise God, to give thanks to God, to repent of sinful behavior, to ask forgiveness, to seek a favor from God, and (occasionally) to ask God to curse an opponent. Prayer is found in almost all religions.

Predestination: This is a controversial doctrine promoted by John Calvin and other theologians. God has divided humanity into two groups: a small percentage of people who God will save and who will attain heaven. God has decided to not save a much larger group; they will spend eternity being tortured without mercy in Hell. Only after God chooses an individual can they understand and accept salvation.

Pregnancy, start of: General medical definition: Pregnancy begins when the pre-embryo attaches to the wall of the uterus, about 12 days after conception. **Common pro-life definitions:** Pregnancy begins at conception, or shortly afterwards when a unique DNA is formed. The difference in definitions makes dialog concerning [abortion](#) and [emergency contraception](#) (a.k.a. the morning after pill) very difficult.

Premillennialism: a belief that the moral condition of the world is degenerating, that a period of great suffering will occur in the near future, that "*born again*" believers will rise from the earth to be with Jesus, and that Jesus Christ will establish himself as king and start a 1,000 year period of peace. Originally a Christian heresy in the early church, this belief is now promoted by most Evangelical Christians.

Presbyterian: The name of a Christian denomination, like the Presbyterian Church, USA, who trace their spiritual roots back to Calvin. A method of church government by the ministers and representative elders from each congregation in a given district.

Presuppositionalism: a conservative Christian belief that accepts on faith that God exists and that the Bible is true. No attempt is made to prove these beliefs logically or from evidence. Leading proponents of presuppositional apologetics include Greg Bahsen, John Frame, Abraham Kuyper, and Cornelius Van Til.

Preterism: A Christian belief system in which some or all of the end-time events specified in the Christian Scriptures (New Testament) are believed to have already been fulfilled. They were accomplished in the past, particularly during the Roman-Jewish war of 66 to 73 [CE](#).

Preterist: A Christian who believes in Preterism.

Priesthood of all believers: The belief that saved individuals can have access to God directly, without the need for a professional priesthood to act as intermediaries.

Pro-aborts: A term used mainly by U.S. religious and social conservatives to refer both to the majority of American adults who favor abortion access (pro-choicers), and to the small number of Americans who actively promote abortion as a solution to unwanted pregnancy.

Pro-choice: A belief that pregnant women should have free, or relatively free, access to abortion. There is a range of beliefs among people who consider themselves pro-choice: some would allow the woman to have an abortion for any reason up to the moment of birth. Others would restrict access to abortion under various conditions. Common reasons held by some pro-choice advocates include a pregnancy in its later stages when the fetus is sentient, abortions for sex selection, and/or cases where the fetus is minimally genetically defective. There is no consensus on the meaning of the term, although many people hold firmly to their own definition as the only correct one.

Pro-life: A belief that pregnant women should have limited or no access to abortion. There is a range of beliefs among people who consider themselves pro-life: some would allow the woman and the fetus to die rather than terminate the life of the fetus; others would allow abortion for specific reasons but criminalize it under all other situations. Common reasons held by some pro-life advocates to allow abortion are: pregnancies resulting from rape, pregnancies arising from incest, pregnancies in which the fetus is very seriously genetically malformed and would quickly die, and/or pregnancies that would seriously harm the health and perhaps cause permanent disability to the woman if they are not terminated. There is no consensus on the meaning of the term "pro-life", although many people hold firmly to their own definition as the only correct one. In recent years, the meaning of the term has expanded to include matters related to [assisted suicide](#), [in-vitro fertilization](#), [the death penalty](#), [pre-implantation diagnosis](#), etc.

Process Theology: A view of God which is based on the writings of Alfred North Whitehead. The traditional view of a immutable, omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent deity is replaced by a God who is in process. He is constantly changing, learning, and evolving along with humanity. God affects history indirectly through gentle persuasion and not directly by coercion. He does not intrude directly in human activities; he does not violate the laws of nature by creating a miracle. Rather, *"God gently persuades all entities towards this perfection by providing each of them with a glimpse of the divine vision of a better future. And yet all entities retain the freedom to depart from that vision."*

Profane: When used to refer to language, "Profane" generally describes cursing, irreverent speech, or action. When used in a religious sense, "profane" means something that is not sacred and not associated with religion.

Progressive Christianity: A loosely organized very liberal wing of Christianity whose believers look upon Christianity as one of many valid spiritual paths and who stress seeking truth, social justice, concern for the environment, and peace. Their groups are open to persons of all genders, races, sexual orientations, classes, abilities and such religious minorities as agnostics and skeptics.

Proof-text: A Bible verse or passage in the Bible, which clearly and directly answers a specific question.

Promise Keepers: A conservative Christian men's movement founded in 1990 by Bill McCartney. It encourages men to accept more responsibilities for their personal behavior and for

their family roles. It is strongly opposed to racism. They promote a family structure in which men take a leadership role in families. They oppose equal rights for gays and lesbians.

Prophet: In the times of the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) a person, almost always male, who was a religious reformer. They claimed to speak for God.

Prophecy: The foretelling of the future through a direct revelation from God.

Proselytize: To attempt to convert another person to your beliefs.

Protestantism: This word has many overlapping definitions: A grouping of thousands of Christian denominations that trace their history back to the Protestant Reformation, and the split with the Roman Catholic church over the authority of the pope, the grounds for salvation, the status of the Bible, and the priesthood of all believers. A Christian denomination that is not Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, or the Anglican Communion. A Christian denomination that is neither Roman Catholic nor Eastern Orthodox.

Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion: A document forged by the Russian Secret Police in the early 20th century. It was based on an earlier French novel, and was promoted as evidence of an international Jewish conspiracy to rule the world. It is still circulated by some rabidly antisemitic groups, and is referred to by the media in some Muslim countries. It was sold in Wal-Mart online book store until removed shelves on 2004-SEP-21. It is available online at Amazon.com.

Protoevangelium: Greek for "*first message*." This is found in Genesis 3:15. It relates to the relationship between [Eve and the snake in the Garden of Eden](#). Historical Christianity interprets the serpent as Satan, and has taught that this verse predicts how the impact of Adam's and Eve's sin in the Garden of Eden would be undone millennia later by the Messiah, who will bring salvation to all. Thus, the verse anticipates the gospel message.

Pulpit Theft: A term used to refer to clergy who buy canned sermons from the Internet or elsewhere and pass them on as their own creation. See <http://www.desperatepreachers.com> as one example.

Pure: *A term used by conservative Christians to refer to the very small percentage of teens or young adults who have not become sexually active before marriage.* Many who are not conservative Christians regard sexual activity within a committed relationship prior to marriage to be a moral decision, which makes neither partner less pure; they consider the term to be offensive.

Pure Land: A Buddhist term for a *Land of Ultimate Bliss* into which a person can be reborn after death and in which they can seek enlightenment without being subject to retrogression (rebirth on earth or in a lower realm).

Purgatory: The Roman Catholic Church teaches that almost everyone who is not sent to hell at death will go to this place and/or state. They will be purified through punishment for an interval of time before going to heaven. Belief in Purgatory was never accepted by the Orthodox Churches; it has been rejected by the Protestant Churches.

Pyramid power: The concept that objects in the shape of the Egyptian pyramids can concentrate power, preserve materials or heal. We have never seen any scientific studies which have supported this belief.

Racism: Any attitude, action or institutional structure which systematically treats an individual or group of individuals differently because of their race. The most common form of racism in North America is in the form discrimination against African-Americans. However, it occasionally is manifested as preferential treatment for blacks. A secondary meaning is the belief that one race -- normally caucasian -- is inherently superior to other races. See also [sexism](#), [religism](#), and [homophobia](#).

Radical theologies: Nonsupernaturalist concepts of deity that reject belief in a personal God -- one who has a personal consciousness, created the world, and interacts with humans.

Ramadan: A Muslim period of daytime fasting and contemplation which lasts for a lunar month of about 28 days. It commemorates the transmission of the [Qur'an](#) by the archangel Gabriel to Muhammad.

Rapture: (a.k.a. the secret rapture) From the Latin "*rapio*" which means to snatch. The belief held by many conservative Christians that Christ will soon appear in the sky and that all of saved individuals, both living and dead, will rise to meet him. Although this belief is supported by some passages from the Christian scriptures (New Testament), it is not shared by many mainline and liberal Christians.

Rastafarianism: A new religious movement centered among persons of African origin in Jamaica and the U.S. They revere the late Emperor Selassie of Ethiopia (1892-1975), as the Elect of God and savior of the black race. They regard black people to be the reincarnation of Israel in the Bible.

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Rationalism: A movement in the 18th century Protestantism which abandoned the idea of Biblical inerrancy and adopted the belief that the Bible can be analyzed as a historical document. Some Rationalists assert that the existence of some form of deity can be proven by reason. Others see Rationalism and [Atheism](#) as synonyms.

Real Presence: Among Roman Catholics: The belief that the bread and wine at the Eucharist are transubstantiated (transformed) by the Holy Spirit into Jesus' actual body and blood through its belief in [transubstantiation](#); the priest performs a miracle by recreating Jesus' flesh and blood. **Among Lutherans:** They also use the term "*Real Presence*" which they also call "*Sacramental Union*." They believe that the body and blood of Christ are "*truly and substantially present in, with and under*" the bread and wine. This is based on Martin Luther's belief in [consubstantiation](#) -- that Jesus body and blood coexist with bread and wine.

Rebirthing: A form of therapy in which the patient engages in continuous deep breathing. It is supposed to cure emotional problems in adulthood.

Redaction criticism: A method of analyzing those portions of the Bible which appear to have been created by an editing process in which redactors (editors, compilers) have combined various source document into the form that we see in the Bible. The Gospel of Luke, for example, is regarded by most liberal theologians as being compiled from the Gospel of Q, the Gospel of Mark, and some independent oral or written material. Through redaction criticism, the theological goals and purposes of the redactors can be inferred. Conservative Christians generally have a dim view of this technique because it impacts on their belief of the [inerrancy](#) of the Bible.

Rede: Old English word for a law or rule. The *Wiccan Rede* is the main behavioral rule for [Wiccans](#). In modern English it can be translated as "*As long as it harm non, do what you wish.*"

Redemption: A general term meaning to set loose or release a person from bondage. In Christianity, it generally refers to the deliverance of believers from a state of sin which is possible because of the death of Jesus on the cross.

Reflexology: A holistic, alternative, health treatment which associates each organ in the body with a spot on the individual's foot or hand. Massage of the foot or hand is then believed to unblock the body's energy and heal the organ. Medical researchers generally discount any mechanism linking points on the feet and hand to internal organs.

Reformation: A Christian movement which was started by Martin Luther in the early 16th century as an attempt to reform Roman Catholicism. It was joined by Zwingli, Bucer, Calvin and others, and resulted in a complete break with Catholicism. Millions of people died during the resulting religious wars. The reformation led to the fracturing of Christianity into approximately 35,000 faith groups.

Reformed theology: A system of religious belief based on the writings and beliefs of Calvin.

Regeneration: The process by which God is believed to work on a born-again person, whereby her/his soul is renewed and becomes a new creation.

Reincarnation: the belief that when a person dies, their soul is reborn into another living human. In North America, belief in reincarnation is found among Buddhists, Hindus, followers of the New Age, and most Neopagans. It was a common belief in early Christianity. Often confused with the Hindu concept of the [Transmigration of the Soul](#).

Relativist: one who is convinced that religious disagreements are neither productive nor important. Relativists tend to emphasize areas of harmony among religions, minimizing or ignoring their differences.

Religion: "*Any specific system of belief about deity, often involving rituals, a code of ethics, and a philosophy of life.*" Thus we would include Agnosticism, Atheism, conservative Christianity, Humanism, Islam, Judaism, liberal Christianity, Native American Spirituality, Wicca and other Neopagan traditions as religions.

Religious liberty: Within a religion, this is a measure by which individuals can hold beliefs that deviate from those taught by their faith group, without incurring oppression, expulsion, or trial for heresy. Within a nation, this is a measure of an individual's right to hold beliefs that differ from the dominant religion; to worship freely according to these beliefs; to attempt to peacefully

convince others to convert to their faith; and the right to change their religion or set of beliefs. Historically, countries with a strict separation between governments and religion have tended to exhibit the greatest religious liberty for its citizens.

Religious market, Religious marketplace: We have seen the following two uses of these terms: The social arena in which congregations, denominations, and para-church organizations compete for members and resources. The economic expenditure by religious individuals on religious retreats, meetings, conventions, missions, etc.

Religious Right: A group of very conservative, politically active organizations within Fundamentalist Christianity which is attempting to implement conservative changes to society and its laws. The *American Family Association*, *Christian Coalition*, *Concerned Women for America*, *Family Research Council*, *Focus on the Family* form part of the religious right. Their main areas of activity are in reducing choice in [abortion access](#), [homosexual rights](#), [same-sex marriage](#), [physician assisted suicide](#), and [prayer in the public school](#).

Religious tolerance: Among religious conservative, this means that one must accept all religious faiths as equally true. Among others, it means to grant full religious freedom to persons of all religions, including those different from your own faith.

Religism: A word that we created during the 1990s that is non-existent, but badly needed in the English language: Any attitude, action or institutional structure which systematically treats an individual or group of individuals differently because of their religion. The word seems to be catching on: On 2006-MAY-07, Google found 54 hits for the word. The most common form of religism in North America is in the form of discrimination against non-Christians, up to and including the promotion of genocide against them. However, it also surfaces often as discrimination against conservative Christians. A secondary meaning is the belief that persons who follow one religion are inherently superior to those of other religions. See also [racism](#), [sexism](#) and [homophobia](#).

Replacement Theology: (a.k.a. Supersessionism). This is the theological concept that, because the vast majority of Jews in the first century [CE](#) did not accept Jesus as their Messiah, God unilaterally terminated his covenants with the Jewish people and transferred them to the followers of Christianity. It relegates Judaism to an inferior position and recognizes Christianity as the 'true' or 'spiritual' Israel. This concept was first developed by Justin Martyr (circa 100 to 165 CE) and Irenaeus of Lyon (circa 130 to 200 CE). It was largely accepted within the church by the 4th century. It has led to a great deal of [persecution of Jews](#) by Christians. Although the Catholic Church reversed its stance on replacement theology in the 20th century, *many conservative Protestant groups still believe in this principle*. In opposition to replacement theology is the [dual covenant theory](#) that God's covenants in the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) are still in place.

Restorationism: The belief that the true Christian church died out in the early 2nd Century CE, and was restored by Joseph Smith when he established the [Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints](#) (LDS, Mormon). This movement currently consists of almost 100 denominations, many centered in Utah and Missouri.

Resurrection: The belief that Jesus died, and later returned to life after three days. This is not to be confused with the resuscitation of Jesus, as taught in Islam. Muslims believe that Jesus did not actually die, but perhaps entered into a coma and later returned to consciousness.

Retrogression: A Buddhist term that refers to one's rebirth after death on earth or one of the lower realms.

Revelation: The [last book in the Bible](#), which has been interpreted in different ways. The gift of knowledge that God gives to humanity through the Bible and by other means.

Rhema: A Greek word that means any spoken word having a definite meaning. Romans 10:8 uses "*rhema*" in place of the more common word "*logos*."

Righteous: This very important term is often mentioned in the Bible. In *2 Corinthians 6:14*, for example, Paul states that all non-Christians are "*unrighteousness*." Unfortunately, the word has three somewhat different meanings. A person: Acting according to divine law, or Who is free from sin, or Exhibiting moral behavior. Of course, an individual may be acting according to divine law, be free from sin, and be moral, within one religion, but not by another.

Righteous among nations: A term used to refer to non-Jews who helped save Jews from the Nazi Holocaust.

Ritual: Speech, action, singing, and other activities which often contain a symbolic meaning, performed in a specific order - typically during a religious service. Rite is often considered a synonym to ritual.

Ritual Abuse: Involuntary psychological, physical, sexual or spiritual maltreatment, associated with a (normally religious) ritual. There is typically one accidental death per year in North America as a result of ritual abuse in the form of a conservative Christian exorcisms. Satanists were widely perceived during the 1980's and early 1990's as perpetrating widespread [Satanic Ritual Abuse \(SRA\)](#) involving the torture, murder and even eating of human sacrifices. After two decades without any evidence of its existence, most investigators regard SRA as non-existent.

Role Playing Games: See [Fantasy Role Playing Games](#)

Roman Catholicism: This is the largest of the four branches of Christianity; the others being the Anglican Communion, Protestant denominations and Eastern Orthodox churches. During the fourth century CE, the branch of the early Christianity which was founded by Paul became the official religion of the Roman Empire. The authority of the Bishop of Rome, the Pope, gradually increased, as Christian missionaries spread out through western and northern Europe. Starting in the 15th century, Roman Catholicism spread to the Americas. The church lost its religious monopoly in Western Europe at the time of the Protestant Reformation in the 16th century, but remains today the largest single Christian faith group, by far.

Rosary: Prayer beads strung on a thread, used primarily by Roman Catholics.

Rosetta stone: A black basalt stone monument found in Egypt in 1799, which contained the same messages in three different languages: one was ancient Greek, which was known by linguists. The other two were Demotic script and Egyptian hieroglyphics. Over time, the stone enabled linguists to understand both of the latter languages.

Routinization of character: To change your character to have distinct traits that conform to your religious beliefs.

RPG: See [Fantasy Role Playing Games](#)

Rupa: A [Hindu](#) and Buddhist term which generally refers to religious statues.

Rune: (Derived from an early Anglo-Saxon word "*runa*" meaning "*secret*" or "*mystery*.") It was originally a pictorial alphabet in Northern Italy, circa 500 BCE. Its use later spread across Europe. There are a number of different sets of runes, each derived from a specific alphabet, such as the Elder Futhrk, Saxon Futhork and Norse Younger Futhark. The word "*rune*" also refers to a small piece of material marked with a rune symbol. The latter are used in [divination](#) by many Wiccans, other Neopagans and New Agers. Their use is generally condemned by conservative Christians as a practice forbidden by the Bible.

Russelites: An early name for the bible students who later became the [Jehovah's Witnesses](#) in 1931. The name is derived from their founder, Charles Taze Russell..

Sabbat: A seasonal day of celebration observed by Wiccans and other Neopagans. There are eight each year. The two solstices and two equinoxes are minor Sabbats. Between each solstice and equinox is a major Sabbat. Samhain (Oct. 31), Imbolc (Feb. 2), Beltane (May 1), and Lammass (Aug. 1) are among the most common names used.

Sabbatarianism: The belief that the weekly Sabbath must be observed from sundown on Friday to sundown on Saturday. Often, Jewish dietary laws and seasonal days of service are also observed by Sabbatarians.

Sabbath, weekly: Originally Saturday: a day of rest and holiness; observed by Jews and a minority of Christian denominations. Most Christian groups observe Sunday as the Sabbath.

Sabellianism: Synonym for [Modalism](#)

Sacraments: A formal church ritual frequently described as an outward and visible sign of an internal and spiritual grace. The [Roman Catholic](#) and [Orthodox](#) churches recognize seven sacraments, popularly known as: Baptism, Confirmation, Mass, Penance, Anointing the dying, Ordination and Marriage. Most Protestant denominations only recognize two: Baptism and Communion. A few denominations, such as the [Amish](#), add foot washing. Sacraments are believed by most Christian denominations to have been instituted by Jesus. The [Society of Friends](#) (Quakers) and the Salvation Army do not recognize or use sacraments.

Sadaqa: Islamic term for the giving of a charitable donation. This is an obligation for Muslims.

Sadducees: A small group of priests who controlled the temple at Jerusalem. One of about two dozen Jewish religious groups active during the 1st century CE. They rejected belief in immortality. They were religious conservatives who felt threatened by Pagan influences due to Roman and Greek occupation of Israel.

Sahaba: This is the Arabic word for "*companions*." In Islam, it generally refers to the people who lived and witnessed with the Prophet Muhammad.

Saint: In Roman Catholicism, a person of great spirituality who has died, is responsible for at least three miracles, and who has been elevated to the sainthood by the church. In Protestantism, a saint is one of the ancient leaders of the church, like St. Peter and St. Paul. In Evangelical Christianity, all saved Christians are saints.

Sajdah: (*Full name: As-sajdah*) This is the the act of prostration by a Muslim during which seven parts of the body are to touch the ground: the forehead, palms, knees and big toes.

Salat: A Muslim prayer. Islam expects each Muslim, where possible, to perform the *salat* prayer five times a day. It is the second of the *Five Pillars of Islam*. This is recited while orienting one's body towards Mecca. ₂ It is done at specified times in the morning, at noon, mid-afternoon, after sunset and just before sleeping.

Salvation: The remission of sins and healing of the gulf between an individual and God. Various passages in the Christian Scriptures imply that salvation is achieved either by good deeds; or by belief in Jesus' resurrection; or belief that Jesus is the Son of God; or by church rituals such as baptism or penance; or by avoiding certain behaviors; or some combination of the preceding. Various traditions within Christianity have resolved the Bible's ambiguity by stressing some passages and largely ignoring others.

Salvific pluralism: The belief that individuals can achieve salvation by following any one of many different world religions. ₅ If salvific pluralism is true, then the belief that all those who have *not* repented of their sins and trusted Jesus as Lord and Savior will go to Hell at death is false. [More details](#).

Samahdi: In Buddhism, a type of insight achieved through meditation or wisdom.

Samhain: A major sabbat - a seasonal day of celebration - observed by Wiccans and other Neopagans on OCT-31. Samhain is often incorrectly defined as a Wiccan God of the dead within many conservative Christian and secular sources.

Samsara: A Buddhist term referring to the endless cycle of birth, life, death, and rebirth. The goal of a Buddhist is to achieve enlightenment and to escape from samsara.

Sanctification: A Christian term which refers to the process by which the Holy Spirit helps a Christian to grow spiritually to be more Christ-like, after first having been justified.

Sanhedrin: A council of Jewish leaders in Jerusalem. They formed a court which was the highest religious body in Palestine. They acted as an advisory board to the Roman governor.

Santeria: A syncretistic religion which combined Roman Catholicism with Pagan religions from Western Africa. It is found throughout the Caribbean and in North America.

Satan: (a.k.a. the Devil, Lucifer): In the older parts of the Hebrew Scriptures, he is described as a type of District Attorney in God's court. In the New Testament, he is described as a supernatural being who is profoundly evil and who seeks to destroy people's lives. The religion of Islam also recognizes the existence of Satan. Many conservative Christians believe that followers of [Wicca](#) and other [Neopagan religions](#) worship Satan. However, the latter do not recognize any all-evil deity called by the name of Satan or by any other name.

Satanism: A religion based upon Satan, either as a form of deity or as a principle. Adherents follow simple rules of behavior: give kindness to those who deserve it; indulge in their lusts and wants; return vengeance rather than turning the other cheek. With some justification, Satanism

has been called the religion of the U.S. corporate boardroom. Although their beliefs are different from [Christianity](#), Satanists are not particularly anti-Christian any more than they are anti-[Hindu](#) or anti-[Buddhist](#). However, some have included references opposing [Wicca](#) in their rituals. Most Satanists are either teenage dabblers, or members of the Church of Satan, Temple of Set or Church of Satanic Liberation. Their total membership in North America is unknown, but probably numbers about 10,000. Total membership is believed to be decreasing. Common Evangelical usage: a violently anti-Christian religion worshipping Satan. Some are teenage dabblers; others are religious Satanists belonging to an established church or temple; others are mass murderers; still others form a secret, underground international, multi-generational conspiracy which engages in [Satanic Ritual Abuse](#) and human sacrifices - usually of infants or children. Membership rapidly rising. Common Fundamentalist usage: Any non-Christian faith group, such as Buddhism, Hinduism, Taoism is Satanic. By this definition, two out of three people in the world are Satanists.

[Satanic Ritual Abuse \(SRA\)](#): psychological, sexual, and/or physical assault committed by two or more people whose primary motive is to fulfill a prescribed religious ritual involving the worship of the Christian devil, Satan. A large percentage of the population (90% in Utah) believe that SRA is widespread. [Numerous government studies](#) into SRA have revealed it to be non-existent, or essentially so.

Scapegoat: Originally a religious term. Ancient Israelite priests would transfer the sins of the community to a goat who would then be driven into the desert to die. The term is currently used to refer to a person or group who is unjustly accused of a crime or improper behavior.

Schism: From the Greek word "*schisma*" - a rent or tear. A division of a faith group into two or more smaller groups. One result of the Protestant Reformation was a series of schisms leading to the approximately 35,000 present-day Protestant faith groups.

Schism, great: The formal split between the Eastern Orthodox and the Roman Catholic churches in 1054 CE. Also used to refer to the interval from 1378 to 1417 [CE](#) when as many as three individuals simultaneously claimed to be pope.

Scripture: In Christianity, this is the Bible. It is composed of the 39 books of the Hebrew Scriptures (a.k.a. Old Testament) and the 27 books of the Christian Scriptures (a.k.a. New Testament). Some denominations add the books of the Apocrypha.

Seance: A gathering of individuals who attempt to communicate with the spirits of the dead, generally with the help of a medium.

Second coming: The return of Jesus Christ to earth.

Second probation: The belief that after death, non-believers will be given a second chance to be saved by accepting Jesus as Lord and Savior.

Sect: A small religious group that has recently split away from an established religion. The early Jewish Christian group under James, the Brother of Jesus, in Jerusalem circa 30 [CE](#) would have been considered a sect of Judaism at the time.

Secular: an item that is free of religion.

Secularization: A process in which religious consciousness, activities, and institutions lose social significance

Security, eternal: The concept that once a person is saved, that they cannot lose their salvation. Christian faith groups have different beliefs on this topic.

Seder: A Jewish ceremonial meal held on the first day (and sometimes also on the second day) of Passover. It recalls the alleged Exodus of the Hebrews from slavery in Egypt, variously dated as 1440 to 1290 [BCE](#). The meal and associated rituals are typically held in the home.

Selah: A biblical term used 71 times by itself in the Psalms. It invites the reader to pause and to meditate or reflect on the message. One example is Psalms 3:2: "*Many there be which say of my soul, There is no help for him in God. Selah.*"

Septuagint: A Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures, made in Egypt, perhaps in the third century [BCE](#). This was the version known to, and used, by the early Christians. Many theologians believe that a mistranslation in Isaiah contributed to the Christian belief in the [virgin conception of Jesus](#).

Serpent Seed doctrine: The belief that Eve's sin in the *Garden of Eden* was to engage in sexual intercourse with the serpent. Together, they produced Cain. Various faith groups identify the descendents of Cain in various ways: They are: "*Jews according to the Christian Identity Movement, Communists/Atheists according to the Unification Church, Whites according to the Nation of Yahweh, and the lost according to William Branham.*"

Service: In a religious sense, a formal worship meeting of a group of believers.

Sexism: Any attitude, action or institutional structure which systematically treats an individual or group of individuals differently because of their gender. The most common form of sexism is discrimination against females. However, it occasionally is manifested as preferential treatment for women. A secondary meaning is the belief that one gender - normally female - is inherently inferior to other genders (male and intersexual). See also [racism](#), [religism](#), and [homophobia](#).

Sexual Orientation: There are two quite different meanings to this term: Gays, lesbians, sociologists, psychologists, researchers into human sexuality, members of liberal and some mainline faith groups normally define this as: A measure of a person's feelings of sexual attraction to males and females. There are three sexual orientations, all of which are normal, natural, and fixed in adults: heterosexuals are attracted to the opposite gender only, homosexuals are attracted to the same gender only, bisexuals are attracted to both men and women; not necessarily to the same degree. Evangelical Christians and some mainline faith groups sometimes define the term more broadly: A measure of a person's sexual behavior with men and women, animals, and children. Some sexual orientations are heterosexuality, homosexuality, bestiality, pedophilia. Only the first is considered normal and natural. Many conservative Christians do not acknowledge the existence of bisexuals, believing people to be either heterosexual or homosexual, based on their behavior. They often use the term "sexual preference" in place of "sexual orientation," thus implying that orientation is a choice.

Shamanism: This is a "system of religious and medical beliefs and practices that centers on the shaman, a specific type of magico-religious practitioner...who specializes in contacting and

controlling the supernatural." Usually male, his main task is healing. Shamanism was originally centered in central Asia and Siberia.

Shari'ah: A code of Islamic law. In some cases, Shari'ah provides for very severe punishment - even amputation or execution - for some transgressions that are seen as minor in the West.

Shaytan: The Muslim name of the evil entity called Satan - the Devil in Christianity.

Sheep stealing: The practice of some Christian faith groups who attempt to convert other Christians to membership in their denomination.

Shema: A Jewish prayer, customarily repeated morning, evening and just before going to sleep. It begins: "*Hear, Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One.*" See Deuteronomy 6:4-9

Shepherding: An relationship in which an experienced Christian, a shepherd, is selected to supervise a new convert. In some denominations, the senior person closely controls almost every aspect of the convert's life. This has major potential to generate spiritual abuse.

Shi'a (a.k.a. Shi'ite): The second largest tradition within Islam.

Shinto: This is the indigenous religion of Japan. Starting about 500 [BCE](#) (or earlier) it was originally "*an amorphous mix of nature worship, fertility cults, divination techniques, hero worship, and shamanism.*" It later became the state religion of the country. Church and state were separated just after World War II.

Shoa: (a.k.a. Shoa and Sho'ah) the killing of five to seven million of European Jews by the Nazi government during World War II. Sometimes referred to as the Holocaust, although the latter term is sometimes used to refer to all of the ten to fourteen groups of victims, which included Jews, Roma (a.k.a. Gypsies), Russians, Poles, other Slavs, [homosexuals](#), [Jehovah's Witnesses](#) etc.

Shunning: (a.k.a. Disfellowshipping): This is a method of disciplining or punishing a member who strays from the group's expected behavior or belief. Other members --often including friends and family - are expected to have no contact with the shunned individual. In a high intensity faith group where a believer's entire support network is composed of fellow members, this can have disastrous consequences; some have been moved to commit suicide. Various forms of shunning are practiced by [Amish](#) and [Jehovah's Witnesses](#)

Sikhism: Although religious scholars generally view Sikhism as a blend of Hinduism and Islam, most Sikhs believe that their religion is unique without precursors, originating from a series of ten gurus, starting with Guru Nanak. Sikhs believe in a single deity, and reject class differences. There are about 18 million Sikhs in the world; most are concentrated in the Punjab region in northwest India.

Sin: In the Bible, the Hebrew and Greek words which are translated as sin mean failing to hit the target or missing the mark. Most conservative Christians believe that, since God is pure and just, that a person who sins just once cannot come into God's presence unless they first attain [salvation](#).

Sins, The Seven Deadly: The seven deadly sins are: sloth, covetousness, anger, lust, gluttony, envy, and pride.

Six directions: A Buddhist collection of paths: north, south, east, west, up and down. Wiccan, other Neopagan traditions, Native American spirituality and other Aboriginal religions recognize variations of this - sometimes including center, and the four points on the compass that lie between the cardinal directions.

Skandas: In Buddhism, the five principal components of the personality: form, sensation, perception, impulse, and consciousness.

Social Darwinism: An attempt to adapt Charles Darwin natural selection principles to human society, thus producing a culture that embraces the "*survival of the fittest*." This is based on a misunderstanding of Darwin's theories. Natural selection, when applied to a society, also includes such factors as organizational ability, talent to inspire others, creativity, perseverance, mental flexibility, etc., in addition to physical fitness.

Sodomite: In the Bible, the word refers to an inhabitant of Sodom. In modern usage by religious conservatives: [a homosexual](#). It is regarded as a derogatory term by most homosexuals, religious liberals, and some others. A new meaning is gradually emerging: a person who is insensitive to the needs of the poor, sick, stranger, imprisoned, widowed, etc. This is derived from the growing belief that Genesis 19 in the Bible refers to this lack of concern, and not to homosexual behavior.

Solstice: The date and time when the sun reaches its northernmost or southernmost extreme. On the summer solstice, the interval of daylight is at its maximum and the nighttime interval is at its minimum for the year. The reverse occurs at the winter solstice. The solstices happen about June 21 and December 21. Many religious holy days are synchronized to the equinoxes. Wiccans, other Neopagans, Native Americans and followers of many aboriginal religions worldwide celebrate the solstices.

Sorcery: There are two quite different meanings to this term: the use of black magic to kill, injure, harm, dominate, manipulate or control other people. This is the primary meaning. the (usually) benign use of magical powers to influence events or people.

Soteriology: The study of [salvation](#).

Soul: From the Greek word "psuche" - breath. This word has a variety of meanings, including: the seat of personality, the individual or person themselves, the immaterial component of a human, etc. Among Christians, dichotomists believe that a person is composed of a body and soul; trichotomists believe that a person consists of a body, soul, and spirit. Both argue their cases from biblical passages.


Soul Freedom: the concept that an individual has the right and privilege to interpret Scripture for themselves in the context of their religious community, using the best available scholarship. Robert Bellah wrote, in 1997: "*What was so important about the Baptists was the absolute centrality of religious freedom of the sacredness of individual conscience in matters of religious beliefs.*"

Soul sleep: The belief that, after death, one's soul sleeps until the day of resurrection.

Spell: a prayer, or verbal direction of magickal energies toward the accomplishment of some goal. Wiccans and other Pagans often use spells, but are not permitted to use them to dominate, manipulate, control or harm another person. For example, a Wiccan is not permitted to cast a love spell to motivate another person to feel attraction towards them.

Spiritism: See [necromancy](#).

Spirituality: This term is defined quite differently by monotheists, polytheists, humanists, followers of new age, Native Americans, etc. A common meaning is "*devotion to metaphysical matters, as opposed to worldly things.*" Another is "*Activities which renew, lift up, comfort, heal and inspire both ourselves and those with whom we interact.*"

Srivatsa (a.k.a. Swastika in German and English): A cross symbol with equal arms bent at a right angle:  This is an ancient positive symbol used by many religions around the world - e.g. [Hinduism](#), [Buddhism](#), [Jainism](#), [Christianity](#), [Judaism](#), and by the ancient Greeks, Germanic tribes, and [Native Americans](#).⁹ It was distorted and adopted by the Nazi regime in Germany; since the 1930s it has been considered a profoundly evil symbol throughout the west.

Stereotype: A process of generalization by which an entire group is found to be at fault because of the actions of a few of their members. One example is to blame all homosexuals for child molestation because of the actions of NAMBLA, a homosexual pedophile group which is composed of a handful of members. The term is sometimes used to refer to the condemnation of an entire group because of events that never happened. One example was the German Nazi government who blamed the loss of World War I on the German Jews - a very small minority at the time, numbering less than 1% of its citizens.

Stigmata: the presence of wounds on a person's body (usually a woman) in the places where Jesus is believed to have been injured at his crucifixion. Wound's usually appear on the palms of the person even though during his crucifixion, Jesus was either pierced through his wrists or his arms were tied to the crossbar.

Subliminal Messages: Visual or audible messages shown in a way that prevents the conscious mind from recognizing them. Visual messages may be flashed on a screen too fast for the person to sense; audible messages may be played at too low a volume to be detected. Controlled tests have shown that they are completely ineffective. Some people still believe that such messages can enter the individual's subconscious mind and motivate them to take certain actions. See also [backmasking](#).

Substance dualism: The concept that the brain and mind are separate entities: the brain is a physical entity controlled by chemical and electrical processes; the mind is not physical.

Succubus: A female demon who would visit men at night and engage in sexual activity. This belief was commonly held during the late Middle Ages and Renaissance. There were also male demons, called incubi who were believed to visit women.

Suffragan bishop: an assistant bishop in a diocese.

Sufiism: "*Sufism or tasawwuf, as it is called in Arabic, is generally understood by scholars and Sufis to be the inner, mystical, or psycho-spiritual dimension of Islam.*" Some Muslims reject the concept that Sufism is part of Islam.

Sunni: the largest tradition within Islam.

Supersessionism: (a.k.a. Replacement Theology). This is the theological concept that, because the vast majority of Jews in the first century [CE](#) did not accept Jesus as their Messiah, God unilaterally terminated his covenants with the Jewish people and transferred them to the followers of Christianity. It relegates Judaism to an inferior position and recognizes Christianity as the 'true' or 'spiritual' Israel. This concept was first developed by Justin Martyr (circa 100 to 165 CE) and Irenaeus of Lyon (circa 130 to 200 CE). It was largely accepted within the church by the 4th century. It has led to a great deal of [persecution of Jews](#) by Christians. *Many conservative Protestants still believe in this principle.* In opposition to supersessionism is the [dual covenant theory](#).

Surah: Any passage from the Qur'an, the Islamic holy book.

Sutra: A Buddhist scripture.

Swastika: See [svastika](#).

Sweat lodge: A Native American ritual for purification involving moist hot air in an enclosed space.

Synagogue: A Jewish house of worship.

Syncretistic Religion: A faith that is created from the merger of concepts from two or more religions. [Santeria](#) and [Vodun](#) are two examples.

Synergism: Two or more items interacting in such a way that the end result is greater than each item could have achieved separately. For example, a client who believes in [Satan](#) as an evil, quasi-deity who undergoes [recovered memory therapy](#) (RMT) is very likely to recover false memory of [Satanic ritual abuse](#) (SRA). Just believing in Satan or just undergoing RMT is much less likely to generate false memories of SRA.

Synod: In Roman Catholicism: any official church meeting. Among Presbyterian denominations, a religious court between the presbytery and the general assembly.

Systematic theology: The study of God and his relationship with humanity.

Talit: A Jewish blue-and-white-striped prayer shawl. Traditionally restricted to males only.

Talmud: A body of Jewish literature composed of two parts: The Mishna, which is a rabbinic commentary on the Torah, and the Gemara, a more lengthy commentary.

Tanakh: The Jewish Bible, a.k.a. the Jewish Scriptures. The word Tanakh is derived from the letters of the names of its three components: *Torah* (a.k.a. Pentateuch), the Books of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy; the *Nevi'im* (a.k.a. Prophets); and the *Ketuvim* (Writings).

Taoism: This religion of about 20 million followers was founded by Lao-Tse (604-531 BCE), a contemporary of Confucius, and author of *Tao-te-Ching*. Taoism started as a combination of psychology and philosophy but evolved into a state religion in 440 CE. At that time Lao-Tse became popularly venerated as a deity. Taoism, along with Buddhism and Confucianism, became the three great religions of China. Much of Taoism was destroyed since the Communist victory in 1949; it survives mainly in Taiwan.

Teleological: A system of morality in which the proper choice among two or more options is based on their practical consequences. Whichever choice has the best (or least worse) outcome is the moral decision. Antonym is [deontological](#).

Temple: The term used by Buddhists, Hindus and others to refer to their house of worship.

Ten Commandments: A set of 19 different commands and prohibitions which are intended to govern basic human behavior. Three versions appear in the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) at: Exodus 20:2-17, Exodus 34:12-26, and Deuteronomy 5:6-21.

Terrorism: The use of extreme violence or the threat of violence by states, groups or individuals to generate fear in individuals and thus manipulate their behavior. Currently, most terrorism is drug or religion based. Some define the term widely to include topics like [spanking of children](#) or the teaching of an [eternity of torture in Hell](#) as forms of physical or spiritual terrorism.

Tetragram , Tetragrammaton: (From the Greek "tetra" (four) and "gramma" (letter). It consists of four Hebrew letters: Yod, He, Waw and He, transliterated as *YHWH*, *JHVH* or *JHWH* -- the name of God in the Hebrew language. Often translated as "*Lord*" or mistranslated as "*Jehovah*" in English versions of the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament). It could never have pronounced as "*Jehovah*." "*Yahweh*" is probably a more accurate vocalization. Historically, within Judaism, the name of God was neither spoken nor written.

Textual criticism: A study of biblical text, attempting to identify the words of the original autograph copy and eliminate later forgeries, spelling errors, etc.

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Theist: A person who believes in the existence of a personal God who is active in the universe. Sometimes used to include persons who believe in the existence of multiple deities, but who worship only one.

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Theistic Evolution: The belief that new species of animals develop from existing species over a very long interval of time, in response to the guidance, supervision, and intervention of a deity.

Theocracy: From the Greek words: "Theos" (God) and "cratein" (to rule). A government in which the church and state are unified. Such a union is generally has disastrous effects on human rights, particularly for women and various minorities. This form of government is common among Muslim countries.

Theodicy: From the Greek words "*Theos*" (God) and "*dike*" (justice). Attempts to harmonize the goodness of God with the existence of evil in the world.

Theology: The study of religion.

Theology of displacement: A synonym for "*supercessionism*:" the concept that Christianity replaced Judaism because God unilaterally abrogated his Old Testament covenant with the Jewish people.

Theophany: Eastern Orthodox Christians recall the baptism of Yeshua of Nazareth on this day, JAN-6 according to the Julian Calendar. "Theophany" means "*to make known*" or "*to reveal*." Eastern Christians believe that Jesus' divinity was revealed at his baptism. The Western church celebrates the [Epiphany](#) on JAN-6.

Theosis: (a.k.a. deification, divinization, participation in God) The concept that Christians can become participants in the life of God, while not sharing in God's essence. The precise definition varies among Christian denominations and theologians. This is based, in part, on 2 Peter 1:4: "*Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature...*" ²

Therapeutic Touch: A holistic health practice in which the practitioner moves their hands above the patients body, and balance or release the natural energy of the latter's body. This is said to facilitate healing. A high school student conducted a series of experiments for a science project, that proved that therapists cannot measure body energy fields. This appears to destroy the credibility of this therapeutic technique.

Tikkun olam: A Jewish term usually translated as "*repairing the world*." First used by Isaac Luria, a Cabbalist from the 16th century. It describes the obligation of a Jew to do good works, promoting peace, understanding, and help for the hungry, homeless and oppressed.

Tithe: The practice of donating 10% of one's income to the church. "*Triple Tithing*" is also used; it consists of 13% of one's income, donated according to a specified schedule.

Tolerance, General: The willingness to grant to other people equal rights and freedom from persecution and oppression, irrespective of their gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, language, nationality, language, ability status, marital status, etc.

Tolerance, Religious: This very important term unfortunately has multiple, very different, meanings. Conservative Christians often believe that it involves the belief: That all religions are the same, and/or That all religions are equally true, and/or That all religions are simply different paths to God. Others define religious tolerance as: Valuing the human right of other people to freely hold religious beliefs which are different from your own, without oppression or persecution.

Tongues, speaking in: See [glossolilia](#).

Torah: From the Hebrew word for "teaching" or "law." The Torah, (a.k.a. Pentateuch, or the Law) are the first 5 books of the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament): Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. Most conservative Christians and Jews believe that they

were written mainly or entirely by Moses. There is a near consensus among other theologians that they were [written and edited by many persons or groups of persons](#) over a period of many centuries.

Total inability: Alternative description of the first of the *The Five Points of Calvinism*: the belief that it is impossible for the ordinary "natural" human to understand the Gospel's message. They are spiritually helpless. First, God must first decide to intervene in the form of the third personality within the Trinity, the Holy Spirit. Otherwise, the person is lost.

Total depravity: This is the first of the *The Five Points of Calvinism*: the belief that as a result of Adam and Eve's disobedience to God -- the Fall of Man -- sin has extended to all parts of every person's being: "*his thinking, his emotions and his will.*"

Touch for health: See [Therapeutic Touch](#).

Touch therapy: See [Therapeutic Touch](#).

Tractarianism: Synonym for [Anglo Catholicism](#).

Tradition: a term used by Neopagans to indicate the group that is being referred to. It is analogous to "denomination" in Christianity.

Traditionalism: The belief that, after death, unsaved people will be tormented for all eternity of time in Hell without hope of mercy or relief. This contrasts with [annihilationism](#) (a.k.a. conditionalism and conditional immortality) which teach that these individuals spend only an interval of time being tortured in Hell; they are then exterminated and cease to exist.

Tradionalism: the concept that deity is remote from the world and the rest of the universe.

Transcendence: Being beyond the limits of all human experience and knowledge.

Transference of the Holy Spirit: The concept that a person can transfer or impart a blessing to another person, often by physical contact, as in the laying on of hands. In some Christian denominations, it is believed that one Christian can transfer either demons or the Holy Spirit to another person by the laying on of hands.

Transfiguration: In Christianity, this refers to the transfiguration of Jesus as described in three of the gospels: [Mark 9:2-13](#), [Matthew 17:1-13](#), and [Luke 9:28-36](#). Jesus climbed Mount Tabor with three of his disciples, and was joined by Moses and Elija. All three appeared clothed in dazzling white. Luke records how God's voice came from the cloud, saying "*This is my chosen Son; listen to him.*" In the [Harry Potter series of books](#) for children, transfiguration refers to the use of magic to change the appearance of an object - e.g. from a toothpick to a needle.

Transmigration of the Soul: The Hindu belief that at death, a person's soul is reborn into another living entity. Often, this is a new human. But if the individual has accumulated a bad balance of [Karma](#), they may return as an animal. This term is often confused with [Reincarnation](#).

Transubstantiation: The belief, held by Roman Catholics, that during the Lord's Supper, the Holy Spirit transforms the wafer and wine into the actual body and blood of Jesus.

Tribulation: A period of seven years of great misery and death, which is described in Revelation 14:9-16.

Trichotomy: The belief that a person is composed of three parts: body, soul and spirit.

Trickster: Within Native American spirituality, a trickster is a mythical hero who teaches culture, proper behavior and provides sustenance to the tribe.

Trinity: The [Christian](#) belief that deity is simultaneously a unity and is composed of three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. As the ancient Athanasian Creed is worded, the Trinity is "one God" and "three persons... and yet they are not three Gods, but one God." Extensive debate about the nature of God and of Jesus occurred during the early centuries of the Church until this concept was forced on the church by Constantine. The [Hindu](#) belief that Brahman is simultaneously visualized as a unity, and as a trinity composed of: Brahma the Creator, Vishnu, (Krishna) the Preserver, and Shiva. The belief among many [Neopagans](#) that the Goddess exists as a trinity, composed of Maiden, Mother and Crone, representing energy and sexuality, fertility and wisdom.

Trinity, Economic: Christian concepts of how God has revealed himself to humanity.

Trinity, Ontological: Christian concepts of how the three persons in the Trinity relate to each other.

Tritheism: The belief in the existence of three deities. This is one form of polytheism. A small minority of Christians believe that God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit are three different entities. Two Covenant theory: See [dual covenant theory](#)

UFO: See [Unidentified Flying Objects](#).

Unbeliever: a person who does not believe in your particular religion, denomination or religious tradition. Similar to **infidel**, but less judgmental. Of course if a person of faith group "A" regards a person of faith group "B" as an unbeliever, then "B" would probably also regard "A" as an unbeliever.

Unconditional election: This is the second of the *The Five Points of Calvinism*: the belief that God decided before he created the universe that certain people would be chosen to make knowledgeable about himself. The rest would remain ignorant, be damned, and spend eternity in Hell.

Unidentified Flying Objects: (acronym: UFOs). Objects seen flying in the sky whose source and nature cannot be determined. Much of the public believes that these are advanced space ships, perhaps extraterrestrial. Some conservative Christians have speculated that these ships are piloted by demons. A number of religions have been founded that are based on beliefs that UFOs are piloted by an advanced civilization of creatures who are trying to communicate with humans.

Unipersonality: The belief that Jesus had both a divine and a human nature within his personality.

Unitarian: There are two distinct and unrelated meanings for this term, which are often confused by non-Unitarians: A monotheistic belief which was widespread in the early Christian movement, that God is a unity, not a trinity. A series of church councils voted in favor of the

belief that God is a Trinity, composed of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Unitarianism then became a heresy and was suppressed. A religious movement, the *American Unitarian Association* (AUA), which featured a lack of dogma, a belief in the inherent goodness of people, and the obligation for each member to seek out and develop his or her own system of beliefs and ethics. In North America, the AUA merged with the *Universalist Church* to form the *Unitarian Universalist Association*. They strongly support human rights, personal freedoms and behavior choices. UUA members have been accused of being anti-Christian. In fact, about 10% of the membership considers themselves to be Christian; the rest are un-Christian but not anti-Christian. All promote the freedom of everyone to follow their own religious beliefs.

Universal atonement: The belief that Jesus died for all humans, and not just for those who are [saved](#).

Universalism: Derived from the Greek word *apocatastasis*, which means "*complete salvation*". A Christian belief that everyone would eventually reach heaven after death. It was promoted in the 2nd and early 3rd centuries of the Christian church by Clement and Origen. Traditional Christianity has taught that universalism is a [heresy](#). They believe that heaven is reserved for a small minority of people, and that the vast majority will go to Hell to be tortured for all eternity without mercy. Many Christian individuals and denominations are drifting towards Universalism because an eternity in Hell seem to many people to be incompatible with a loving deity. A liberal religious group which merged with the American Unitarian Association to form the [Unitarian Universalist Association](#). A concept in Judaism that "God created the entire universe as a single entity, that all people were created for a common moral purpose, and that God chose the Jews to convey a moral message to all humanity so that the redemption available to all people through God might occur."

Universism: This is a progressive natural philosophy which emphasizes the personal search for truth and understanding of the universe. They have abandoned the rigid teachings of organized religion in favor of relative truth, and acceptance of uncertainty. Universists apply personal reason and experience to the fundamental questions of human existence, derive inspiration from the natural uncertainty of the human state, and deny the validity of revelation, faith and dogma."

Unpardonable sin: Matthew 12:31-32 discusses a sin so serious that a person committing it cannot be pardoned. Unfortunately, the passage is ambiguous, and there have been many conflicting interpretations about what exactly this sin is.

Upanishads: One of the holy texts of the Hindu religion.

Upsherin: A Yiddish word meaning to "shear off." It is a traditional Jewish celebration of a boy's third birthday. This marks the beginning of his formal education and his obligation to keep the commandments and perform mitzvot (good deeds.)

Usul: A required, foundational belief within Islam. One example is the unity of God.

Vedas: A group of writings which form the oldest of Hinduism's sacred scriptures.

Vatican Council: The first Vatican Council of the Roman Catholic Church was held on 1869 and 1870. Its most famous achievement was to declare that some proclamations by the pope on faith and morals are infallible. The second Vatican Council was held on 1962 to 1965, and introduced many liberalizing reforms, although it did not change any fundamental beliefs.

Venial sin: Within the Roman Catholic church, a minor transgression against God, the church or another human. The consequences of a venial sin can be compensated for through good works.

Virgin birth: The belief, as stated in the Gospels of Luke and Matthew, that Mary was a virgin when she conceived Jesus as a result of the intervention of the Holy Spirit. A common belief among Mormons was that God the Father came to earth and engaged in sexual intercourse with Mary. However, this teaching was never declared part of Mormon doctrine by the church. The Roman Catholic church teaches that Mary remained a virgin for the rest of her life, and had no more children.

Vishnu: One of the Gods in the Hindu trinity; the others are Brahma and Shiva. Krishna is one of eight or nine earthly incarnations of Vishnu. There are many points of similarity between the life of Krishna and Jesus. Some have speculated that many events in Jesus' life are mythical in nature, and were copied from Hinduism.

Vision quest: This is an attempt to make contact with a spirit in order to acquire supernatural powers or protection. It is usually restricted to male youth. They undergo rigorous physical challenges such as exposure to the elements and fasting in order to attain their vision. Quests are common throughout many Aboriginal cultures.

Vodun: A benign religion which combines elements of African Native spirituality and Roman Catholicism. This religion is probably the most highly misrepresented religion in the world.

Voluntarism: The concept that belief is a matter of the will.

Voodoo: A popular name for a Hollywood-created, imaginary religion patterned partly on the religion of Vodun.

Vulgate: Jerome's (circa 342-420 [CE](#)) translation of the Bible from the original Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek into Latin.

Walpurgasnacht: A synonym for Beltane, a Celtic holy day celebrated on APR-30.

Waldenses: An early schismatic group that broke away from the Roman Catholic church. Their history is in doubt; they may have existed as early as the eight century [CE](#). They were viciously persecuted by the Roman Catholic Church from 1209 until 1690. They held many of the beliefs later promoted by Martin Luther and other Protestant reformers.

Warlock: An old-English term for oath breaker. *Conservative Christians and the media often refer to male Witches/Wiccans as Warlocks.* The term is not used by Witches, Wiccans or other Neopagans.

Watchtower Bible and Tract Society: The organization founded by Charles Taze Russell which publishes the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines, and whose followers are called Jehovah's Witnesses - a high-demand Protestant Christian denomination.

Westminster Standards: The *Westminster Confession of Faith*, the *Larger Catechism*, and the *Shorter Catechisms* were written by the *Westminster Assembly of Divines* from 1643 to 1648. They form the theological basis for the Presbyterian and, with some changes, the Congregational denominations. The *Baptist Confession* of 1689 was largely based on the Westminster standards.

Wicca: a [Neo-pagan](#) polytheistic religion with roots in pre-Christian, pre-Celtic Europe. Wiccans follow the [Wiccan Rede](#): "do whatever you wish, as long as you harm nobody, including yourself". Power, manipulation and control of others strictly prohibited. Their drug usage usually confined to wine. Rare ritual sexual activity is practiced, but only in private between a committed adult couple. Wiccans do not proselytize. Most Wiccans are solitary practitioners; some form democratically organized covens, typically of 5 or more people. The minimum age for training or initiation is usually 18. *Conservative usage: evil [occultic practice](#) based on a lust for power, manipulation and control. Rigid ritual practice; heavy illegal drug usage and sexual activity; organize into covens of 13 members each; practice shape shifting (human to animal). Active recruiters, particularly of young people.*

Wiccan: a follower of Wicca

Widdershins: The counter-clockwise direction. The term is often used in describing Neopagan rituals.

Will: One of the basic functions of the human soul; the other is understanding.

Witch: a follower of Witchcraft. It has so many conflicting meanings that it should be used with great care (or perhaps never at all) in public, in order to avoid confusion. 18 common meanings are: A Gothic Satanist; a worshiper of Satan who, during the late Middle Ages and Renaissance, was believed to use black magic to harm others, by involving the aid of Satan and his demons. They didn't exist then and don't exist now. A Wiccan; a follower of [Wicca](#), a recently created, benign, Neopagan religion which is largely based on the some of the symbols, deities, seasonal days of celebration of an ancient European Celtic religion. Wiccans are prohibited from using magic to harm others; they do not believe in the existence of Satan or demons. A woman of such incredible beauty that she bewitches others. A woman of incredible ugliness; a hag. A person who practices benign Magick to influence the world through rituals. A magician with unusual knowledge who can apparently perform miracles during ceremonial magic rituals. In ancient Native American usage and the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament): an evil person who secretly uses evil sorcery (black magic) to intentionally harm others. In the Christian Scriptures (New Testament): a criminal who murders people by administering poisons. A follower of modern-day [Religious Satanism](#). They recognizing Satan as a virile pre-Christian, pagan principle, but do not believe in his existence as a living entity. A member of an underground, evil religious group who worship Satan who engage in [ritual abuse, murder and sometimes cannibalism - largely involving children](#). During the 1980s and early 1990s, many North Americans believed that this group exists.

Witchcraft: a religion or practice followed by a Witch. It has so many meanings that it should be used with great care (or perhaps never at all) in order to avoid confusion.

Womanism, Womanist: "*Womanist and womanism are populist and poetic synonyms for black feminist and black feminism.*" ^{4,5}

Womym: A synonym for the word "woman," which is often used by feminists. "Woman" comes from the Old English term "wif-man." Womym was coined recently.

Word of Faith movement: (a.k.a. Health & Wealth Gospel, Positive Confession, Name it and Claim it, and Faith-formula). A group of conservative Protestant para-church ministries that

focus on "anointed" ministers and the health, wealth, and success of their viewers and donors. MinistryWatch estimates that their total income is in excess of a half billion dollars annually. ³

World Council of Churches: An umbrella group formed in 1948. They promote inter-faith dialog and ecumenical cooperation among mainline and liberal Christian denominations.

World view (a.k.a. worldview): "...a set of presuppositions (assumptions which may be true, partially true or entirely false) which we hold (consciously or subconsciously, consistently or inconsistently) about the basic make-up of our world." ¹ See also [biblical worldview](#)

Worship: In a religious sense, the act of expressing reverence to a deity or supernatural entity.

Wrath, God's: God's judgment on sinners, fueled by his anger, hatred, revulsion and indignation of sin. In the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) there are many descriptions of [mass murders and genocides](#) either created or ordered by God. Author Martyn Lloyd-Jones found that the Hebrew Scriptures contains 20 words which describe God's wrath, and that they are used 580 times. In the Christian Scriptures (New Testament) the topic is discussed in detail in Romans 1:18 and in the Book of Revelation. Author Cairns comments: "...the full power of the wrath of God has never yet been manifested on earth - not in the deluge, or in the destruction of Sodom, or in any other judgment. The full fury of God's anger will be seen when 'the great day of his wrath is come' and the ungodly feel the indescribable torment of 'the wrath of the Lamb' Revelation 6:16-17." ² Martin Luther felt that the wrath of God, as described in Revelation, was incompatible with the loving God that Jesus referred to as "Abba" during his prayers. When Luther translated the Bible into German, he downgraded Revelation, by placing it in an appendix.

Xylolaters: Literally "wood worshippers." A disrespectful term used to refer to Eastern Orthodox believers who revered images and icons.

Yahweh: A vocalization, favored by most theologians, of the tetragrammaton -- the name of God ("JHWH") found throughout the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament). An alternative pronunciation is Jehovah.

Yarmulke: a Jewish head covering traditionally restricted to males. "...the Code of Jewish Law says, 'It is forbidden to walk four cubits without a head covering'." ¹ Synonym: kippah (also spelled "kippa")

Year-day theory: A theory in which a day in some passages of biblical prophecy is held to be equal to a calendar year. This relationship is stated in Numbers 14:34. The theory has found extensive application in interpreting prophecies in Daniel and Revelation. It has been used repeatedly to estimate the second coming of Christ; the answers have always been wrong.

Ying and yang: A Taoist belief that the universe is made up of pairs of opposing forces, like male and female, positive and negative. One's task is to harmonize these forces, both within one's body and in the rest of the universe. A mythical "Yellow Emperor" wrote: "*The principle of Yin and Yang is the foundation of the entire universe. It underlies everything in creation. It brings about the development of parenthood; it is the root and source of life and death it is found with the temples of the gods...Heaven was created by the concentration of Yang, the force of light, earth was created by the concentration of Yin, the forces of darkness. Yang stands for peace and*

serenity; Yin stands for confusion and turmoil. Yang stands for destruction; Yin stands for conservation. Yang brings about disintegration; Yin gives shape to things..."

Yoga: A Hindu method of learning that includes exercises, breathing sequences and meditation. It is designed to aid in enlightenment. The exercise component of Yoga is often practiced in the West as an aid to healthy living.

Yule: An ancient Celtic seasonal day of celebration at the time of the winter solstice. Depending upon the year, the solstice may fall on DEC-20 to 23. A popular minor Sabbat (holy day) observed by Wiccans and other Neopagans.

Zealots: Originally, the name of a small group of Pharisees in 1st Century CE Judea who used terrorist tactics to attack the occupying Roman Army. Their goal was religious and political independence from Rome. The term has since evolved to refer to any extreme radical religious group or individual.

Zen: A Japanese school of Buddhism which has become popular in North America. It is similar to the Chinese school of Buddhism known as Chan.

Zoroastrianism: This religion was founded in ancient Persia, perhaps during the sixth and seventh century BCE. Many scholars believe that numerous religious concepts first appeared in Zoroastrianism, and were later adopted by Judaism, and Christianity. These include: heaven, hell, resurrection of the body, the Messiah, final judgment, and the battle of Armageddon. Once a religion with many followers, it currently only has about 200,000 members; most live in Iran and India.

Abba: An Aramaic word for father, typically used by a child when addressing their own parent. Jesus used the term when addressing God. "Papa" might be the best translation in English. Not to be confused with a really neat Swedish singing quartet.

Abortifacient General medical definition: A drug which causes the [interruption of a pregnancy](#) and the death of an embryo or fetus. (Pregnancy begins when the pre-embryo attaches to the wall of the uterus.) **Common pro-life definition:** A drug which causes the death of any form of human life after conception. The difference in definitions makes dialog concerning [emergency contraception](#) (a.k.a. the morning after pill) very difficult.

Abortion grays: This is a term used to refer to those American adults who are not strongly pro-life or pro-choice. They have reservations about abortion but do not wish to see it criminalized. They may well form the majority of adults. They are as opposed to enforced childbirth for every pregnant woman as they are to completely free access to abortion at any stage of pregnancy for any reason.

Abrahamic: (a.k.a. Abramic) A group of religions that recognize Abraham as a patriarch. This includes [Judaism](#), [Christianity](#) and [Islam](#). Sometimes, the [Baha'i Faith](#) is included in the list. Many smaller non-Jewish groups such as Samaritans, Falashas, Karaites, etc, also trace their spiritual roots back to Abraham, but are not often cited as Abrahamic religions.

Absentee Property Law: An Israeli law that considers all land in Israel that was abandoned by Palestinians when they were driven from Israel now belongs to the state.

Absolution: In legal terms, it is the act of a judge or jury declaring a person innocent of a crime. In a religious sense, it involves a person being freed from guilt or sin. In the Roman Catholic Church, a priest can declare the sins of a penitent person to be forgiven if they sincerely plan to avoid such behavior in the future.

Absolutism: The belief that [absolute truths](#) exist in the field of ethics and morality. Typically, these truths are extracted from a holy text. Antonym is [relativism](#). The concept that a monarchy held the ultimate authority in a state. This was typically a king who claimed to rule by divine right.

Acolyte: (From a Greek word for "*follower*") A layperson who performs minor duties during a religious service.

Activism: Promoting social change. In a religious sense, the term is often used by Fundamentalist and other Evangelical Christians to refer to the expression of the gospel in various ways, including missionary outreach and social reform.

Activist judges: A term, typically used by social or religious conservatives, to refer to judges who give state or federal constitutions priority over ordinary laws, and rule in favor of equal justice and liberty for all persons, regardless of gender, race, sexual orientation, degree of ability, etc.

AD: (a.k.a. A.D.) An acronym for anno domini, the year of the Lord. It refers to the number of years since the birth of Yeshua of Nazareth, a.k.a. Jesus Christ. In reality, Jesus was born probably in the Fall of a year between 4 and 7 [BCE](#). "[CE](#)," an acronym for the religiously neutral term "common era" is gradually replacing "AD."

Adhan: The Muslim call to prayer, typically from the minaret at a mosque.

Ad Hominem: The action of attacking a person's character, expertise, ethics, knowledge etc. as an attempt to discredit their ideas without taking on the more difficult task of debating the ideas themselves.

Adoptionism: A belief, universally held within the earliest Christian movement, and still active in the 2nd and 3rd century CE, that Jesus was a normal human being, a prophet, who was born as any other human, and is not a deity. God later gave him supernatural powers at his baptism when God chose Jesus as his "*adopted*" son. Adoptionism was declared a heresy by a number of early church councils.

Advent: From the Latin word "adventus" or coming: A period of time before Christmas, beginning on the Sunday closest to NOV-30 when the birth of Jesus is recalled. Advent candles are often lit.

African Independent Churches (AICs; a.k.a. African Indigenous Churches): African-based Christian faith groups which range from variations of Western denominations to syncretistic tribal groups which combine selective elements of Christianity with local existing traditions.

Agape: A Greek word for love that is found frequently in the Christian Scriptures (New Testament) in noun form as "*agape*" and in verb form as "*agapao*." ¹ It is different from erotic

love. It is supposed to be the characteristic attitude of Christians toward one another, (John 13:34), and toward all humanity, 1 Thessalonians. 3:12; 1 Corinthians 16:14; 2 Peter 1:7.

Agnostic: a person who believes that, at our present level of knowledge, we cannot know whether or not a God exists. Some Agnostics believe that we can never know whether one or more deities exists.

Agunah: A Jewish woman who is not free to remarry, generally because her husband refuses to give her a get (divorce), or because he has disappeared and not known to be alive or dead, or because he is not mentally competent to give her a get.

Ahimsa: Taking care and concern to avoid injury to any sentient creature. This is the first of the five precepts of [Buddhist](#) life and a major principle of [Jainism](#).

Alawis: An sect of Islam that originated in the Shia tradition. Many of its followers live in Syria.

Alexandrian School: One of the two great schools of biblical interpretation in the early Church. They incorporated Greek Pagan philosophical beliefs from Plato's teachings into Christianity. They interpreted much of the Bible allegorically. The school was established in Alexandria, Egypt in the late second century [CE](#).

Alim (single), Ulama (plural): Islamic scholar(s).

Aliyah: A Jewish term which means an immigration of Jews to Israel. An "oleh" is a single Jew immigrating into Israel. (Plural is "olim").

Allah: This is an Arabic word which means "*the One True God*." Most Muslims in the West use *Allah* and *God* interchangeably.

Al-Hijra: An Islamic holy day that recalls the trek by Mohammed and his followers to Medina.

Al-Sajdah: This is the the act of prostration by a Muslim during which seven parts of the body are to touch the ground: the forehead, palms, knees and big toes.

Allegory: Interpreting religious texts sybmolically.

All Saints Day: A Christian day of remembrance of the saints of the faith- both recognized and unknown. It has been observed since 609 [CE](#). The Western church celebrates it on NOV-1; Eastern Orthodox churches celebrate *All Saints Day* in the springtime -- on the Sunday after Pentecost.

All Souls' Day (a.k.a. the *Day of the Dead*), is celebrated yearly on NOV-2. This is a day for prayer and almsgiving in memory of ancestors who have died. Believers pray for the souls of the dead, in an effort to hasten their transition from [Purgatory](#) to [Heaven](#). It is primarily observed by Roman Catholics.

Altar: A table-like structure originally used for ritual sacrifice of animals, and occasionally of humans. Now used as a central focus in Jewish, Christian, Neopagan, and other religious services.

Amen: The word is related to "Emunah" in Hebrew, which means faith and/or belief. Adding "Amen" at the end of "...a blessing or a prayer demonstrates a statement of affirmation that the blessing is true and hope that the prayer will be answered." "Amen" is also a near acronym; its four letters stand for the three Hebrew words: "Aiy'l Melech Ne-eman" which mean that God is a true and faithful king.

Amillennialism: (a.k.a Nonmillennialism) A belief taught by Roman Catholicism, and some Reformed Protestantism and Baptist churches concerning the end of the world. We are currently in the "millennium." End time events described in the book of Revelation and elsewhere in the New Testament have mostly taken place. The Antichrist is viewed figuratively and not as a real person. This was the universal belief of Christianity up until the 19th century.

Amish: A very conservative Christian group which broke away from the larger Anabaptist movement in the Alsace region in France during the late 17th century. Most Amish now live in the U.S. and Canada -- largely in Indiana, Ohio and Pennsylvania. They isolate themselves from the larger American/Canadian culture. Most are farmers. [More details.](#)

Anabaptists: A European Christian movement at the time of the Protestant reformation, whose origins are a matter of debate. They believed in adult baptism, freedom of belief, separation of church and state, the rejection of war, and other beliefs that were rather advanced for their time. They were terrible persecuted, both by Roman Catholicism and Protestant churches. The [Amish](#) and Mennonites trace their origins to the Anabaptists. Some theologians and historians include the Society of Friends ([Quakers](#)) and Moravians as Anabaptist denominations.

Anagogy: From the Greek word "anago" - to lead. Interpreting the scriptures, or other writings, mystically, in order to uncover a hidden meanings.

Ancestor worship: The veneration or worship of deceased people by their living kin. It exists, sometimes integrated as part of a world religion, in about 60% of the world's cultures.

Angel: The English word comes from the Greek "angelos" (messenger). In the Bible they were described as an intelligent and immortal species, usually presented as being visually indistinguishable from humans -- i.e. with a human body and without wings. They delivered messages from God, and either harmed or helped humans. Satan is described in the Bible as an evil angel. Because the Bible's cosmology asserts that the earth was flat, that it was covered by a metal firmament or dome, and that God resided in Heaven above the dome, angels have often been portrayed as having wings so that they could fly like birds from Heaven to earth and back. Angels play a major role in Judaism, Christianity, Islam and the New Age.

Angelology: The theological study of angels. This is primarily found in Christianity.

Anglicanism: The beliefs and organization of the *Church of England* and the national churches that together form the *Anglican Communion*. The Communion includes the Episcopal Church in the U.S. and the Anglican Church of Canada. The denomination is theologically diverse, having members whose beliefs range from Fundamentalism to liberal Christianity and from homophobia to support for equal rights for persons of all sexual orientations. The Communion is coordinated by the Lambeth Conference which meets once every decade.

Anglo-Catholicism: A movement within the Anglican Communion which promotes a return to pre-Reformation beliefs and rituals, including the mass, confession and monasticism.

Animism: a type of religious belief that all components of the universe, including humans, animals, plant life, rocks, etc. contain some form of life force, soul or spirit. Some are seen as friendly spirits; others as tricksters. "*While animists can be found in almost all Asian countries, they are more than 5% of the population only in Laos. Animists are between 1% and 5% of the population in Burma, India, Indonesia, Kampuchea, Malaysia, and Vietnam.*" ³

Aninut: A Jewish term covering the interval between a person's death and burial.

Annihilationism: (a.k.a. conditionalism and conditional immortality). From the Latin word "*nihil*" -- which means nothing. This an umbrella term used to refer to a group of beliefs about life after death. They are: After death, [unsaved people](#) will immediately cease to exist in any form. This is taught by most [Adventist groups](#), by the [Jehovah's Witnesses](#) and other Christian groups. This contrasts with the historical Christian belief that the unsaved will be tortured for all eternity in [Hell](#) without hope of mercy or cessation. Both views can be supported by selected biblical passages. The belief that unsaved people spend an interval of time in Hell. Their length of stay is matched to the frequency and seriousness of their evil deeds. They are then exterminated and cease to exist. This view is also supported by some biblical passages. The belief -- common among Agnostics, Atheists, Humanists, secularists and others -- that after death everyone will automatically cease to exist. After death, we live on only in the DNA that we have passed on to the next generation, and in the influences that we have had on other people and society while we were alive.

Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary: This is a Christian holy day which recalls the Archangel's announcement to Mary of her pregnancy.

Annunciation: This refers to the announcement to Joseph (in Matthew 1:20) and to Mary (Luke 1:26-35) of Jesus' future birth.

Antedeluvian: The interval of time preceding the great flood of Noah, described in Genesis 2:6-8. Some Christians believe that the climate was more uniform that it is at the present, and that the earth was surrounded by a gigantic vapor cloud. All or essentially all geologists reject these beliefs.

Anthem: A Christian term for a hymn whose words come from the Bible.

Anthropology: The study of humanity and human cultures.

Anthropomorphism: The representation of a non-human as a human. God in the earlier parts of the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) is described in human terms, as having a body. Sometimes anthropomorphism is extended to animals who are assumed to have human feelings.

Antibaptists: (not to be confused with [Anabaptists](#)): Christians who deny the validity of baptism. Most believe that water baptism has been replaced by spirit baptism. Christians who do not recognize earlier baptism that convert's from other denominations had received.

Antichrist: An individual whose appearance is prophesized in two books of the Christian Scriptures (1 John and 2 John). He is expected by some Christians to appear near the [End Time](#), when he will act as Satan's chief representative. The pope, Ronald Reagan, Bill Gates, Hitler, Stalin, and many other people have been called the Antichrist. So has at least one computer system.

Anticult Movement (ACM): A mainly secular movement which opposes new religious movements (NRMs) because of their perceived deceptive recruiting practices and mind-control techniques. Many small ACM groups coalesced into several large ACM organizations starting in the early 1970's. Their beliefs that many NRMs drive their members to suicide and reduce their followers to near-zombie status has been widely accepted among the public. However, most sociologists and other academics reject these teachings. [Counter-cult organizations](#) -- groups that oppose NRMs on theological grounds -- are considered by some to be part of the ACM. [More details.](#)

Antidisestablishmentarianism: Being opposed to the belief that there should no longer be an official church a the country. The word is sometimes quoted as the longest word in the English language. The longest word in any language may well be the Welsh name of a town in Wales: **Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwllllantysiliogogoch.**

Antinomianism The belief that once a believer is [saved](#), they are not bound to follow moral laws. The belief that a saved believer can freely sin because he is forgiven of past and future transgressions.

Antiochan School: One of the two great schools of biblical interpretation in the early Church. They incorporated Greek Pagan beliefs from Aristotle's teachings into Christianity.

Anti-semitism: (a.k.a. Anti-Semitism, antisemitism) Hatred, prejudice, oppression, or discrimination against Jews or Judaism. The term is usually spelled with a capital "S" in "*Semitic*." We spell it with a small "s" because it Semite refers to a language group. Semites originally meant the descendents of Shem, which include both Jews and Muslims in the Middle East. Now, the term is used mainly to refer to Jews. Alan Dershowitz, in his book "*The Case for Israel*" defines anti-semitism as "*taking a trait or an action that is widespread if not universal, and blaming only the Jews for it.*" In recent years, the term has been used to refer to any action or person that is critical of Jews, Judaism or the Israel.

Antitrinitarians: Christians who deny the Trinity -- that concept that God the father, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit are three persons in a single deity.

Anti-zionism: A belief system opposed to the creation and continuation of Israel as a Jewish state.

Apikoros: A Jewish term for an unbeliever.

Apocalypse, apocalyptic: From a Greek word meaning "revelation." A style of mainly Jewish and Christian writing that was common from about 200 [BCE](#) to 200 [CE](#). The writings prophesized the destruction of evil and triumph of good. Sometimes narrowly used to refer to the [Book of Revelation](#) in the Bible.

Apocatastasis: The belief that all living entities will eventually attain Heaven, including individuals sent to Hell, Satan, demons, etc. Hell will thus eventually be cleared of all of its inhabitants. This is considered a [heresy](#) by most Christian denominations. One meaning of the term "universalism" is similar to "Apocatastasis," and is a *lot* easier to pronounce.

Apocrypha: A Greek term meaning to hide or uncover. A collection of fourteen books written after the last book of the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) and before the first book of the Christian Scriptures (New Testament). It is accepted by the [Roman Catholic Church](#) and [Orthodox Churches](#) as part of the inspired canon of the Bible, but is rejected by most Protestant denominations.

Apologetics: A systematic defense of a belief system. It is derived from the Greek "*apologia*" which means to create a defense. See 1 Peter 3:15. Most apologetics texts are directed to members of another religion, or to secularists. However they tend to be read in practice by the faith group whose beliefs are defended. See [Polemics](#). In Christianity: **Classical Apologetics:** uses rational arguments to prove that God exists, and relies on evidence to support biblical claims and miracles. **Presuppositional Apologetics:** starts with the assumption that God exists and that the Bible is true. They argue from this that their particular belief of the Trinity, salvation, Heaven, Hell, etc. is valid. **Evidential Apologetics:** uses evidences such as miracles, fulfilled prophecies, etc. to prove that God exists and that the biblical account of Christ and his message are valid and trustworthy.

Apologist: A Christian who gives an intellectual defense of their religion.

Apostate: From the Greek *apo - histanai* ("*depart from a stand.*") A person who was once affiliated with a faith group, but has since "fallen away" and left the group. One group's apostate is generally another group's convert. Very severe penalties exist in some countries of the world against individuals who abandon the state religion in favor of another faith. It can theoretically mean execution in some [Islamic countries](#). The Roman Catholic church stopped burning European apostates at the stake in 1792 [CE](#).

Apostle: A Christian term to refer to Jesus' immediate followers. An apostle must generally a man was personally chosen by Jesus, and to have seen him. Sometimes, the term is used to refer only to the twelve disciples, or to the twelve disciples and Paul. Other times, it has been used to refer to the 70 disciples selected by Jesus. In Romans 16:7, Paul refers to a [female apostle, Junia](#), as "*outstanding among the apostles.*" (NIV)

Apostle's Creed: A summary of Christian beliefs. Many Christians believe that the Apostles personally wrote the creed so that they could coordinate their missionary efforts as they spread out through the known world. However, there is evidence that the creed was written near the end of the second century [CE](#), about a century after the time of the apostles.

Apostolic succession: The Catholic belief that Jesus Christ ordained the twelve apostles, who ordained bishops, who in turn ordained their successors in an unbroken sequence up to the present day. Non-Catholic Christian denominations generally regard apostolic succession to be a myth.

Apparition: From the Latin word "*apparere:*" to appear). A paranormal incident involving the appearance of a non-existent entity or object. A visual apparition is generally called a ghost.

Appollinarianism: An early Christian belief promoted by Apollinarius (b 310) who lived in Syria. He believed that Jesus was entirely divine and had no human nature. The belief was declared a [heresy](#), first at the Council of Alexandria (378 CE) and later at two subsequent Councils.

Aramaic: A semitic language used throughout southwest Asia. Used by Jews after the 6th century [BCE](#).

Archangel: a member of the highest rank of angels. Only two are mentioned in the Bible: Gabriel and Michael.

Archbishop: (Derived from a Greek word for "chief overseer"). A bishop who has administrative responsibilities over an archdiocese.

Archdiocese: A diocese -- a geographical area -- that is particularly large or has an important past. Its priests are under the direction of a single archbishop. The term is used by the Roman Catholic church, the Greek Orthodox churches, and the Anglican Communion.

Archon: A [Gnostic](#) term which refers to the [Demiurge](#) -- the creator of the material world -- and his angels.

Areligious: Indifferent to organized religions.

Arhat: A Buddhist saint who has liberated themselves from samsara: the endless cycle of life, death and rebirth into the world. They typically lead a monastic live.

Arianism: An early Christian [heresy](#) named after Arius (250-336 CE). He taught that Jesus was not in existence for all time, but was created by God near the end of the first century [BCE](#). He also taught a form of monotheism in which there is only one person in the Godhead -- the Father -- and not a Trinity. The church at the time was evenly divided over whether Arianism was truth or a heresy. Constantine's vote swayed the balance, and it became a heresy.

Arigocity: A word coined by Adam Bolt, an Australian photographer, to mean the acceptance of spiritual diversity. The word does not seem to have caught on yet, because the only location on the Internet where the word appears is on Bolt's personal web site. Still, it is a word that seems needed, particularly in the U.S., which is the world's most religiously diverse country.

Ark: In a religious sense, it has two unrelated meanings: Noah's Ark was the boat constructed by Noah in which he and his family survived the great flood.

Armageddon: A battle that is prophesized to occur in the plain of Megiddo, Israel. Jesus and Satan, and their armies, will fight a final battle (as stated in the biblical [Book of Revelation](#)).

Arminianism: A set of Christian beliefs suggested by Arminius, a theologian from the Netherlands, in reaction to [Calvin's five points](#). He maintained that: Everyone has free will and can chose to be saved; God selected some individuals to be saved on the basis of his foreknowledge of who would respond; Jesus died for all; People can resist the call of God. One cannot lose one's salvation unless they abandon it.

Aryan: A term used by the German Nazi government to refer to Caucasians of the Nordic type. Originally, the term referred to persons who speak an Indo-European language.

Asa, Ás. Æsir: The name for the Gods in Norse Heathenism, either as individuals or as a collective.

Ascended Masters: A [New Age](#) belief that there are spiritual, non-physical, entities who live on an astral plane and can communicate spiritual truths to humans through [channeling](#).

Ascension: In Christianity, this refers to the belief that Jesus ascended to heaven to sit at God's right hand. According to two gospels, Luke, Jesus ascended to heaven on a Monday, the day after his resurrection. Acts explained that it occurred 40 days later.

Ascension, feast of (a.k.a. ascension day): A Christian holy day celebrating [Jesus' ascension](#) from Earth to Heaven. It is celebrated on a Thursday, 40 days after Easter Sunday.

Ascension of Abdul Baha: A celebration by the Baha'i Faith of Abdul Baha's spirit rising to heaven.

Ascension of Baha'u'llah: A remembrance by the Baha'i faith of the death of its founder, Mirza Husayn Ali, and the ascension of his spirit to heaven.

Asceticism: The belief that a conflict exists between one's body and spirit. By renouncing the needs and desires of the body, one can attain a higher spirituality. This concept is found in many religions and faith groups, from [Christianity](#) to [Native American spirituality](#).

Ashkenazi: A term referring to Jews of eastern and northern European origin. See also [Sephardi](#).

Ashoora: A one-day fast in which Muslims recall the death of Imam Hussain, the grandson of the Prophet of Islam. He sacrificed his life and the lives of many of his family members and friends in Karbala Iraq, in order to preserve the teachings of Islam. 3

Ashram: A Hindu term for a religious retreat center where a student can learn under the guidance of a guru (teacher).

Ash Wednesday: This is the first day of Lent, observed by Christians. It is held on the Wednesday which is 40 days prior to Easter.

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Assimilation: Becoming integrated into mainstream culture.

Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary: A Roman Catholic holy day which commemorates the Virgin Mary's death and direct ascension to heaven. The declaration on 1950-NOV-1 that the Virgin Mary's body and soul directly ascended to heaven. This event does not appear in the Bible. However, it has been argued on the basis that Jesus would not have allowed his mother's body to decay in the earth.

Astral plane: A plane of existence that is separate from, but which overlaps, the physical world.

Astral projection: A practice among some Pagans and New Agers whereby they believe that they can transfer their consciousness from the physical world to the astral plane.

Astrology: a belief that the positions of the planets affect events and states of being on earth. It was developed independently in Greece and India circa 300 [BCE](#).

Athame: A knife, typically double sided with either a black or natural wood handle used by Wiccans and other Neopagans during rituals.

Atheism: from a Greek term meaning no deity. According to many Atheists: having no belief about a deity. According to most non-Atheists, actively denying that a deity exists.

Atheist: A person who believes in Atheism.

Atlantis: An sunken island. generally believed to be in the Atlantic ocean, which some people assert once held an advanced civilization.

Atonement: In general, an act that unites enemies as friends. In Judaism, it refers to a process of healing the relationship between God and humans achieved through repentance, seeking forgiveness and making amends. In Christianity, the doctrine that Christ's death has the power of canceling the sins of those Christians who are "[saved.](#)"

Atonement, limited: One of the five points of Calvinism: Christ died to atone for certain sins of specific individuals -- only those who are elected by God to be saved. He did not die for the all sins of all humanity.

Attributes of God: God, as viewed by followers of Judaism, Christianity and Islam is traditionally thought to be omnipotent (all powerful), omniscient (all knowing), omnipresent (present everywhere) and omnibeneficent (all loving). The [theodicy paradox](#) addresses the apparent impossibility of God holding these four attributes simultaneously. Other attributes include holy, good, wise, and just.

Aura: An energy field believed by some to surround humans or objects. Some people believe that they can detect an aura visually and determine an individual's emotional and physical state from its color and variation. ²

Authoritarianism: A system of control in a group, family, country, religion, etc. in which most members are heavily controlled by a few.

Authority, Bible: Biblical authority is the belief -- near universally held among conservative Christians -- that: "*the Bible, as the expression of God's will to us, possesses the right supremely to define what we are to believe and how we are to conduct ourselves.*" ⁴ Steven Ibbotson states: "*The Bible is authoritative because it is God's inspired word to humanity.*" ⁵ Religious liberals commonly discount some sections of the Bible as authoritative because they are judged to be [profoundly immoral](#) when compared to today's religious and secular moral standards.

Authorized Version: Synonym for the *King James Version* of the Bible.

Autosoterism: The belief that a person is responsible for their own salvation which is attained through their good works.

Avatar: A Hindu concept of a God adopting a human or animal form. A God-man Krishna is an avatar of Vishnu.

Averah (a.k.a. aveira): A Jewish term for sin.

Ayyam-I-Ha: The first intercalary day, required to balance the Baha'i calendar. Members of the Baha'i faith engage in acts of hospitality and charity towards others on this day.

Babel, tower of: A tower mentioned in Genesis 11. The Bible describes how there was only one language used prior to construction of the tower. God was offended by the construction, and caused its builders to speak in different languages. Almost all linguistic experts, except those who are conservative Christians, consider the story to be a myth.

Babylonian Talmud: The most authoritative compilation of rabbinic discussions on Jewish law, ethics, customs, legends and stories. Abbreviated term: Bavli

Backmasking: A type of [subliminal message](#) in which a second audio track is recorded backwards on top of a record's music. It is a common belief among the public that such messages bypass the conscious brain, enter the subconscious and motivate the individual to take certain actions. One rock group actually inserted a backmasking section on one of their records as a joke. There is no evidence that backmasking works or has ever been used with evil intent.

Badge: A cloth identifier that the Catholic Church required Jews to wear. This was later adopted by the Nazi Government in Germany who required certain groups to wear a badge so that they could easily be singled out. For Jews, this was a yellow Star of David. For other groups it was usually a triangle: brown for Roma (a.k.a. Gypsies), purple for Jehovah's Witnesses, pink for homosexuals, green for criminals, red for political prisoners, blue for emigrants, and black for "asocials." In recent years, gays and lesbians have embraced the pink triangle as a symbol of their drive for equal treatment.

Bahá'í Faith: A world religion, founded in 1844 CE by Baha'u'llah (Glory of God) in Iran. Its roots are based in Islam. With the exception of its beliefs about homosexuality, and the makeup of its *Universal House of Justice*, it promotes democracy with equal rights to all, regardless of gender, race, nationality, etc. It has spread across the world. Its followers experience heavy oppression in Iran.

Baphomet (a.k.a. Sigil of Baphomet): A pentagram (a five pointed star) with one point downwards and two upwards, within a circle. A goat's head is drawn within the star. This is used by many Satanists as a religious symbol.

Baisakhi: The [Sikhs'](#) New Year's celebration.

Baptism: The English words "baptize" and "baptism" are derived from a Greek root: "baptizr," which means "to immerse," "to dip under," or "to wash." Within Christianity, it is usually performed by a member of the clergy in a church setting, thus welcoming an individual into the church. Denominations disagree about the method (immersion or sprinkling), the age at which the ritual is done, and additional consequences of baptism. Some Christian groups maintain that baptism is required before a person can be saved; some say that only those baptized in their denomination or in a certain way can be saved. Still others consider baptism to be merely an indication that a person had been saved in the recent past.

Baptism for the dead: This is a procedure that was employed among some Christian groups during the second century CE. Today, it is followed by members of [The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day saints](#) -- the Mormons. Ancestors who died outside the church can be baptized by their descendents who are alive today.

Baptists: A group of Protestant Christian who, according to religious historians, originated in the English Separatist movement of the 1600s. However, some Baptists believe that they can trace their history directly back to the New Testament period. In the U.S., they consist of dozens of denominations that do not baptize infants, but who baptize individuals by immersion after they have personally professed their faith. Baptist congregations are independent; full authority resides in the membership of each church. The largest American Protestant denomination, the Southern Baptist Convention, deviated from centuries of tradition by expelling congregations who had decided to welcome sexually active gays and lesbians as members.

Bar Mitzvah: From the Hebrew phrase "son of the commandments." A ritual performed on Jewish boys at the age of 13 when they attain religious responsibility.

Bat Mitzvah: From the Hebrew phrase "daughter of the commandments." A ritual performed on Jewish girls at the age of 12 years and a day when they attain religious responsibility.

BCE (a.k.a. B.C.E.): An acronym for "Before the Common Era." A religiously-neutral calendar notation that is numerically equivalent to the "BC" notation without the connotation that the user recognizes Yeshua of Nazareth (Jesus Christ) to be the Messiah or Christ. Some non-Christians find the use of "BC" to be offensive.

Beget: To father, or sire. Etymology is: Indo-European "ghend" > Old English "begetan" > Middle English "biyeten" > Modern English "Beget."

Begotten: A past participle of beget.

Beit Hillel: From the Hebrew "House of Hillel). A liberal religious school of belief derived from Hillel -- a notable Jewish philosopher and rabbi who lived during the 1st century BCE. Yeshua of Nazareth (a.k.a. Jesus Christ) largely followed Hillel's teachings, except over criteria for marital divorce.

Believers in exile: This is a term created by John Shelby Spong, a retired bishop of the Episcopal Church, USA. It refers to Christians "... for whom the God experience is still real, but most of the religious forms used to interpret that reality have lost all meaning." They have outgrown the faith of their childhood and are searching for a new path.

Beltane: One of the four major Sabbats celebrated annually by Wiccans and other Neopagans on the evening of APR-30. It is based on an ancient Celtic seasonal day of celebration.

Besom: A broom often used by Wiccans or other Neopagans to purify a circle or other sacred area before a ritual is conducted.

Bhagavad-Gita: The "*Song of the Lord*" -- a holy text revered by followers of Hinduism and Iskcon.

Bible Code: A book by Michael Drosnin which promoted the concept that the Bible contains prophecies which are hidden by a special code. This belief became popular during the 1990s, but collapsed when it was found that similar codes could be extracted from any book of similar length.

Biblical authority: This is the belief -- near universally held among conservative Christians -- that: *"the Bible, as the expression of God's will to us, possesses the right supremely to define what we are to believe and how we are to conduct ourselves."* ² Steven Ibbotson states: *"The Bible is authoritative because it is God's inspired word to humanity."* ³ Religious liberals commonly discount some sections of the Bible as authoritative because they are judged to be [profoundly immoral](#) when compared to today's religious and secular moral standards.

Biblical worldview: A personal perspective on humanity, deity and the rest of the universe based on the Bible. There are many such worldviews, reflecting various conservative, mainline, liberal, Gnostic, post-Christian and other belief systems. The Barna Group defines a conservative Protestant biblical worldview as including eight beliefs: [Absolute truth](#) exists. The source of moral truth is the Bible. The Bible is [without error](#) in all of its teachings. That eternal spiritual [salvation](#) cannot be earned through works while on earth. Everyone has a responsibility to share their religious beliefs with others. [Satan](#) is a living force, not just a symbol of evil. [God](#) is the creator of the universe, omnipotent, omniscient who still rules the universe today.

Biblicism: Having a particular regard for the Bible as the Word of God and the [ultimate authority for religious belief and morality](#).

Bibliolatry: Worship of a book, particularly the Bible. A term of criticism levied against individuals who give an excessive regard to the text of the Bible.

Bibliology: This word has a secular and a Christian meaning: Secular: A discussion of books. Christian: The study of the Bible and the doctrines derived from it.

Biocentrism: Rejecting humanity as having supreme importance on Earth, and considering all living species as equally important.

Biofield: A subtle energy field that allegedly permeates a person's body and extends beyond it. It may be similar to Qi, an energy field believed to exist in traditional Chinese medicine. It has never been detected and measured by conventional scientific instruments. However, some alternative medicine practitioners believe that they can detect and even see it.

Bind: A ritual found in conservative Christianity, Wicca and other Neopagan traditions to prevent a person or spirit from harming individuals.

Birth of the Bab: A [Baha'i](#) holy day honoring of the founder, Mirza 'Ali-Muhammed, (1819-1850 [CE](#)). He assumed the title **Bab** ("*the Gate.*")

Birth of Baha'u'llah: A [Baha'i](#) annual celebration of the birth of their teacher and Messiah, Mirza Husayn-'Ali-i-Nuri (1817-1892). He was the Manifestation predicted by the Bab.

Birth of Guru Nanak Dev Ji: A day when [Sikhs](#) commemorate the birthday of their founder.

Bisexual: An individual who is physically and emotionally attracted to both males and females.

Bishop: (From the Greek word episkopos: supervisor). In the early church, he was a chief priest at a church. Later, the role became that of a priest with administrative duties over a group of churches within a geographical area called a diocese.

Bitheist: Synonym for duotheist; a person who believes that there are two deities -- typically one female and the other male, as in [Wicca](#), or one all good and the other all bad, as in [Zoroastrianism](#).

Black magic: The use of religious rites and rituals to harm another person. One example from the Bible was when Elisha issued a curse against 42 children who were bothering him. The children were torn to shreds by she-bears. See 2 Kings 2:23-24.

Black Mass: An imaginary inverted form of the Roman Catholic mass involving black candles, desecrated materials stolen from a church, prayers recited backwards in Latin, etc. Such rituals have been performed by members of the [Church of Satan](#) as a publicity stunt.

Black Muslims: A group of Muslim organizations for African-Americans, including the *Nation of Islam*.

Black theology: The belief that Israel, as described in the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament), was a nation of blacks. Jesus was black; his purpose was to liberate fellow blacks from oppression by white Gentiles.

Blasphemy: Swearing in the name of God, denying the existence of God, saying evil things about God, asserting incorrect beliefs about God, etc. One religion's affirmation of their God is often another religion's blasphemy about their God.

Blessed be: A frequently used greeting-blessing by Wiccans and other Neopagans.

Blessed hope: The expectation that Jesus Christ will return to Earth in the second coming.

Blood Atonement: A group of theories that attempt to explain how Jesus' torture-death resulted in a [mechanism by which people's sins can be forgiven](#). Other explanations, sometimes called "bloodless atonement" theories, account for the forgiveness of sins on the bases of Jesus' teachings and life. A [belief in the early Mormon church](#) introduced by Brigham Young. It has since been abandoned by some Mormon denominations. Some crimes were considered so serious that the perpetrator's salvation required that he be killed and his blood mixed with the earth.

Blood libel: A false belief which has endured since the 1st century [BCE](#). It states that members of a religious group [kidnap, abuse, ritually murder and sometimes eat the body of a member of another religion](#). Groups creating this groundless fable include ancient Greek and Roman Pagans, Christians, Nazis, and Muslims. Innocent religious groups victimized by the fable include Jews, Christians, Wiccans, Druids and other Neopagans, and Roma (Gypsies). The hoax exists today mostly among some Muslims (against Jews) and some Fundamentalist Christians (against Wiccans, Satanists and other religious minorities).

Blót: Service of the Gods; kinship between the Gods of Norse Heathenism and the people.

Bodhi: A Buddhist term which means to have achieved enlightenment; to understand the ultimate reality.

Bodhisattva: A Buddhist Sanskrit term that literally means "an enlightenment being." A person who is embarked on the path to enlightenment and has reached the final stage before nirvana.

However, the individual chooses to remain on Earth being reborn in successive lives, in order to help all other sentient beings attain enlightenment.

Bodhi Day: The day when [Buddha](#) decided to sit under the bodhi tree, and remain there until he reached enlightenment.

Body of Christ: This often refers to the physical body of Yeshua of Nazareth (a.k.a. Jesus Christ.) Other times, it refers to the "*invisible church*" which is made up of true Christians, past and present. Unfortunately, there is no consensus concerning [who is a "true" Christian](#), so that there is no agreement over the exact makeup of this group.

Boline: A knife used by a Wiccan or other Neopagan to collect herbs for ritual use.

Bon Festival: This is a day when the followers of [Shinto](#) honor the souls of their ancestors. People visit graveyards.

Book of Life: In [Christianity](#), a list of saved individuals which is maintained by God.

Book of Mormon: One of four texts considered to be divinely inspired and authoritative scripture by the [Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints](#) (the Mormons) and other Mormon denominations. Mormons believe that Joseph Smith, their founder, translated the Book of Mormon from golden plates left by an early American society. Some researchers believe the Book to have been written by Smith, and partly based on an earlier book "*View of the Hebrews*" by Ethan Smith (no relation).

Book of Shadows: A personal diary of a Wiccan or other Neopagan in which she/he records their ritual activities.

Born again: The process by which a person repents of their sins and trusts Jesus of Nazareth as Lord and Savior. Conservative Protestants believe that this is the only way that one can get to [heaven](#). Some of these denominations do not require that a person repent first.

Brahma: The creator God and member of the Hindu trinity of deities, which also includes Shiva and Vishnu.

Brahmin: A member of the priestly class in Hinduism -- the highest caste in India.

Brainwashing: (a.k.a. thought control, mind control, coercive persuasion). A non-violent method that uses mind control techniques to convince a person to abandon some of their basic beliefs and adopt the beliefs of the indoctrinator. The [anti-cult movement](#) teaches that many small religious groups, which they call cults, engage in brainwashing. Sociologists and mental health researchers who are not involved in the anti-cult movement generally reject the concept.

Branch Davidians: Popular name for a doomsday, [destructive cult](#), the *Students of the Seven Seals*, which was led by David Koresh. Dozens of their members died when their compound burned to the ground in Waco, TX.

Brit Ha-Hayim: In reform Judaism, a ceremony celebrating the birth of a girl.

British Israel movement: A belief that the ten lost tribes of Israel -- those conquered and assimilated by the Assyrians circa 722 BCE -- became the British people, and sometimes the inhabitants of the former British Empire, including the U.S. and Canada.

Buchmanism: The *Moral Rearmament* movement founded by Frank Buchman (1878 - 1961). He organized the *Oxford Group* in 1929, which became *Moral Rearmament*, an inter-faith group, in 1938. Its goal was to change society one person at a time, by promoting absolute purity, unselfishness, honesty and love.

Buddha: A Buddhist term used to refer to Prince Siddhartha, (560 - 480 [BCE](#)) after his enlightenment.

Buddha Day: A celebration of the birthday of the [Buddha](#).

Buddhism: A world religion, founded in the 6th century [BCE](#) by a Hindu: Siddhartha Gautama, His followers called him "the Buddha" or "the enlightened one." It has about 300 million followers, almost all located in Asia. Buddhism is experiencing a rapid growth in North America. It is perhaps the least violent of the world's major religions.

Bull: From the Latin word "*bull*" a seal. A papal statement in which he speaks *ex cathedra* on a matter of belief or morality. Such a statement is regarded by Roman Catholics as infallible.

Cabala (also spelled Cabalah, Caballa, Caballah, Cabbala, Cabbalah, Cabballa, Cabballah, and various spellings starting with the letters K or Q): A [Jewish](#) mystical tradition with roots in Palestine during the 1st century CE and which developed during the 12th century. It uses occultic (hidden) knowledge to interpret the Torah. It is currently enjoying a surge in popularity.

Caliph: Muslim term for community leader.

Calvinism: A system of Christian belief laid down by John Calvin. It emphasizes predestination -- that certain people are fated to be saved and others are selected by God to be not saved and spend eternity in Hell. The selection is not done on the basis of any action that they have performed during their life on earth.

CAN: An acronym for the [Cult Awareness Network](#).

Canon: The *Canon of Scripture* in Christianity refers to the set of books selected from among the books of the Hebrew Scriptures, the dozens of gospels, and many dozens of epistles, to form the Bible. Some canons contain just the 39 books of the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) and 27 books in the Christian Scriptures (New Testament). Other canons include the Apocrypha. Some liberal theologians have recommended that the canon be opened for additional writings, like the Gospel of Thomas -- often regarded as the fifth gospel.

Canon law: A term used primarily within the Roman Catholic church to refer to a collection of church laws.

Canonization: The process by which a Christian becomes a saint. The process by which books are accepted into a holy book

Cantor (Latin term for a singer): A person who recites and sings liturgical materials in Jewish religious services.

Cardinal: Bishops in the Roman Catholic church who advise the pope. They meet as a group to elect a new pope when needed.

Cardinal Doctrines of Christianity: Lists of beliefs of the foundational beliefs that all Christians should believe in. Although lists differ, they often include some of the following: biblical [inerrancy](#), the deity of Jesus, the [virgin birth](#), Jesus' bodily [resurrection](#), the Trinity, the [Atonement](#), criteria for [salvation](#).

Castrato: (Plural castrati): An adult male singer with a soprano, mezzo-soprano or alto voice. They retained their prepubescent vocal range because they were castrated before puberty. This was a practice within the Roman Catholic Church from about 1500 [CE](#). Castrati were banned by the pope in 1902.

Catechism: From the Greek "katecheo" -- to sound aloud. A training program to educate a person in the fundamentals of Christianity. It is often organized in a question and answer format.

Catholic: This came from the Greek word *Katholikos* which means "throughout the whole" or "*universal*." This implies a world-wide faith, rather than a local one. The Nicene Creed, recited in the churches of many Christian denominations, speaks of "*one holy catholic and apostolic church*." Many faith groups refer to themselves as Catholic: the Roman Catholic Church, centered in the Vatican; Anglo-Catholics (within the Anglican Communion); and Evangelical Catholics (among Lutherans).

Catholic Charismatic Renewal: The acceptance of certain Pentecostal beliefs and practices within the Roman Catholic church. This has also happened within Protestant denominations, where it is generally referred to as *Charismatic Movement*.

CE (a.k.a. C.E.): An anacronym for "common era." A religiously-neutral calendar notation that is numerically equivalent to the "AD" notation without the connotation that the user recognizes Yeshua of Nazareth (Jesus Christ) to be God. Some non-Christians find the use of "AD" to be offensive.

Celibate, Celibacy: This is a word in transition. In the past, it has simply meant to be unmarried. More recently, it has evolved to mean the act of sexual abstinence. We recommend that the word never be used, unless it is carefully pre-defined. We recommend "*unmarried*" and "*sexually inactive*" or "*a virgin*" as preferred, unambiguous terms.

Celibrant: A minister or priest -- or in some denominations, a member of the laity -- who leads a worship service which includes communion.

Cessationism: The belief that [tongues](#), and other special gifts enjoyed by believers in the early Christian movement faded early in the history of the Christian church, and are thus not present today. The time of cessation is variously defined as the date of the completion of the last book of the Christian Scriptures or the death of the last Apostle. Antonym: continuationism.

Chakra: This is a term used in some traditions in Buddhism and the New Age to refer to seven points of energy concentration throughout a persons central nervous system -- their in their brain and along their spine.

Chalice: A special drinking cup used in some [Christian](#) communion services to hold wine. It was adopted as the official symbol of the *Unitarian Service Committee* and the [Unitarian Universalist Association](#), and is used by hundreds of UU congregations. Among [Wiccans](#) and other [Neopagans](#), it is a goblet used to hold either a beverage or water for ritual use.

Channeling: A practice common among New Agers in which the spirit of a master teacher is contacted in order to receive guidance and knowledge.

Chanukah: (a.k.a. Hanukka): The Jewish festival of lights which recalls a miracle at the time of the rededication of the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem circa 164 BCE. A small quantity of oil

burned for many days. With the heavy commercialization of Christmas, this minor Jewish holiday has taken on greater importance.

Charismatic movement: The adoption of certain Pentecostal beliefs and practices within Protestant denominations. The same phenomenon has occurred within the Roman Catholic Church where it is called the *Catholic Charismatic Renewal*.

Chiliasm: From the Greek term for 1000: The belief that Yeshua of Nazareth (Jesus Christ) will reign on Earth for 1,000 years. Synonym for millennium.

Chiromancy: The prediction of a person's past and future through palm reading.

Chosen people: A belief from the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) that the Jewish people were chosen by God to receive the Torah and spread the word of God throughout the Earth. Many conservative Protestants teach the principle of Supersessionism (a.k.a. Replacement Theology): that God unilaterally terminated his covenants with the Jewish people and transferred them to the followers of Christianity.

Christ: From a Greek word meaning to rub down an athlete with lineament. It refers to a Hebrew word (Messiah in English) that means "*an anointed one*," e.g. a king of Israel or a prophet. Jesus' real name was Yeshua of Nazareth.

Christadelphianism: A small Christian religious group with non-traditional beliefs. They teach that Jesus was a created being, that the Holy Spirit is a power or energy rather than the third personality in the Trinity. They deny the traditional concepts of [heaven and hell](#).

Christian: This term was derived indirectly from the Greek word for Messiah. It has [many meanings](#): Census offices consider any person or group to be Christian if they devoutly, seriously regards themselves to be Christian. Thus, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, Roman Catholic, and members of the Unification Church are Christians. Many groups, particularly conservative Christians, regard many of these denominations as "[cults](#)" and not part of Christianity. Webster's New World Dictionary: "*A person believing in Jesus as the Christ, or in the religion based upon the teachings of Jesus.*" Concise Oxford Dictionary: "*Person believing in, professing or belonging to the religion of Christ.*" (They don't define exactly what the religion of Christ is, or which of the thousands of denominations and sects represent this religion.).

Evangelical/Fundamentalist usage: often used to refer only to fellow conservative Christian faith groups or to "saved" individuals.

Christian Atheism: see: [Death of God Theology](#)

Christian evidences: A branch of [Apologetics](#) that deals with attempts to prove that Christianity and/or the Bible is true. Much effort is expended by conservative Christians to prove that creation, the great flood, the tower of Babel, virgin birth, resurrection, Exodus, attack on Canaan etc. happened exactly as explained in the Bible. Their expectation is that no evidence from archaeology, geology, cosmology, astronomy or any other science will disprove the [inerrancy](#) of the Bible.

Christian Identity: A small, racist, radical group within Christianity which has adopted a belief similar to that of British Israelism. They teach that the ten lost tribes of Israel became the Anglo-

Saxon race. Many Identity groups teach that Eve engaged in sexual relations with the serpent in the Garden of Eden, and that the Jews were the product of that union.

Christian Science: A Christian denomination founded in 1879 in Boston, MA, by Mary Baker Eddy. It promotes spiritual healing, that sickness and matter is not real, and that one should avoid medical help. The life expectancy of Christian Scientists appears to be significantly shorter than for the general population.

Christology: The study of the personality, attributes and/or life of Yeshua of Nazareth, a.k.a. Jesus Christ. The term is derived from two Greek words, for "*messiah*" and "*formal study*."

Christmas: This is held on DEC-25, the nominal date of the birth of Yeshua of Nazareth, after whose life the Christian religion is patterned. The western church uses the Gregorian calendar and the eastern church uses the Julian calendar. So Christmas is celebrated on two different days.

Chupah: A Jewish wedding canopy which represents the home that the groom is expected to maintain.

Church: The Greek word ekklesia (to call out) in the Bible is generally translated as "church." In modern usage, it may refer to: All people, living or dead, who are Christians. A specific wing of Christianity, as in the Roman Catholic Church. A specific Christian denomination or sect, like the Presbyterian Church (USA), or a specific congregation, like the First Baptist Church. A non-Christian religion, like the Wiccan Church of Canada.

Circumcision: From a Latin word to "cut around:" The removal of the skin that covers the tip of a penis. In Judaism, it is performed during the brit milah ceremony at the age of eight days. In Islam it is conducted at various times between birth and puberty, depending on local culture. In North America it is often done for appearance purposes.

Circumcision of Jesus: A Christian holy day held in remembrance of Jesus' circumcision.

Civil religion: A set of religious beliefs shared by most citizens about "*the sacred nature, the sacred ideals, the sacred character, and sacred meanings of their country – its blessedness by God, and its special place and role in the world and in human history.*"¹ The term was created by Rousseau in his writing "*On the Social Contract*" 1762.

Civil union: A voluntary union of two adult persons of the same sex. The couple typically receives all of the same benefits, obligations, and protections as married opposite-sex couples are given. In the U.S., they are available in [Connecticut](#), [New Jersey](#) and [Vermont](#). See also [domestic partnership](#).

Clergy: An ordained Christian priest, pastor or minister. In Judaism, a rabbi. Some conservative faith groups restrict the clergy to males. It is sometimes use generically to refer to any religious leader.

Collective Responsibility: The concept that an entire group of people (e.g. all of a certain sex, religion, skin color, nationality, or sexual orientation, etc) are equally responsible for the act of one person in the group. This is a logical outgrowth of the biblical principle of [transferability of sin](#). Until recent decades most Christian faith groups extended the concept of collective

responsibility to extend over millennia by holding modern-day Jews responsible for the execution of Yeshua of Nazareth (a.k.a. Jesus Christ) almost 2,000 years ago.

Coming, second: (a.k.a. Parousia): The belief that Jesus will descend to earth as described in the [biblical book Revelation](#), leading a massive army. As the 21st century approached, approximately one in four American adults believed that this would happen during their lifetime.

Commandments: In Jewish tradition, there are 613 commandments in the Torah: 248 positive and 365 negative. Of these, about two dozen are described in Exodus 20:2-17 which are grouped together to total ten commandments. These are held in high regard by both Jews and Christians, although few can list their topics.

Communion: A Christian ritual, sometimes called the Eucharist, or Mass, or Lord's supper. A group of believers or a group of denominations. The *Anglican Communion*, for example, is a group of national churches who share many beliefs and practices in common.

Communion: The sharing of bread and wine (or a wine substitute) during a Christian service. At the time of the early church, only baptized Christians were allowed to be present during communion. When Pagans started to spread the rumor that cannibalism was involved, this part of the service was opened to the public. Alternative names for communion are: Eucharist, Divine Liturgy, Last Supper.

Comparative religion: The study of world religions to determine their points of similarity and differences. In practice, this is difficult to do on an impartial basis. Students often consider their own branch of their own religion to be "true," and all other branches of their religion, and all other religions to be "false"

Completed Jews: A term used by conservative Christians to refer to Jews who have embraced Messianic Judaism -- a blend of Jewish tradition and ceremonies with Fundamentalist theological beliefs about Jesus Christ and the Trinity.

Concestor: An animal species, typically long extinct, which is the ancestor to two later-evolved species. For example, according to the theory of evolution, the concestor shared by humans and chimpanzees lived about six million years ago. There are 40 concestors between humans and the first life forms which lived about 3.8 billion years ago.

Concreated holiness: This is the belief that when God created Adam, that Adam's will was created holy. His natural inclination was thus to behave in a holy manner.

Concupiscence: From the Latin word "concupiscentia:" the natural inclination or innate tendency of humans to perform evil deeds.

Conditionalism (a.k.a. Conditional immortality): Synonyms for [annihilationism](#).

Confessing Church: The Roman Catholic Church and most Evangelical (i.e. Protestant) denominations cooperated fully with Hitler and the German Nazis during the 1930s and early 1940s. However the "*Pastors' Emergency League*" founded by Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Pastor Niemoller, and other ministers opposed the Nazi's aryanization of German Christianity. The League grew into the Confessing Church. Many of its leaders were executed by the Nazis.

Confessionalism: As a religious term, it means that each member of a faith group is expected to adhere fully to the group's entire belief system. No dissent is allowed. The [Amish](#) might be regarded as a good example of confessionalism. Those congregations affiliated with the [Unitarian Universalist Association](#) might be regarded as an opposite extreme; they encourage and expect diversity of belief.

Confucianism: An indigenous system of thought which originated in China about 500 [BCE](#). It is considered by some to be a religion, by others a humanistic philosophy. Founded by Confucius (551-479 BCE)

Congregation: This word is another of those religious terms with multiple meanings. It can refer to: The members of a specific place of worship. A religious organization, as in the *First Unitarian Congregation of Toronto*. An administrative body within the Curia of the Roman Catholic Church, as in the *Congregation of for the Doctrine of the Faith* -- formerly called the Sacred Congregation of the Universal Inquisition. A group of professed members of a Roman Catholic religious congregation. Congregations are similar to religious orders, except that the members only take simple vows. The term can also refer to an assembly of senior members at a university.

Conservative: Within Christianity, this is one wing of the religion, composed of Fundamentalists, other Evangelicals, Pentecostals, Charismatics, and members of most independent churches. Other wings of Christianity include mainline Christianity, liberal Christianity, Roman Catholicism, Anglican Communion(s), and Eastern Orthodoxy. Conservative Judaism was organized as a reaction to Reform Judaism, the largest of the three main wings of the religion.

Consubstantiality: The belief that Jesus is of the same substance (homoousion in Greek) as God the Father. This belief was promoted by those who taught that God, Son and Holy Spirit formed a Trinity. Opposing them was Arius who regarded this as a Pagan polytheistic concept. He taught that Jesus was of similar substance (homoiousion in Greek) to God the Father. The difference of one letter (o,i) caused a great deal of angry debate in the church; the two sides were evenly matched. Constantine applied political pressure to have homoousion accepted at the Council of Nicea. This has been the teachings of almost all Christian faith groups ever since.

Consubstantiation: The belief, as taught by Martin Luther, that the elements during communion are actually bread and wine which coexist with the body and blood of Jesus.

Contemplation: In a religious sense, the practice of meditation on spiritual matters.

Contemplative prayer: This is an ancient Christian practice that was suppressed by the Roman Catholic Church during the Middle Ages and is rejected by many conservative Protestants today. It consists of wordless form of prayer in which one simply exists in the presence of the Holy Spirit. Some Christians believe that the Holy Spirit lives in each baptized Christian; others believe that he exists indwells every saved person.

Contextualization: A method of analyzing the Bible which attempts to differentiate between the meaning of the text and "*the cultural and historical context in which it is given.*" ² The result is that when one tries to interpret the meaning of a biblical passage in terms of today's culture, the meaning of the text may have to change. For example, in Genesis 9:1. humans are urged to be

fruitful and multiply. That made sense in days when there were so many childhood diseases, and warfare. The opposite command -- to limit one's fertility -- might make more sense today.

Continuationism: The belief that [tongues](#), prophecy, healing, and other special gifts enjoyed by believers in the early Christian movement have continued to the present time. Antonym: cessationism.

Conversion: the act of changing one's beliefs from one religion to another or from one faith group to another within the same religion. It can be a capital offense in some predominately Muslim lands to convert to another religion.

Conversionism: the belief that lives of all humans need to be changed by way of a "[born again](#)" [decision](#) in which they repent of their sins and accept Jesus as Lord and Savior.

Conversos (a.k.a. New Christians): A group of Jews in Spain who converted to Roman Catholicism in order to escape brutal violence and oppression during the 14th and 15th century.

Corpus Christi: A Roman Catholic holy day which commemorates the Eucharist - a ritual in which they believe that a wafer and wine become the actual body and blood of Jesus Christ.

Cosmogony: beliefs about the origin of the universe. While 95% of scientists and most North American adults believe that the world and the rest of the universe is billions of years old, many conservative Christians believe in a universe less than 10,000 years of age.

Cosmogony: (From the Greek: "cosmo" meaning universe; "gony" meaning origin): A religious or scientific model of the origin of the universe. The two most common models in North America are creation science, theistic evolution and naturalistic evolution.

Cosmology: (From the Greek: "cosmo" meaning universe; "logos" meaning study). Beliefs about the structure of the universe. Many religious texts have a pre-scientific view of the makeup of the earth, the solar system and the rest of the universe.

Council, ecumenical: A series of meetings of the bishops of the Christian Church to settle doctrinal and organizational matters, in which the decisions were accepted by the entire Church.

Counter cult movement (CCM): A group made up mainly of Fundamentalist and other Evangelical Protestant organizations which opposes and criticizes new religious movements (NRMs) because of the latter's unorthodox and/or novel theological beliefs. [More details](#).

Counter reformation: A reform movement within the Roman Catholic church taken shortly after -- an in response to -- the Protestant Reformation.

Coven: a local group of [Wiccans](#) or other Neo-pagans. During the "burning times" when Christian groups were tracking down and exterminating Witches, it was believed that each coven held 13 members. This was and is not true; covens can be of any size, but are most often perhaps about a half-dozen.

Covenant: "*Berith*" in Hebrew and "*diatheke*" in Greek: An agreement between two persons which are obligatory on both parties. Most commonly used to refer to various covenants between

God and the Hebrews. Jews believe that these covenants are permanent; some Christians believe that God unilaterally abrogated them and selected Christians to be the new chosen people.

Covenant Theology: A Christian concept which teaches the unity of the Hebrew Scriptures and Christian Scriptures (Old and New Testament). The covenants of the Hebrew Scriptures are not done away with the arrival of Christ on Earth; they are still binding on humans today. Ancient Jews were not saved by animal sacrifice. Such rituals were only symbolic of Jesus' self-sacrifice. See also [New Covenant Theology](#).

Creed: From the Latin word "*credere*" -- to believe. A short statement of religious belief, usually motivated by a desire to emphasize church teaching as opposed to a heresy. There are a number of [creeds within the Christian religion](#): the Apostles creed, Nicene creed are the most popular. However, the former is little used in Eastern Orthodox churches.

Criticism: When referring to the Bible, this refers to a method of analyzing its text: Lower criticism is the analysis of the text in order to understand its meaning and detect any forgeries, mistranslations, etc. Higher criticism is an attempt to determine when the passage was written, who wrote it, where it was written, what their purpose was, whether it was imported into the Bible from another source, etc. One example of the results of higher criticism is the [documentary hypothesis](#) concerning the authorship of the first five books in the Hebrew Scripture, which most mainline and liberal theologians accept.

Cross, sign of: A movement, commonly used among Roman Catholics, in which the right hand touches the forehead, chest, left shoulder, and right shoulder in sequence. Orthodox believers cross themselves from right to left.

Crucicentrism: Making the [substitutionary atonement by Christ](#) on the cross central to a Christian belief system.

Crucifix: A religious symbol representing Jesus nailed to the cross. Most crucifixes lack accuracy because they portray a partly clothed man nailed through his palms. The Romans crucified people naked, with their wrists nailed (or their arms tied) to the crossbar. Another possible inaccuracy relates to the shape of the cross. It is not clear whether Jesus was executed on a Roman cross -- as essentially all crucifixes show -- or on a cross in the form of a capital "T," or on a vertical stake.

Cruciform: an object in the form of a cross. The term is often used to describe buildings and jewelry.

Crucifixion: A method of carrying out the death penalty which involved physical abuse of the victim, stripping him of all clothing, tying or nailing his arms and legs to a cross or stake, and abandoning him to die. The corpse was often partly eaten by scavengers. The body was generally denied a proper burial; it was tossed on a garbage heap. Crucifixion was widely used within the Roman Empire to execute either slaves or rebels.

Crypto-jew: A person who adheres to Judaism while publicly professing to be of another faith. This was most often seen in countries where Judaism was under oppression, like Nazi Germany during the mid 20th century, or in Spain during the 14th & 15th century.

Crystals: These are materials which have their molecules arranged in a specific, highly ordered internal pattern. This pattern is reflected in the crystal's external structure which typically has symmetrical surfaces. Many common substances, from salt to sugar, and from diamonds to quartz, form crystals. They can be shaped so that they will vibrate at a specific frequency and are widely used in radio communications and computing devices. Many [New Agers](#), [Wiccans](#), and other [Neopagans](#) and others believe that crystals possess healing energy.

Cult: From the Latin word "cultus" -- meaning worship. Cult is a word with [many religious meanings](#) (and some secular as well) which should be used with great care to avoid misunderstanding. We recommend the neutral term "*new religious movement*" be used in its place. Even better is to refer to a religious group by its name: **Traditional theological usage:** a style of worship and its associated rituals. It can be applied to any faith group. **Sociological usage:** a small religious group that exists in a state of tension with the predominant religion; e.g. Christianity in Pakistan. **General religious usage:** a small, recently created religious group; not a variant of an established religion. Often headed by a single charismatic leader. **Evangelical usage:** *a religious group that considers themselves to be Christian but which denies one or more historical beliefs of Protestant Christianity.* **Counter-cult movement usage:** Same as Evangelical usage. **Anti-cult movement usage:** a small, evil religious group, often with a single charismatic leader, who engage in deceptive recruiting, brainwashing and other mind control techniques. **Popular belief:** A doomsday, dangerous, destructive religious movement whose members risk their life to belong.

Cult apologist: Derogatory term used to refer to: Academics who investigate new religious movements and often report that they are harmless. Members of new religious movements who defend their groups against criticism from the [anti-cult movement](#) and/or [counter-cult movement](#)

Cult Awareness Network (CAN): Originally, an anti-cult group which targeted new religious movements. CAN was forced into bankruptcy because of their criminal activities linking the parents of members of new religious movements with kidnappers and re-programmers. In an ironic twist, their name and other assets were purchased by the *Foundation for Religious Freedom*, which teaches tolerance of other faith groups.

Curate: In the Anglican communion, an assistant pastor.

Dalai Lama: The spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhism.

Daoism: see [Taoism](#)

Dar-e-Mehr: A North American term used by the [Zoroastrian](#) faith to refer to their house of worship. It literally means "*a portal to all that is good: charity, devotion, kindness and love.*"

Dasa Laxana: A [Jain](#) holy day which recalls the ten important goals for a follower of Jainism.

Day of reckoning: Judgment day as described in the Bible: a time when all will be judged and sent either to [Hell or Heaven](#).

Day of the Covenant: [Baha'is](#) recall the the covenant contained in the last will and testament of Baha'u'llah.

Day of the Lord: A time when Christians believe that God will destroy all evil and establish his kingdom on earth.

Days of awe: A Jewish term referring to the ten days from Rosh Hashanah to Yom Kippur. It is a time of introspection.

Deacon: From the Greek word diakonos (servant). Originally a church administrator. Currently, the term may refer to a low-ranking member of the clergy, a lay minister, or a lay administrator.

Dead, cult of the: Worship of the deceased. Unlike ancestor worship, cult of the dead involves the worship of the deceased by all, not just by the kin of the ancestors.

Dead Sea Scrolls: According to "[*The Da Vinci Code*](#)" the scrolls consists of "*some of the gospels that Constantine attempted to eradicate. ... The Dead Sea Scrolls were found in the 1950s hidden in a cave near Qumran in the Judean desert...these documents speak of Christ's ministry in very human terms.*" According to reality, the Dead Sea Scrolls were actually found in the 1940s. They contained no gospels and no mention of Jesus' ministry. In fact, the scrolls contained no Christian writings at all; they were entirely made up of Jewish documents. Except for the book of Esther, all books from the Hebrew Scriptures are present, along with many documents from the Essene tradition.

Dean: Most commonly used as an assistant to the bishop who runs the cathedral.

Death of God Theology: (a.k.a. Christian Atheism) This is a belief that became popular in the 1960s among some Christian theologians. Perhaps the most famous promoter of this concept was J.A.T. Robinson, a bishop of the Church of England. He wrote in his book *Honest to God* that the transcendent God described in the Bible is an outdated myth

Debate, religious: A formal discussion of the truth or advantages of one or more faith groups or theological positions. See [dialogue](#)

Decalog: Synonym for the [Ten Commandments](#).

Deconversion: A term used most often by Atheists and Agnostics to describe an individual's loss of faith in a religion with which they had identified.

Deicide: The act of killing God. Until the mid 20th century, most Christians held modern-day Jews responsible for killing God in the form of Yeshua of Nazareth (a.k.a. Jesus Christ). The Catholic Church has partly repudiated this belief. Most Protestant denominations have gone further. But one still hears the occasional accusation of "Christ Killer" directed at Jews.

Deist: a person who believes in the existence of a remote, unknowable deity, usually male, who created the universe, but has not been involved with it since. Most of the politicians who founded America were Deists.

Deity: a generic term used to refer to one or more supernatural beings. It can refer to a single God, as is Judaism and Islam; a pair of gods, as in Zoroastrianism; a Trinity as in Christianity and Hinduism; a God and a Goddess as in Wicca and other Neopagan religions, etc. Plural form is "*deities*."

Demiurge: "*public craftsman*" in Greek. The name of the creator according to the philosophy of Plato. A creator-god viewed by [Gnostics](#) as defective and inferior to the supreme deity. This is the God of the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament), a deity who they view / viewed as fundamentally evil, jealous, rigid, lacking in compassion, and prone to genocide.

Demon: Originally an angel, it joined with Satan to oppose God. Many conservative Christians believe that a person can be possessed by a demon; some think that only non-Christians can be possessed. Mental health professionals abandoned the concept of demonic possession centuries ago.

Demoniac: An individual who is possessed by a demon.

Denomination: an established religious group, which has usually been in existence for many years and has geographically widespread membership. It typically unites a group of individual, local congregations into a single administrative body.

Deontological: a system of ethics based on fixed rules which need to be followed in order for a person to be ethically and morally justified in their decisions. The [Ten Commandments](#) or the 613 Mosaic Laws in the Torah are two examples. One's duty is to follow these defined rules of conduct, regardless of the practical consequences. Antonym: [teleological](#).

Deosil: The clockwise direction. The term is often used in describing Neopagan rituals. ●

Depravity, total: (a.k.a. **Total inability**) The doctrine, primarily held by conservative Christians, that every part of a person has been hopelessly damaged by sin. None would seek out God unless God first intervenes in their life. "*Man is spiritually dead and unable to save himself or even believe without God's help.*" 1 This is one of the five points of Calvinism. See Romans 3:9.

Deprogramming: A criminal method of forcing a person to abandon their religious or other beliefs, usually through kidnapping, forcible confinement, and psychological pressure. ●

Deutero Isaiah: A theological term referring to chapters 49 to 65 in the book of Isaiah. Religious liberals and most Bible historians believe that this was written by a different author. ●

Devi: (Sanskrit for Goddess) Wikipedia describes her as a Hindu goddess. "...synonymous with Shakti, the female aspect of the divine, as conceptualized by the Shakta tradition of Hinduism. ●

Devil: Christian synonym for Satan: an all-evil former angel. He is regarded by most progressive Christians as a mythical being who symbolizes evil. He is regarded by most conservative Christians as an extremely powerful personality -- a quasi-deity who is tempting every human to do evil.

Dharma: This term has multiple meanings: The teachings of the Buddha, truth; that which is established, customary, or proper; natural law -- the way the universe works; one's duty and responsibility, etc.

Dharma Day: This celebrates the first teaching of the Buddha after his enlightenment. (Not to be mistaken for Tuesday, when Dharma and Greg situational comedy is broadcast. Sorry for the humor. ;-)

Dialog: In a religious sense, dialog refers to people from two or more religious traditions meeting as equals to explain and explore their religious beliefs and practices together. The aim is not conversion, debate, or proselytizing; it is to improve understanding, mutual respect, and personal growth. Dialog tends to be rare when compared to instances of [debate](#).

Diaspora: The forced exiles of the Jewish people from Palestine by the Babylonians in the sixth century [BCE](#) and by the Roman Empire in the middle of the 2nd century [CE](#).

Diatessaron: The belief that the four Christian Gospels are in harmony with each other. The term is often used to refer to the writing of a very popular gospel by Tatian (120 - 173 CE) based on Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

Dichotomy: In the field of religion, the concept that a person is made up of a body and a soul, or a body and a spirit. An opposing belief, also justified by reference to biblical passages is trichotomy: the belief that a person is composed of body, soul, and spirit.

Didache: a very early, short book describing Christian rituals and beliefs.

Diocese: a geographical area under the jurisdiction of a bishop.

Diophysite: A person or group which believes in Diophysitism.

Diophysitism: This is the belief that Christ had two natures: both divine and human. This concept won out after extensive debate at the church council at Chalcedon in 451 [CE](#). It is imbedded in the Chalcedonian Creed. An opposing belief is [Monophysitism](#).

Diocese: A geographical area in which a group of priests are under the direction of a single bishop. The term is used by the Roman Catholic church, the Greek Orthodox churches, and the Anglican Communion.

Disciples: In Christian usage, followers of Jesus. At one time, Jesus had 12 disciples; at another time, 70 are mentioned. Although those followers who were mentioned by name often in the gospels were evenly split between women and men, only conflicting lists of male disciples survive.

Disfellowshipping: A practice of some Christian faith groups in which a member has certain privileges removed in order to force them to give up certain behaviors and beliefs. Within the LFD church -- commonly called the Mormons -- a disfellowshipped member has certain privileges removed, but still remains a member. Among the Jehovah's Witnesses, a person is shunned. This can have devastating consequences to persons in a high-intensity religious group whose entire support system involves fellow members.

Dispensation, Dispensationalism: This is the concept that all of human history has been divided into seven distinct periods of time or dispensations. They are often called: innocence, conscience, human government, promise, law, grace and the Kingdom. God focused on the Hebrews during some dispensations and on the church during others. Dispensationalists see a major role for the state of Israel in the future, and anticipate the second coming of Jesus in the immediate future.

Dispensationalist premillennialism: See [premillennialism](#)

Displacement, theology of: Alternative term for [supercession](#).

Disappointment, great: The term is used to refer to the failed prophecy of William Miller who predicted that Christ would return to earth in 1844.

Disassociate: a term used within the [Jehovah's Witnesses](#) to refer to an apostate who has been severed from the organization..

Disestablishment: Cancellation of the official status of a faith group as a country's official church. There is a growing support that the state church in Britain, the Church of England, be disestablished.

Disestablishmentarianism: The belief that there should no longer be an official church in the country. The word **antidisestablishmentarianism** is sometimes quoted as the longest word in the English language. The longest word in any language may well be the Welsh name of a town in Wales: **Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwlllantysiliogogoch**.

Dissociate: a mental condition in which the mind detaches itself from external activity. A psychological term widely used in the treatment of persons who allegedly suffer from [Multiple Personality Disorder](#) (MPD) a.k.a. Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID). This is a controversial topic. Most mental health professionals believe that MPD/DID is either extremely rare or nonexistent. Belief in MPD/DID is rapidly declining.

Divination: Any method of predicting future events. Astrology, bird entrails, tarot cards, runes, even the shadow of a groundhog near the end of winter have been used as tools of divination. Divination was practiced by many persons mentioned in the Bible (Joseph, high priests, Daniel). Some types of [divination are condemned by the Bible](#).

Diwali: A Hindu Festival of Lights. Gifts are exchanged; fireworks are enjoyed

Docetism: From the Greek word for "image." An early belief about Christ in which Jesus was believed to be a spirit who merely appeared to be a human.

Doctrine: From the Latin word "*doctrina*" (doctor) and the Greek "didaskolos" (teaching). A body of beliefs that is taught. Within the field of religion, there is often the assumption that a member must agree with all aspects of the group's doctrine. The 1,000 or so Christian faith groups in North America teach many different sets of conflicting doctrine. Many consider their own doctrines to be absolutely true, and other groups' doctrines to be in error.

Documentary Hypothesis: The belief that the Pentateuch (the first five books in the Bible) were not written by Moses, but by four anonymous authors -- traditionally called J, E, P and D. Also involved were one or more redactors who edited the writings into their present form. Conservative Christians generally deny the hypothesis, and believe that Moses wrote all five books -- except perhaps for the chapters that describe his death and burial.

Dogma: From the Greek word "*dogma*" (a decree). A revealed truth defined by a faith group. It is important to realize that one group's dogma is often another group's [heresy](#).

Domestic partnership: A voluntary union of two adult persons of the same sex. The couple typically receives some but not all of the same benefits, obligations, and protections as married opposite-sex couples are given. In the U.S., they are available in [California](#). See also [civil unions](#).

Donatism: An early Christian leader from North Africa, Donatus, promoted the belief that the validity of a sacrament was dependent on the moral character of the priest who performed it. Two church synods later declared this to be a heresy.

Doomsday cult: a religious group which is focused on the anticipated end of the world in the near future. Often referred to as a [destructive cult](#).

Dormition of the Theotokos: On this day, the Greek Orthodox Church commemorates the death, burial, resurrection and ascension into heaven of the Virgin Mary.

Downgraders: A term used to refer to Christian theologians and clergy during the 1880s who were reacting to the widespread public skepticism against miracles at the time. They instead taught the moral leadership of Jesus, and were called "downgraders" as a result.

Dowsing: A type of divination, typically using a forked branch or two sticks. They are used most often to locate underground sources of water. Although belief in the effectiveness of dowsing is widespread, carefully controlled studies have shown it to be useless.

Druids: A professional class of individuals in ancient Celtic society who had various teaching, priestly, legal, and ambassadorial functions. They are often portrayed as engaging in human sacrifice. However, the only source for this belief are a single reference in the wartime writings of Julius Caesar, who relied on hearsay.

Druse: (a.k.a. Muwahhid, Mowahhidoon, Mo'wa'he'doon, Taw'heed Faith): The Druze are a fiercely independent religious group with perhaps as many as a million members. They are mainly concentrated in Lebanon around the base of Mount Hermon, and in the mountains behind Beirut and Sidon. They broke away from Islam during the 10th century [CE](#).

Dualism: In general, the belief that entities and concepts often appear in pairs. They are generally opposites. Often one is considered good and the other bad. The religion of Zoroastrianism recognizes one all-good deity and one who is all-evil. Most conservative Christians believe that two, very powerful, supernatural powers influence the world: God and Satan. Dualism" is often used to refer to persons as being composed of body and soul, or to refer to the universe as being made up of mind and matter.

Dual Covenant: This is the theological concept that God has continued his covenants with the Jewish people, and has established a new, parallel covenant with the followers of Christianity. Opposing this belief is the concept of [Supercessionism](#): that God has unilaterally terminated his covenants with the Jews, and transferred them to Christians. The latter belief led to a great deal of [persecution of Jews](#) by Christians; it is now rejected within Christianity except for some conservative Protestant denominations.

Duotheist: Synonym for bitheist; a person who believes that there are two deities -- typically one female and the other male, as in [Wicca](#), or one all good and the other all bad, as in [Zoroastrianism](#).

Dussehra: Hindus celebrate the victory of Lord Rama over the Demons.

Easter: This is the most important holy day of the Christian calendar. Easter Sunday commemorates the day in the springtime when the resurrection of Jesus is believed to have occurred. The date is calculated by one formula by most Eastern Orthodox churches, and by another formula elsewhere in Christianity. Easter Sunday falls on the first Sunday after the first full moon after MAR-20, the nominal date of the Spring Equinox. It can be on any Sunday from March 22 to April 25th. Eastern Orthodox churches sometimes celebrate Easter on the same day as the rest of Christianity. However if that date does not follow Passover, then the Orthodox churches delay their Easter - sometimes by over a month.

Ebionites: (From the Hebrew root "*Ebion*" which means poor, oppressed or humble.) A group of Jewish Christians. Some theologians believe that before Paul came on the scene, the Ebionites (or their predecessors) formed the original Christian movement. This included the people who knew Jesus best: his disciples and family. They were led by Peter and James. They rejected Paul's writings, believing him to be an apostate from the Mosaic Law. They denied the deity of Jesus, viewing him as a the final and greatest prophet. Most rejected the virgin birth, and believed that Joseph and Mary were Jesus' parents. The members were scattered during uprisings circa 70 and 134 [CE](#), and died out by the 5th century.

Ecclesiology: A field of study related to a faith group or groups own function, organization, structure, practices, and nature.

Eclectic tradition: A set of beliefs and/or practices which has been selected as the best from the full diversity of those available. Eclectic Wicca, for example, involves selecting portions from a number of established Wiccan traditions in order to create a faith tradition that an individual Wiccan feels most comfortable with.

Eco-justice: is a term used by many ecologists to refer justice for the Earth and all species of life who live in it. It involves a major change from our present anthropocentrism to biocentrism and geocentrism -- making the health of all life forms and the Earth itself of paramount importance.

Ecumenical: From a Greek word meaning *worldwide*. Any movement which attempts to bring together various denominations or traditions within a single religion. The term is used most commonly to refer to [Christian intra-denominational efforts](#).

Eid ul-Adha: [Muslims](#) celebrate this Feast of Sacrifice at the conclusion of the Hajj. It recalls Abraham's willingness to ritually murder his son in response to a command of God.

Eight adversities: A term used in Buddhism to refer to rebirth: in Hell, as a hungry ghost, as an animal, in Uttarakuru (a very pleasant place where there is little motivation to practice the Dharma), in a long-life heaven, also where one is not motivated), with a disability, as an intelligent but skeptical person, or in the period -- like today -- between a Buddha and his successor.

Eightfold Path: A Buddhist list of the path which one must follow to escape suffering. They include: Panna (Wisdom): Right view and right thought. Sila (Morality): Right speech, action and livelihood. Samadhi (Meditation): Right effort, mindfulness and contemplation.

Eisegesis: The process of taking a preconceived belief and interpreting a biblical passage in a way that supports that belief. This is a very common phenomenon, although the interpreter is not generally conscious of the process.

Elder: This term has many meanings, both casual and formal: A group of species of shrubs or small trees with white or cream colored flowers and a berrylike fruit. A term used to differentiate on the basis of age between two related persons of the same name. Synonym for Scribes or Pharisees in the Bible. A respected member of an Aboriginal community who is a keeper of the tribe's oral tradition, knowledge, and worldview. Usually an older person recognized for their wisdom and spirituality. The position held by a lay member with teaching and/or administrative responsibilities in many Protestant denominations. A group of individuals with the leadership position in a Wiccan or other Neopagan coven. A priesthood and leadership position in many denominations of the LDS Restorationist Movement including The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints -- the Mormons. A fictional group of individuals in the TV program *Charmed* who oversee positive magick. The "Elder Scrolls" (TES) is the name of a series of [role-playing computer games](#).

Election, unconditional: The second of Calvin's five points of theology. The doctrine states that God has decided, totally on the basis of his own, unknown criteria, to select a small minority of humans and lead them to a saving knowledge of the gospel. The majority of humans are not elected. Without God's help, the gospel is incomprehensible to them; they will never be saved; they will spend eternity in Hell without hope of mercy or an end to their torture. Some Christians believe that God elects that minority of humans for salvation that he knew would eventually choose Him.

Elohim: A Hebrew word for "Gods."

Emerging church (a.k.a. Emergent church): This is another of those predominately Christian religious phrases which mean different things to different people. In general, it refers to a response by mainly Evangelical and mainline Christian believers to engage a rapidly changing culture in positive ways. Some are searchers who feel that they have outgrown the denomination and the religious beliefs of their youth. Others are searchers who are not affiliated with any denomination, and who are seeking for themselves a more spiritual, meaningful, and purposeful life. The movement started in New Zealand and spread to the U.S., Canada, western Europe, and Africa.

Endless punishment: The belief that the unsaved will be punished by severe tortures (worms, unbearable heat, horrendous thirst, flogging with whips, etc) for all eternity without any hope of mercy or cessation. The book of [Revelation](#) describes Jesus as being present in Hell; whether he is there to supervise or merely observe the torture is unclear.

Endlösung: German word for the "final solution" of the Nazis: to exterminate all of the Jews in Europe in a systematic genocidal campaign.

Enlightenment: A Buddhist term which means to have grasped the ultimate reality and escaped the endless repetition of birth, life, death and rebirth. A name given to the *Age of Reason* in the Americas and Europe during the 17th and 18th centuries. It was marked by great advances in science, democracy, industry, human rights and religious tolerance.

Eparchy: a geographical area under the jurisdiction of a bishop in an Orthodox church.

Epiclesis (aka Epiklesis): A Greek word for invocation, in the sense of calling upon, or making an appeal to, or addressing someone. In Christian worship, epiclesis refers to the invocation of the Holy Spirit.

Epiphany: Christians recall the visit of the Magi to the baby Jesus on JAN-6. (aka: **12th day of Christmas, Twelfth Night & Three Kings' Day**). Eastern orthodox churches celebrate **Theophany** on this day in commemoration of Jesus' baptism. "Epiphany" means "*to make known*" or "*to reveal*." Christians believe that the Magi made the divinity of Jesus known to the world.

Episcopal: Part of the name of the Episcopal Church, USA -- the national church in the U.S. which is affiliated with the Anglican Communion. Any religious denomination governed by bishops.

Epistemology: The study of the nature of knowledge.

Equinox: The date and time when the sun crosses the equator. On that day, the daytime and nighttime are both very close to 12 hours. This happens about March 21 and September 21. Many religious holy days are synchronized to the equinoxes, including the Jewish Passover, and Christian Easter. Wiccans, other Neopagans, Native Americans and followers of many aboriginal religions worldwide celebrate the equinoxes.

Eretz Yisreal: Hebrew for "the land of Israel." The area that Yahweh is believed to have granted to the Jewish people in the Hebrew Scriptures.

Erntefest: German for "harvest festival." The largest extermination campaign against Jews during World War II. German Nazis attempted to exterminate all remaining Jews in the Lubin District of Poland during the fall of 1943. Over a two day period, about 42,000 Jews were murdered at Majdanek, Poniatowa, and Trawniki concentration camps.

Eschatology, eschatological: The study of the eventual outcome of the world, from a religious perspective. In the case of conservative Christians, this typically involves discussion of the [rapture](#), the Anti-Christ, Jesus' second coming, the war of Armageddon, and other [end-time events](#). Eschatology plays a minor role in liberal Christianity.

Esoteric: A type of hidden knowledge that is generally known only by a few individuals and not by the general public.

ESP: An acronym for [Extrasensory Perception](#).

Essenes: One of the approximately 24 Jewish groups active during the 1st century [CE](#).

Essentialism: Defining a group of people by one -- or a small set of -- fixed properties. Gender, religion, race or sexual orientation are the most common properties. It assumes that there is no possibility of variation within the targeted group, or potential for change. See [racism](#), [sexism](#), [religism](#) and [homophobia](#).

Eternal Generation, Eternal Sonship: A belief that Jesus Christ has been the Son of God continuously, from before the creation of the world to the present time. Some Christians have alternative beliefs, stating that Jesus became the Son of God at the time of his ascension, or resurrection, or baptism, or birth.

Eternal Progression (LDS and other Mormon Churches): See [Exaltation](#)

Eternal Subordination of the Son: An early Christian heresy in which Jesus was believed to be forever in a subordinate role to God the Father. This hierarchical concept of the Trinity has been promoted in recent decades by some Fundamentalist Christians. It is often used to teach that women should be restricted to inferior roles in the Church, home, and the rest of society.

Ethical Culture: A movement founded in the U.S. by Felix Adler (1851 - 1933). He advocated replacing religious beliefs and codes with a secular ethic.

Ethics: The study of human values and moral conduct. See also *Normative Ethics* and *Metaethics*. ● **Eucharist:** See [Communion](#)

Eugenics: Programs by which humans are carefully selected for breeding in order to maximize certain qualities. The German Nazi government instituted a Mutterkreuz (mother's cross) program which encouraged women to have many "Aryan" children, for which they could receive crosses.

Euthanasia: (Greek for "good death.") An ambiguous term with meanings ranging from "physician assisted suicide" for terminally elderly persons in intractable pain, to the German Nazi programs of murdering old and handicapped persons. We recommend that the term never be used, and that a specific term be used in its place.

Evangelical: "Evangelical" is not a well-defined term with a universally accepted meaning. It normally refers to a major portion of the conservative "wing" of Protestant Christianity. In a study comparing Evangelical and mainline denominations, a Princeton University study included the following as Evangelical denominations: Assemblies of God, Southern Baptists, Independent Baptists, black Protestants, African Methodist Episcopal, African Methodist Episcopal Zion; Church of Christ, Churches of God in Christ, Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, National Baptist Church, National Progressive Baptist Church, Nondenominational, Pentecostal denominations, and the Presbyterian Church in America. Evangelicals tend to take very conservative views on social matters, like [access to abortion](#), [equal rights for gays and lesbians](#), etc. Many Evangelical congregations serve parishioners who are mainly of a single race.

Fundamentalists comprise the most conservative wing of Evangelicalism. Most Evangelicals tend to be less anti-scientific and less literal in their interpretation of Biblical passages than are Fundamentalists. Evangelicals generally believe in the historical doctrines of the Christian church: The original writings of the Bible, were [inerrant](#) (without error). Jesus Christ was born of a [virgin](#). [Atonement](#): that through Jesus' death, the relationship between God and Man (which had been damaged by Adam and Eve's sin) has been restored. [Resurrection](#): that after Jesus' death and burial, he arose again. Second coming: that Jesus return to earth is imminent. Incarnation: that God appeared on earth in human form, as Jesus. Justification: an act of God in which any person who accepts that they have sinned and who believes in the atonement of Christ is forgiven of their sins and brought into a close relationship with God. Regeneration of the spirit: that a new believer undergoes a spiritual rebirth. [Inspiration](#): that the authors of the Bible

were inspired by the Holy Spirit. God exists as a Trinity, consisting of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. [Satan](#) is a created being, was once an angel but is now an all-evil tormentor of humanity. [Salvation](#) is attained by repentance of one's sins and trusting Jesus as Lord and Savior. [Heaven and Hell](#) exist; the former is a place of eternal reward; the latter is a place of never-ending torture without mercy or any hope of cessation. There are many additional beliefs regarded as important by various Evangelical organizations. For example, the *Southern Baptist Convention* requires its employees to sign a loyalty oath which includes the belief that the authors of the Gospels were in fact named Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Some Evangelical institutions refuse to hire faculty who believe that women should be eligible for ordination. The name "evangelical" was originally used to refer to those faith groups which followed traditional Christian beliefs, in contrast with two other movements: philosophical rationalism and legalistic Christianity. The *Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, and *Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod* total about 6 million members and are not part of the present-day Evangelical movement. [More information on the definition of Evangelical](#)

Evangelize: To explain ones beliefs to another in the hope that they might wish to adopt them. The word is sometimes used as a synonym for "*Proselytize*" -- to actively attempt to convert another person to your beliefs.

Evidential, Evidentialism, Evidentialist: This refers to a method of attempting to prove the validity of Christianity by starting with the assumption (or attempt to prove) that God exists and continuing with the use of reason. An alternate method is [presuppositionalism](#)

Evil one: A Christian synonym for Satan: a fallen angel.

Evolution, Naturalistic: (From the Greek "*evolutio*" meaning unrolling or turning out). The term has multiple meanings. It is often necessary to examine an essay, speech or article carefully in order to determine which meaning is being used. Strictly speaking, it deals only with life forms on earth; the term refers to gradual change over long periods of time of plant and animal species due to natural processes and forces, including the appearance and extinction of many species. In a popular sense, it is one of many cosmogonies (models of origins) commonly accepted in North America. It states that the earth, including its life forms, and the rest of the universe formed over the past approximately 14 billion years due to natural processes and forces. People often discuss the evolution of: the universe, of individual stars, solar systems, earth formation, species of life on earth, etc. Also in a popular sense, the term is used to refer to anything that changes over time, such as the evolution of religious beliefs, political concepts, economic models, child discipline methods, etc.

Evolution, Theistic: One of three main cosmogonies (models of origins) commonly accepted in North America. It accepts the observations of naturalistic evolution but states that God guided and used evolution as a method of forming the multiplicity of species of life, the rest of the Earth and the rest of the universe.

Evolutionist: *A term used by Evangelical Christians to refer to over 99% of earth and biological scientists who use and support the theory of [evolution](#) in their professional work.* The term is not used by scientists themselves.

Exclusivism: The belief that one's truth (or faith group or religion) is the only truly [valid truth](#) (or faith group or religion). This is a very common belief among monotheistic faiths, and among other religions as well. It has historically been a foundation of religiously motivated oppression,

mass murder, [mass crimes against humanity and genocide](#). Alternative beliefs towards other religions are [inclusivism](#) and [pluralism](#). [More details](#).

Excommunication: The enforced separation of a Christian from her or his denomination, done for the good of the individual and the faith group, with the intent of changing the individual's behavior so that they can be welcomed back. Unfortunately, in many high-intensity/high commitment religious groups, where a member's entire support network consists of fellow members, excommunication can lead to depression and occasional suicide.

Exegesis: Analyzing passages from a document -- often the Bible -- to understand what it meant to its author and others in the author's culture.

Exaltation of Christ: This consists of Christ's resurrection, ascension to heaven, sitting at the right hand of God, and second coming.

Exaltation (LDS and other Mormon Churches): a.k.a. Eternal Progression. This "...is a belief among members of many Mormon denominations that mankind, as spirit children of their Father in Heaven, can become like him. Exaltation is the highest goal of a Mormon, to become as God is. The highest goal is to learn to become like God, who is perfect in attributes and perfections. Exaltation means to live the life that God lives and to obtain the co-equal position of godhood." ² These beliefs are regarded as blasphemy and heresy by essentially all non-Mormon Christian faith groups, and are largely responsible for anti-Mormon feelings among many Christians.

Existentialism: This is both a philosophical and literary movement which teaches that: Life has no intrinsic meaning, other than what an individual gives it. Individual existence takes precedence over abstract concepts; Humans are totally free and responsible for their own actions; No absolute values exist that are not grounded in human experience.

Exodus: A mass movement of people from an area or country. It often refers to the alleged departure of Hebrews from slavery in Egypt, variously dated as 1440 to 1290 BCE. "*Exodus*" is the name of the second book in the Pentateuch -- the first five books of the Hebrew Scriptures.

Exorcism: The act of driving one or more evil spirits from the body of a person.

Externalist: A Buddhist term for an individual who follows a non-Buddhist religion.

Extraction evangelism: A technique of drawing non-Christians individuals out of their culture of origin and converting them to conservative Protestantism. This has been criticized for its destructive effect on those families in which only some members convert to Christianity.

Extrasensory Perception: (acronym ESP) The ability of a person to sense the world using powers beyond the five senses. This often takes the form of reading cards being dealt in another room, viewing events in a remote location, sensing auras, predicting the future, etc. A prize of over one million dollars awaits anyone who can prove that they have some form of ESP. ●

Extreme Unction: A sacrament of the Roman Catholic church in which a dying person is anointed with oil that has been consecrated by a bishop. It's purpose is to obtain the remission of sins and to restore the person to health. To our knowledge, the efficacy of extreme unction to make a person healthy has never been scientifically evaluated.

Faith: A system of religious belief.

Faith group: a general, inclusive term that might be used to refer to a religion, denomination, sect, or cult.

Faith-formula movement: (a.k.a. Word of Faith movement, Health & Wealth Gospel, Positive Confession, Name it and Claim it, and). A group of conservative Protestant para-church ministries which focus on "anointed" ministers and the health, wealth, and success of their viewers and donors. MinistryWatch estimates that their total income is in excess of a half billion dollars annually.

Faith tradition: A synonym for "*faith group*."

Fall of mankind: The belief, based on a literal translation of Genesis, that when Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden they lost communion with God and brought themselves and all their descendents (including the present and future generations) into a condition of sin and misery. Many religious liberals reject this belief, and interpret Genesis symbolically to indicate the rise of Adam and Eve from a pre-human state to full humanity, becoming aware for the first time of the differences between good and evil -- that is, developing a moral sense.

Fallibilism: The belief that no belief, theory, view, postulation, etc. can be proven with absolute certainty. Any of our beliefs are subject to change in the future. ● "**Fall-sin-redemption**" model. This is a key theological belief about sin and salvation that is held by many Christians. It consists of a series of beliefs: Adam and Eve disobeyed God in the Garden of Eden when they [ate of the fruit of the tree](#) of knowledge of good and evil. By their actions, sin entered the world for the first time, and produced a gulf between God and our first parents. Through the concept of imputation, Adam and Eve's sin has been assigned to their children, their grandchildren, and all the way down to present-day humanity. Not a single person since our first parents has avoided sin. Because of the incarnation in which God took human form in the body of Jesus, and because of [Jesus' sinlessness](#), he had the power to forgive sin. Persons can be saved today by repenting of their sin, and trusting Jesus as Lord and Savior. They will then attain [Heaven](#) when they die. They become a new creation. Through a process of sanctification God helps them change and become more like Christ. The other alternative is to not trust Jesus; they will then be tortured in Hell for all eternity. Many liberal Christians reject this model. In part, this is because they view the Garden of Eden story as a religious myth, and Adam and Eve's actions as symbolizing [the rise of humanity -- not its fall](#).

False Memory: A recollection of an event that never happened, or a very heavily distorted recollection of an event that did occur. During the 1980s and 1990s, false memories were created in tens or hundreds of thousands of North American adults through the use of suggestive techniques like hypnosis, "truth drugs," guided imagery, etc. Most "memories" were generated during therapeutic sessions; some during mutual support groups; still others through individual self-hypnosis. Tens of thousands of innocent parents and relatives were accused of child sexual abuse as a result of false memories. Some victims of [recovered memory therapy](#) were driven to suicide by the memories. The therapeutic technique still continues at a low level and new victims are still being created. However, it has largely been discredited and abandoned.

Familiar spirit: An evil spirit who can allegedly possess the body of a human, and communicate with them. Belief in evil spirits is widespread among many religious conservatives, but has been abandoned by mental health experts for over a century.

Fantasy Role Playing Games: (acronym RPG) A game like *Dungeons and Dragons*TM in which individuals play the roles of characters that they have chosen. Typically, these characters live in a pre-scientific, often medieval society, and are subjected to many challenges. Some conservative Christians have expressed concern that some characters are non-Christian; some parents are concerned about stories of suicides among RPG players. Studies have indicated that players tend to be more stable and less likely to commit suicide.

Faqih: Muslim term for a man skilled in Shari'ah law who has the authority to issue fatwas. ●

Fascism: A political concept in which the state is considered paramount, and individual freedoms and human rights are of minor importance.

Fast; Fasting: The act of doing without food and/or water for an interval of time -- generally to attain a spiritual goal. Muslims are expected to fast completely between sunrise and sunset during the lunar month of Ramadan. The practice is widespread among followers of many religions, including Native American Spirituality, Islam, Christianity, etc.

Fatalism: The belief that any effort to improve oneself or the world is useless because everything is predetermined by blind, irrational forces.

Fatwa: This is an Islamic term that literally means "*an answer to a question.*" Traditionally, it has been a recommendation, an opinion issued by a Muslim scholar on a specific subject.

Feminist Theology: A rejection of the patriarchal, sexist, homophobic, and other teachings in the Bible which are considered immoral by today's religious and secular ethical standards. It promotes a theology which stresses human rights, sexual enjoyment, feminine ordination, and equality. It often involves re-writing the Bible in gender-neutral terms.

Feng Shui: A belief, originating in Taoism, that structures and objects need to be properly aligned in order to promote health and functioning.

Filioque: The *Niceno-Constantinopolitan* or *Constantinopolitan Creed*, which was written and adopted at the Council of Nicea in 325 [CE](#), and then modified by the Council at Chalcedon in 451 CE was later modified during the sixth century [CE](#) with the addition of the filioque. This phrase states that the Holy Spirit proceeded from the Father and the Son. The Eastern Orthodox churches have historically rejected the filioque, citing John 15:26 as proof that the Holy Spirit proceeded only from the Father. Friction over the filioque was a major cause of the split between the Roman Catholic Church and Eastern Orthodoxy in 1054 [CE](#).

Final Solution: The German Nazi plan for the total extermination of every Jew in Europe

First Temple Period: The interval from 850 to 586 BCE during which time the Jerusalem Temple was in place.

Five hindrances: A Buddhist list of feelings that prevent one's spiritual progress: Lust, aversion, sloth, restlessness, and skepticism.

Five poisons: A Buddhist list of five harmful influences commonly found in life: ignorance, hate, pride, craving and envy.

Five precepts: A Buddhist list of activities to avoid: Killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying and the taking of intoxicants.

Five ways: These are the five proofs of the existence of God as derived by Thomas Aquinas from Greek Pagan metaphysical thought.

Flying bishops: This is an Anglican term used in the Church of England and the Episcopal Church, USA. It refers to bishops that are nominated to provide Episcopal duties in parishes which refuse to accept women as priests. The parishes have to petition their bishop for such alternative arrangements.

Foreknowledge: An attribute of God that he is able to know all things: past, present and future.

Form criticism: A method of analyzing biblical verses which involves studying the literary forms used in the passage. It often seeks to uncover the oral traditions behind Bible passages.

Fortune telling: A method of divination: predicting the future. Often performed using cards, tarot cards, runes, palm reading, tea leaf reading, etc.

Foundationalist, Foundationalism: "... the belief that all beliefs are ultimately set upon an unalterable foundation."

Four constituents: In Buddhism, the fundamental components which make up the universe: earth, water, wind and fire.

Four noble truths: A Buddhist list of basic truths about suffering -- that: Suffering exists. It comes from one's attachment to desires. It can be overcome by ceasing one's attachment to desire. The Eightfold Path is the way to achieve freedom from suffering.

Free will: When used by Christian theologians, means the ability of an individual to freely choose to repent of their sins and accept Jesus as Lord and Savior. This is denied by Calvinists, who say that God cannot be truly sovereign if humans have free will.

Friday, good: The Friday before Easter Sunday. This commemorates the execution of Jesus by the Roman Army.

Freemasonry: A spiritual, fraternal order for men which originated in guilds of stone cutters. Freemasons see Freemasonry as supplementing and not in conflict with their religious belief. They are heavily involved in charitable works, like the Shriner's hospitals. Many conservative Christians view Freemasonry as anti-Christian and condemn membership in the Masonic Order. Freemasons, like dozens of other groups ranging from the Roman Catholic Church to Quakers have been accused of [ritual abuse](#). However, no hard evidence has been found to confirm this.

Freethinker: This originally referred to persons who doubted the Trinity -- the concept that a Godhead existed composed of a Father, Son and Holy Spirit. They supported the concept of a single indivisible deity. The meaning of the term has since changed its meaning to include

persons who reject religious beliefs in general, and who follows her/his [own spiritual and ethical path](#).

Free will: The ability of humans to choose their own courses of action.

Frum: A religiously observant Jew.

Fundamentalist: Within Christianity, this is a term used since the 1920's to refer to the most religiously conservative group within Protestant Christianity. Within Judaism, Islam and other religions, the term is used to refer to the extreme conservative wing who Karen Armstrong defines as "*embattled forms of spirituality, which have emerged as a response to a perceived crisis*"¹ - namely the fear that modernity will erode or even eradicate their faith and morality. Its roots within Christianity can be traced to the late 19th Century as a reaction against liberal movements of Biblical criticism and analysis. A 1909 publication "*The Fundamentals: A testimony to the truth*" proposed five required beliefs for conservative Christians; they are listed elsewhere in this glossary under "[Evangelicals](#)", items 1 to 5. Fundamentalists generally believe that other wings of Christianity, and other religions, are in error. The largest Protestant denomination in the U.S., the *Southern Baptist Convention*, has recently transitioned to Fundamentalism. *Bob Jones University*, the *General Association of Regular Baptists*, the *Moody Bible Institute* and other organizations are also Fundamentalist. Among the most generally known leaders are James Dobson, Jerry Falwell, Bob Jones and Hal Lindsey. See the term "[Modernism](#)." The term has three additional meanings in general usage that cause great confusion: A "snarl" word, used by some non-Fundamentalists to imply intolerance, bigotry, lack of flexibility and an anti-intellectual bias. When applied by the Western media to [Muslims](#), it often means "anti-American". Sometimes it means "*radical Fundamentalist Muslim terrorist*." who form a very small percentage of Muslims. When used by conservative Muslims themselves, it refers to a person who strictly follows the teachings of Mohammed, and who promotes the concept of theocratic government.

Furu: An important, but not a foundational belief, within Islam. A believer can reject such a belief and still remain a Muslim.

Futurism, Futurist: Attempts to predict the future. In Christianity, the term applies particularly to the interpretation of biblical books such as [Daniel](#) and [Revelation](#) in order to foretell events in our future.

Gaia: Greek goddess of the Earth. A belief that the earth is a living entity who adapts the environment to promote life.

Gap theory: The belief that there is a large interval of time between the first and second verses in the book of Genesis. By insertion of a gap at this point, Genesis is brought more closely into harmony with the conclusions of the vast majority of biological and earth scientists who believe that Evolution is a fact and that the earth is about 4.5 billion years old.

Gay: An individual who is emotionally and physically attracted to members of the same sex. The term sometimes refers to males only; other times it refers to males and females

Gehena: A Greek word which refers to the Hebrew word gehinnom, the valley of Hinnon. This was the garbage dump for Jerusalem, a place of continuous fire, where the bodies of crucified criminals were tossed. According to Luke 12:4 and other passages, this is [Hell](#). God casts the

body and souls of the unsaved here after their death, to be tortured forever without any hope of mercy.

Gender expression: How a person dresses, speaks and acts to show their gender identity.

Gender identity: An individual's feeling of gender. In the vast majority of people, this is the same as their gender as assigned at birth. However, among transgendered persons, their perceived gender is different from their birth-assigned gender.

General Revelation: A Christian term partly derived from Romans 1:19-20. Paul taught that the existence of the world is proof of the existence of God and of some of his attributes. Further, it teaches that these beliefs are obvious to everyone -- whether they be Christian or not. With advances in science, the existence of the world and its life forms can be explained in naturalistic terms. Thus, the Romans passage does not necessarily apply to contemporary individuals who have become convinced of the reality of evolution.

Genetic fallacy The assumption that because something started with a certain belief or quality that it must continue to have those qualities. An example is: "You're not going to wear a wedding ring, are you? Don't you know that the wedding ring originally symbolized ankle chains worn by women to prevent them from running away from their husbands? I would not have thought you would be a party to such a sexist practice."

Genizah: A place in a synagogue set aside to store both worn-out and heretical or disgraced Hebrew books or papers.

Genocide: Systematic murder of an entire group of people on the basis of their religion, race or nationality.

Genocide, cultural: Attempts to eliminate an entire culture. The Canadian government's program of destroying Native Canadian culture between 1879 and 1986 through the use of boarding schools is one example.

Gentile: This term originated in the Latin word "*gent*" which meant "*of the same clan*." It became "*gentil*" in Middle English. Today, it has a variety of definitions: In Judaism: a non-Jew. In the Christian Scriptures (New Testament) the Greek word "Hellenes" -- which means "Greek" -- has been translated as "Gentile." It refers to any non-Jewish nation or group. See: Acts 16:1, 3; 18:17; Romans 1:14). In Mormonism: a person who is not a Mormon. In Hinduism: a person who is not a Hindu. In some other applications, it refers to a person who does not acknowledge the existence of one's God.

Genocide: (Derived from *genos* (race) and *cide* (to kill)). A term created by Raphael Lemkin in the mid-1940s. It refers to the planned, systematic extermination of an entire ethnic, national, racial, or religious group. Most genocides in the 20th and 21st century have had a strong religious component. The murder of about 200,000 Muslims by Serbian Orthodox Christians during the 1990s is the most serious religiously-motivated genocide in recent years. Rwanda is an exception.

Geocentrism: The belief that the sun revolves around the earth. This was all the rage in Galileo's day. *Religious News Service* reported in 2006-MAR that the belief is having a comeback among conservative Christians because of its support in the Bible. Commentators are having difficulty

deciding whether this news report is a satire, or is serious. Within the environmental movement, a concern over the state and future of the Earth.

Geomancy: The procedure of selecting a site for a building, grave, etc. based upon unseen forces in nature. The goal is to achieve harmony with the natural surroundings.

Get: A Jewish divorce

Ghetto: The term originally referred to a type of inner-city concentration camp for Jews. First developed by the Roman Catholic Church, the concept was later adopted by Hitler during the German Nazi regime. The term now refers to any concentration of a specific group in a city, as in "*student ghetto*."

Ghost: A form of spirit being. Many faiths, from Aboriginal religion to some groups within Christianity believe that they are the spirits of dead people. Hard evidence of their existence is scant or non-existent.

Gilgamesh epic: A flood story from ancient Pagan Babylon with many points of similarity to the Genesis flood. Religious liberals conclude that the Genesis account of the flood of Noah was derived from this Pagan source. Religious conservatives conclude that the Genesis flood story is precisely true, and that the Gilgamesh epic is a distorted record of the actual flood.

Glossolilia or "*speaking in tongues*". In the first Centuries CE, it meant the ability of a person to communicate in a foreign language that they had never learned. e.g. a person raised speaking Greek and unable to speak any other language would suddenly be conversing in Aramaic. At the present time, it refers to a person who suddenly, in a state of religious ecstasy, starts speaking sounds that sound like language but do not represent any known tongue. The manifestation of glossolilia is an expected development in all Pentecostal believers and is a sign of the grace of God. It is also a common practice among charismatic Christians. [More details](#) are available.

Gnosis: A Greek word which literally means "knowledge." Insight or enlightenment capture the meaning of Gnosis better.

Gnosticism: This is pronounced with a silent "g"; it is derived from the Greek word *gnosis* (knowledge). It originated in the Middle East and Greece during pre-Christian times. The movement has been composed of many groups with differing beliefs. One common concept is that there are two Gods: one *Supreme Father* who is from the "good" spirit world, and one *Demiurge* (the Yahweh/Jehovah in the Bible) who created the evil material world. [Salvation](#) comes through knowledge and liberation from the material, earthly world to attain a higher level of spirituality. Christian Gnosticism was one of the three main movements in early Christianity; the other two being Jewish and Pauline Christianity. Many Gnostic sects were the victims of genocide by the early Christian Church. The movement has survived to the present day and is rapidly growing in numbers.

God: A supernatural being, generally male. Various religions assign different attributes and qualities to God, such as a body, omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, love, hate, tolerance, intolerance, etc.

God, false: The deity worshiped by another religion. One faith groups' God is another faith group's false God.

Goddess: a female supernatural being.

Good works: Activities that are legal, pure of motive, and helpful to other persons. Romans 3:12 and other passages state that no unsaved person can perform good works. Many passages in Paul's epistles imply that [salvation](#) cannot be obtained by good works. Many passages in the synoptic gospels appear to teach the opposite.

Gospel: This has three main meanings: One of the four books at the start of the Christian Scriptures which give an account of Jesus' life and which were accepted into the official canon of the Christian Scriptures (New Testament); e.g. the Gospel of Mark. One of the many dozens of books about the life of Jesus, of which only four made it into the official canon; e.g. the Gospel of Thomas. The message, found mainly in the writings of Paul, that the person's belief that Jesus was resurrected will cause God to forgive their sins.

Goy: Hebrew for nation or people. A Yiddish word for non-Jew.

Grace: an Christian expression meaning "*the free and unmerited assistance or favor or energy or saving presence of God in his dealings with humanity...*"). Grace is a gift of God and is not considered to be deserved by the individual. According to the Bible, those to whom God does not give grace are incapable of understanding the gospel message.

Grace, Irresistible: One of the five points of Calvinism: the doctrine that every individual who God has elected (chosen) will come to a saving knowledge of Jesus. None can resist.

Great rite: An act of ritual sex performed by many Neopagan traditions. It may involve actual sexual intercourse by a committed couple in private; alternatively, it may be symbolic in nature.

Guided imagery: A therapeutic technique in which a facilitator tells a story which describes a scene or a passage through a group of scenes. It has been used by athletes in training, by physicians to help their patient's body cure itself, or simply to produce relaxation. It is a suggestive, quasi-hypnotic process that can, under certain circumstances, [generate false memories](#) without either the facilitator or client being aware of the process.

Gurdwara: Literally "*the gateway of the Guru.*" This is a [Sikh](#) religious meeting place.

Guru: Literally "*one who dispels darkness*" or one who is "*heavy*" with the weight of vast knowledge. A revered spiritual teacher who guides students towards enlightenment. It is a term commonly used in Eastern religions. It is also used to refer in a secular sense to refer to an expert in some field, like an "economic guru."

Gypsies: A synonym for Roma, sometimes derogatory. The Roma originated in northwest India who migrate across Europe by the 16th century. About a half million were murdered during the Nazi Holocaust, referred to by the Roma as "the devouring."

Hadavar: Hebrew for "the thing that cannot be described." A term used to refer to Yahweh. Many Jews consider the use of God's name directly to be forbidden or restricted.

Hades: A Greek term generally translated "Hell" in the King James Version of the Bible. Beliefs about Hades are divided: Some Christians believe that Hades is a place where the spirits of

unsaved persons and of believers who died before the ascension of Christ temporarily reside until the day of judgment. Then, the unsaved will be thrown into the lake of fire; the believers will attain heaven. Others believe that Hades and Sheol are Hell where the unsaved are tortured for all eternity.

Hadith: Sayings and practices of Mohammed. They were collected after his death.

Hajj: A pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina in Saudi Arabia which every Muslim is expected to perform at least once during their lifetime, if they are physically and financially able.

Hajji: A Muslim who has performed a Hajj. The term is used as a pejorative by U.S. troops in Iraq.

Halacha (a.k.a. Halaka., Halakha): Jewish law custom, practice or rite.

Halal: A set of Islamic dietary laws which regulate the preparation of food.

Hallelujah: A shout or song of praise to God. "*Hallel*" means "*praise*." "*Jah*" is an abbreviation of "*YWHV*." It appears in many places throughout the last third of the book of Psalms. It is occasionally used as a first name, most commonly for girls.

Halloween: Secular meaning: an annual children's celebration on the evening of each OCT-31. Children dress up in costumes and go to homes in their neighborhood to collect candy. **Pagan meaning:** Wiccans and other Neopagans celebrate the major Sabbat of Samhain on this day. It is the end of the Wiccan year, marking the transition between the warm and the cold season. **Christian meaning:** All Hallow's Eve, a Roman Catholic observance of the night before All Saints' Day. **Satanic meaning:** One of three major seasonal days of celebration -- the other two being Walpurgisnacht (APR-30) and the member's birthday.

Handfasting: A Neopagan wedding. Some religious traditions assign it a length of a year and a day. It can be registered with the government as a marriage if the priest/priestess performing the handfasting is registered to perform weddings.

Haram (a.k.a. haraam): An Islamic term for a forbidden action.

Harg: A stone altar in Norse Heathenism.

HaShem: Hebrew for "the name." A term used to refer to Yahweh. Many Jews consider the use of God's name directly to be forbidden or restricted.

Health & Wealth Gospel: (a.k.a. Word of Faith movement, Positive Confession, Name it and Claim it, and Faith-formula). A group of conservative Protestant para-church ministries which focus on "anointed" ministers and the health, wealth, and success of their viewers and donors. MinistryWatch estimates that their total income is in excess of a half billion dollars annually. 2

Heathen: Originally people of the heath or moor. Originally, it was a Christian term to denigrate followers of the old, pre-Christian Religion. Followers of Asatru and other ancient reconstructed aboriginal religions have embraced the term.

Heaven: In the Old Testament, Heaven referred to the region where God lived. It was above the firmament which was believed to be a solid metal dome located a few hundred feet above the earth. In Christianity it is the abode of God, the Father's House, where selected individuals go after death to be with God. Faith groups differ in their belief about what [criteria are used to determine](#) who will attain heaven after death. Paradise is the name used to refer to Heaven in Islam.

Hebephile: This is a word whose meaning is changing. In the past, it referred to an adult who is sexually attracted to post-pubescent person under the age of 18. Currently, it is evolving to mean a person who sexually molests post-pubescent persons under the age of 18. See [pedophile](#).

Hell: one of two destinations for an individual after death in the [Christian](#), [Muslim](#) and some other religions. Various groups within Christianity believe that a person goes there because of their beliefs or their actions, or some combination of beliefs and actions. Up to the early part of the 20th century, Hell was generally believed to be a place of eternal punishment and torment. Lately, more groups describe it as a simple isolation from God. Liberal religious groups generally treat biblical passages on Hell as symbolic. See also [Universalism](#). In the King James Version of the Bible, the Hebrew word *sheol* and Greek word *hades* (two very different concepts) are both generally translated as *Hell*.

Hellenism: A general term referring to the influence that Greek Pagan culture had on other societies between the time of Alexander the Great (333 [BCE](#)) to 76 BCE when the Romans rose to power. Judaism was profoundly influenced by Hellenism after the conquest of Palestine by the Greeks in the second century [BCE](#).

Henotheism. belief in many deities of which only one is the supreme deity. This may involve: One chief God and multiple gods and goddesses of lesser power and importance. Ancient Greek and Roman religions were of this type. One supreme God, and multiple gods and goddesses who are all simply manifestations or aspects of the supreme God. [Hinduism](#) is one example; they recognize Brahman as the single deity. Some [Wiccans](#) believe in a single deity about which they know little. They call the deity "*The One*" or "*The All*." They recognize the God and Goddess as the male and female aspects of that supreme deity. One supreme God who rules over a country, and many other gods and goddesses who have similar jurisdiction over other territories. Liberal theologians believe that the ancient Israelites were henotheists; they worshipped Jehovah as the supreme God over Israel, but recognized the existence of Baal and other deities who ruled over other tribes.

Heptateuch: A pair of Greek words for "seven" and "container." It refers to the first seven books of the Hebrew Scriptures -- the [Pentateuch](#) and the books of Joshua and Judges. Some theologians believe that these books should be considered as a unit because they believe that the books were composed from the same literary sources.

Herem esh-Sheif: Arabic for "Noble Sanctuary." The area in Jerusalem where the Dome of the Rock and the Al-Aqsa Mosque are located. Most historians believe that the Jewish Temple once stood there.

Heresy: From a Greek word for sub-group or sect: Beliefs that are forbidden by the policy-deciding body of a faith group. Heresy is a relative term, because one group's heresy is frequently another group's required belief or dogma, and vice-versa. Consider, for example, the criteria for salvation [as taught by three Christian groups](#): the Roman Catholic Church, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons), and Fundamentalist protestants. One group's

required belief may also be the same group's condemned past heresy (and vice-versa). Heresies are inevitable in religion because there does not appear to be any mechanism by which religious disagreements can be resolved -- either through reason or by [assessing the will of God](#). [More information](#).

Heresiologist: An individual who studies heresies.

Heresiology: The study of heresies.

Heretic: a person who believes in one or more heresies.

Hermeneutics: The word was derived from the Pagan Greek myth of Hermes. A study of methods used to interpreting the Bible.

Hermeticism: A Pagan religion that started in Egypt in the 2nd or 3rd century [BCE](#). Its followers believed that its beliefs were revealed to their founder Hermes by his divine father. They taught that a person on earth is a mortal god and that God is an immortal man. It was one of the main competitors to early Christianity. Some religious historians trace certain [Mormon](#) beliefs to Hermeticism.

Herodian: An interval of Jewish history from 30 [BCE](#) to 70 [CE](#). Named after Herod the Great who reigned from 37 to 4 BCE.

Heterodox: Greek for "other opinioned." Beliefs that deviate from accepted doctrines. Antonym of orthodox. It is important to realize that one group's orthodoxy is another group's heterodoxy.

Heterosexism: *"....An ideological system that denies, denigrates, and stigmatizes any non-heterosexual form of behavior, identity, relationship, or community. Heterosexism is reflected by personal assumptions that everyone in the world is, or should be, heterosexual."*

Heterosexual: A person who is sexually attracted only to members of the opposite sex. *Conservative Christian definition: a person who is sexually active with members of the opposite sex, and not with members of the same sex."*

Hexateuch: A theological term for the first six books of the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament): The [Torah](#) (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy) and the book of Joshua.

Higher criticism: The study of a section of the Bible to determine who wrote it, when it was written, its literary structure and its meaning.

High Holy Days: A Jewish term that refers to the yearly observances of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

Hijab: A scarf that many Muslim women use to cover their hair.

Hijrah: The flight of Muhammad and fellow believers from Mecca to Medina in 622 CE. The Islamic calendar dates from this time.

Hinayana: Sanskrit for "lesser vehicle." A Buddhist tradition that concentrates on personal enlightenment. There is no consensus on the exact meaning of the term.

Hinduism: The third largest religion in the world, after Christianity and Islam. It is a henotheistic faith which exists in many hundreds of variations. It has about 750 million followers and is largely concentrated in India and Sri Lanka. Hinduism does not have a single founder, a specific theological system, a single system of morality, or a central religious organization. It consists of "*thousands of different religious groups that have evolved in India since 1500 BCE.*"

Hok Hashvut: The Israeli Law of Return which guarantees every Jew the right to migrate to Israel.

Holistic health, holistic medicine: Medical care involving the treatment of the whole person -- body, spirit and mind. Many holistic techniques have never had their efficacy or safety evaluated.

Holocaust: From the Greek: "holos" (completely) and "kaustos" (burned sacrificial offering). When capitalized, the term usually refers to the Shoah, (a.k.a. Shoa and Sho'ah) the killing of five to seven million of European Jews by the Nazi government during World War II. Sometimes used to refer to the total Nazi extermination program, which included Jews, Roma (a.k.a Gypsies), Russians, Poles, other Slavs, [homosexuals](#), [Jehovah's Witnesses](#), etc. totaling ten to fourteen million humans. The Roma refer to the event as the Porajmos (devouring).

Holocaust denial: The belief that either the Nazi Holocaust did not happen, or that the number of Jews killed by the Nazis was relatively small.

Holy: A person, place, time, or ritual set apart -- either by humans or by deity -- for the worship of God, Goddess, gods or goddesses.

Holy communion: A synonym for Holy Eucharist, Divine Liturgy, Mass, or Lord's Supper. A ritual in which the congregation consumes solid and liquid food, typically bread, a wafer, wine or grape juice in remembrance of the death of Yeshua of Nazareth (a.k.a. Jesus Christ). Roman Catholics believe that the wafer and wine become the actual body, blood, soul and divinity of Jesus. Most Protestants regard them as symbolic of Jesus' body and blood

Holy rollers: A derogatory term used to ridicule members of fundamentalist Christian faith groups who engage in ecstatic worship -- sometimes by dropping to the floor and rolling around while under the "spirit of the Lord." The term is most commonly applied to Pentecostals.

Holy Spirit (a.k.a. Holy Ghost): The third person in the Christian Trinity. Some faith groups consider him to be an active force. Historically, Christianity has taught that the Holy Spirit is a person, along with God the Father, and Yeshua of Nazareth (Jesus Christ).

Homeopathy: An alternative treatment of disease involving the consumption of natural materials that simulate the symptoms of the disease. These materials are first diluted in pure water to such an extent that there are generally no molecules of the original material left. The efficacy of this treatment is rejected by most medical experts. It has the potential of causing harm, because individuals may seek a cure through homeopathy, and ignore the potential for a cure from a physician. The latter generally involve medication and/or treatments whose efficacy and safety have been proven.

Homophobia: Any attitude, action or institutional structure which systematically treats an individual or group of individuals differently because of their [sexual orientation](#) or their

perceived sexual orientation. See also [sexism](#), [racism](#), and [religism](#). The most common forms of homophobia in North America is discrimination against homosexuals and bisexuals in employment, accommodation, ordination, church membership, and freedom to marry. However, it occasionally is manifested against heterosexuals. A secondary meaning is the belief that persons of one sexual orientation -- normally heterosexuality -- is inherently superior to persons who have other orientations. A tertiary meaning is fear or loathing of persons with a specific sexual orientation.

Homosexual: This term has at least two conflicting meanings: It is sometimes used to refer to **sexual feelings - what a person is:** Gays, lesbians, sociologists, psychologists, researchers into human sexuality, members of liberal and some mainline faith groups normally define this as: One of three normal and natural sexual orientations experienced by adults, involving an [exclusive, permanent, and unchosen](#) attraction to members of the same gender. It is probably set up by a person's genetic coding, and enabled by some unknown event in the environment in early childhood. *Usage by Evangelical/Fundamentalist and some mainline faith groups:* A form of **sexual behavior - what a person does:** *A perverted, abnormal and unnatural attraction to members of the same gender, hated by God, that can be [changed through prayer and counseling](#). It is caused by bad parenting or sexual molestation during childhood. It is chosen during teenage years, and is extremely addictive. Homosexuals can be attracted to members of the same gender only, or to persons of both genders.*

Homosexualist: A term used by some religious conservatives to refer to anyone -- whether they are heterosexual, homosexual or bisexual -- who support equal rights for persons of minority sexual expression, including: gays, lesbians, bisexuals, and transsexuals.

Houris: A [Muslim belief](#) that beautiful, virgin women are available to men in Paradise (Heaven)

Hudud: Punishments within Islam for spiritual or religious crimes.

Humanism: A term with a variety of meanings, ranging from a study of the humanities (languages, literature, philosophy, history, etc.) to secular humanism (see below).

Humanism, Secular: a non-theistic philosophy which promotes man as the measure of all things. It had its roots in the rationalism of the 18th Century and the free thought movement of the 19th Century.

Huppah: Jewish term for a canopy where a marriage is performed.

Hymn: From the Greek "to sing praise." Songs sung -- generally in praise to a God -- by a congregation or choir.

Hymnals: A book of hymns.

Hyper-Calvinism: The belief by some followers of [Calvinism](#) that a person has no responsibility for their own salvation; it is all up to God to choose who will be saved and be destined to live eternity in Heaven, and who will not be saved and will spend eternity being tortured in Hell.

Hypnotism, hypnosis: A therapeutic technique in which the patient is placed in a trance. This places the patient in an extremely suggestive state in which [false memories](#) can be created.

Hypostatic union: The concept that Yeshua of Nazareth (Jesus Christ) has two natures: one fully divine and one fully human. This is the belief system -- one of many -- about the nature of Jesus that was adopted by the early Christian church and has remained the majority belief.

I Ching: A Chinese technique of predicting the future, based on a book by the same name -- one of the five foundational books of Confucianism. Yellow stocks or rods are cast in order to select one of 64 hexagrams (patterns of six lines which may be broken or continuous).

Idol: This has two main meanings: A drawing, statue, or other representation of an item in heaven or earth, that is used for worship. Anything in life that takes a position of priority over one's relationship with God.

Idolatry: From the Greek: worship of a false god.

Ihram: A white seamless garment worn by male Muslims during the hajj -- a pilgrimage to Mecca. It is normally in two pieces: one is wrapped around the waist, and the other is draped over the left shoulder.

I.H.S.: An acronym for Isis, Horus, and Seb -- the Egyptian trinity consisting of the Mother, the Child and the Father. The first three letters of the name Jesus, the Greek version of Yeshua.

Illuminati: (a.k.a. the enlightened ones) A group or individual who claim to be unusually enlightened. A secret philosophical and political society established by Adam Weishaupt in Germany in 1776. They promoted free thought and democracy. A game involving trading cards. A sinister organization believed to consist of evil men who control world finances, and whose goal is world domination through world government. Many consider this group to be non-existent.

Iman: A Muslim term meaning belief

Imam: A Muslim term for a national leader or the leader of worship in a mosque.

Imitatio Dei: A Latin term for "imitation of the Gods." Taking on godly values. Expressed in: Leviticus 19:2: "Be holy because I, the LORD your God, am holy." Matthew 5:48: "Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

Immaculate Conception: The belief that before the birth of Mary (the mother of Jesus) was born, she was preserved from original sin at the time of her conception, circa 20 [BCE](#). It is widely but incorrectly believed to refer to Jesus' conception, circa 5 to 8 BCE.

Immanence: the concept that God is very much associated with creation, is all-present in the world, and is close to believers.

Immerse, immersion: Baptists and some other Christian groups generally translate the Greek words baptizo and baptisma as implying the total immersion of a convert during baptism. Many other Christian denominations believe that the words can also imply washing, without any specific description of the method. Thus, a baptism by sprinkling is biblically valid.

Imminence: the belief that an event is about to occur in the near future. e.g. the Second Coming.

Immorality: Behavior which transgresses a given system of morals; incorrect behavior. Liberal and conservative Christians differ in many matters over what is moral, even though both sincerely believe that their positions are biblically based. Moral standards change over time, even within a given religious group. Church schisms were common in the mid 19th century over slavery because parts of a denomination considered slavery to be profoundly immoral, while other believers believed that it was condoned, regulated and accepted by the Bible. Major moral shifts over the past 150 years have involved slavery, inoculation of children, birth control, abortion, sexism, racial segregation, discipline of children through the use of pain, and homophobia.

Immortality: God has traditionally been considered to be immortal, there having been no point at which he has not existed. Humans who have been saved have traditionally been considered to be immortal in that they will continue to exist in Heaven after death. Most Christian groups teach that the unsaved are also immortal in that they will continue to exist in Hell for all eternity after death. Other faith groups teach [annihilationism](#).

Impeccability: The concept that [Jesus Christ could not have sinned](#), even if he had wanted to.

Imputation: Adam and Eve's sinful disobeying of Gods instruction when they [ate the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil](#) has been assigned to their children, their grandchildren, and all the way to present-day humanity forever. [Holding one person responsible for the sins of another individual](#) is rare in the field of religion and in secular moral systems. However, it is quite common in the Bible.

Inability, total: Alternative term for *Total Depravity*.

Incarnation: The embodying of a spiritual entity in physical form. Within Christianity: the concept that God became a man, Yeshua of Nazareth (Jesus Christ) and dwelt among other humans. This was rejected by the Gnostic Christians, the Ebionites and other Jewish Christians, but accepted by Pauline Christians.

Inclusion: In general usage, inclusion means to allow people into a group; i.e. excluding nobody. In relation to [salvation](#), the "*Gospel of Inclusion*" means a belief that everyone -- or almost everyone -- will be saved, will attain [Heaven and avoid Hell](#). This is a [heresy](#) according to conservative Christians, and an accurate interpretation of the Bible according to liberal Christians.

Inclusivism: The recognition that ones belief system is the only true and valid one. Beliefs of other religions contain some truth, and their followers are deserving of respect, even though those beliefs might be in conflict with one's own view of the truth. Opposing beliefs are [exclusivism](#) and [pluralism](#). [More details](#)

Incubus: A male demon who would visit women at night and engage in sexual activity. This belief was commonly held during the late Middle Ages and Renaissance. There were also female demons, called succubi who were believed to visit men.

Indulgence: The practice by which a person could pay money to the church or do a good deed and obtain remission of the temporal punishment due to sin. After the Protestant Reformation, cash no longer became an acceptable way to obtain an indulgence.

Inerrant: When applied to a sacred text like the Bible, *inerrancy* is the belief that, as originally written, its contents are infallible, totally free of error and totally authoritative. Many religions, particularly their conservative wings, believe in the inerrancy of their sacred texts.

Inerrancy, limited: This is the belief that the Bible is only inerrant on matters of moral, spiritual and religious truth. That is, biblical passages that describes cosmology, origins of life, the Earth and the rest of the universe, place names, some events, etc. are not necessarily accurate.

Infallible: When applied to a sacred text like the Bible, *infallible* means that the text is fully trustworthy. i.e. it does not deceive the reader into falsehood. There are [problems with this concept](#), because even within the conservative wing of Christianity, Bible experts reach many different conclusions about [divorce](#), [hell](#), the [millennium](#), [Book of Revelation](#), and [creation/evolution](#), etc. Since these theologians' beliefs are mutually exclusive, most must be wrong. Since they were all derived from the Bible, the concept of biblical infallibility is suspect. Within the Roman Catholic Church, the belief that the pope can speak on matters of faith and morals without error. This belief was promulgated in 1870. The pope stripped Hans Küng of his credentials as a teacher of Catholic theology, largely because of his questioning of the doctrine of Papal infallibility.

Infidel: a person who does not believe in your particular religion, denomination or religious tradition. Similar to "Unbeliever" but more of a "snarl" word. Atheists-online have T-shirts available with the definition "INDIFEL: One who does not believe in your God." See [atheists-online.com/](#)

Initial evidence: A doctrine formed from the Book of Acts. It holds that speaking in tongues is the initial evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Both the *United Pentecostal Church* and the *Assemblies of God* believe this doctrine. The, UPC further believes that this experience is essential to salvation. i.e. if you haven't spoken in tongues, you haven't been saved.

Inquisition: An organization within the Roman Catholic Church which was responsible for the elimination of heretics. They were the final court of appeal for those charged with [heresy](#). Those who could be proven to be heretics were turned over to the civil authority for execution. This arm of the church was created in 1542 as the "*Sacred Congregation of the Universal Inquisition*." It went through two name changes, being called the "*Congregatio pro Doctrina Fidei*" (*Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith*) in 1965. "Sacred" was dropped in 1983. It was headed by Cardinal Josef Ratzinger until his election as pope in 2005.

INRI: An acronym for the Latin phrase "*Iesus Nazarenus Rex Iudaeorum*" which means: "*Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews*"

Inspiration: When applied to a sacred text like the Bible, *inspiration* means that the God affected the thought processes of the writers and prevented them from writing any material that was in error. A logical result of inspiration is that the original text of the Bible was inerrant.

Intention: The belief in the Roman Catholic church that the efficacy of the administration of a sacrament is dependant on the priest having the proper intent.

Intercession: An activity of Christ in which he advocates to God the Father the in favor of saved individuals

Interdict, Interdiction: A prohibition by the pope that can deprive individual persons, groups, communities and even nations of all priestly ministry. Thus, they no longer had access to the sacraments of the church.

Interfaith (a.k.a. inter-faith): An attempt to initiate dialog, cooperation, and understanding among individuals of two different faiths. It is also used to refer to a relationship or marriage between people of different faiths. It is occasionally used as a synonym for "[multi-faith](#)." Unfortunately, the term "faith" is defined differently by various religious groups. For example, some conservative Protestants regard a marriage to a person who is not of their denomination to be an interfaith marriage. Other conservative Protestants would regard liberal Christians, Roman Catholics, Mormons, etc. as being of a different faith. Still other Christians interpret "interfaith" as involving another religion, as in a Christian-Buddhist exchange.

Interfaithism: A belief that all religions are equally valid; they all lead to God. This word is used almost entirely among conservative Protestants. One of the two main meanings of the word "[pluralism](#)" is a synonym for "*interfaithism*."

Interreligious: A synonym for "*interfaith*."

Intertestamental period: The interval of time between the writing of Nehemiah, perhaps the last book to be written in the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament), and the writing of 1 Thessalonians, the first book to be written in the Christian Scriptures (New Testament). The interval covers circa 400 [BCE](#) to 51 [CE](#). Books that form the [Apocrypha](#) were written during this interval. Most mainline and liberal religious historians date the writing of the book of Daniel in the middle of the Intertestamental period, to about 165 BCE.

Intincture: To some Christians, this is the communion practice in which the believer takes the bread or host, carries it to the wine, dips it, and then consumes it. In the Roman Catholic church, intincture involves the priest dipping the host in the wine and placing it on the tongue of the communicant.

Irresistible Grace: This is the fourth of *The Five Points of Calvinism*: the belief that it is impossible for a person whom God has [elected](#) to avoid coming to a knowledge of God.

Irtidād: Literally: "*turning back*". In Islam, this is the act of apostasy -- leaving Islam for another religion or for a secular lifestyle.

Islam: The second largest religion in the world. It has over 1,164 million followers, about 20% of the world's population, and is rapidly growing. It is based on the Qur'an, which is said to have been dictated to the Prophet Mohammed by the angel Jibril (a.k.a. Jibreel; Gabriel in English) in 622 [CE](#). This is the largest of the purely monotheistic faiths. Members are found in large numbers throughout Africa, the Middle East and Asia.

Islamic: Synonym for "Muslim," a follower of Islam.

Islamists: These are Fundamentalist Muslims who are attempting to replace secular governments with Islamic theocracies. Mainstream Islamists do this by peaceful means of persuasion. Violent, extremist, radical, militant Fundamentalist Islamists use violence and terrorism as their main means of effecting change.

Islamophobia: Fear of Muslims, hatred of Muslims, or a desire to limit the civil liberties of Muslims. This word corresponds to sexism, racism, homophobia, and xenophobia in areas related to gender, race, sexual orientation and nationality. It is often caused by a person attributing the actions of a few extreme, violent, Fundamentalist Muslim terrorists to the entire population of Muslims.

Isogesis: Reading something into a document. One starts with a belief and searches a document for supporting passages. Often used with reference to the Bible. A potential hazard is that the interpreter may quote a verse out of context with considering the rest of the passage or the rest of the Bible.

Jahannam: A Muslim term for Hell -- the eternal dwelling place after death for evil persons. ●
Janna: A Muslim term for Paradise, which is similar to the Christian concept of Heaven.

Jainism: This is the oldest ascetic religious tradition. It was founded in the sixth century BCE by Mahavira (599-527 BCE). Its 4 million followers are located mainly in India. They believe in karma, in reincarnation, and in avoiding violence. Jainists limit earthly attachments.

JEDP: See documentary hypothesis.

Jehovah: A name for the God of the Hebrew Scriptures, transliterated from YHWH.

Jehovah's Witnesses: Originally a American Fundamentalist Christian denomination organized by Charles Taze Russell during the 1870s, it has since spread worldwide. Members are expected to volunteer significant amounts of time to proselytize in their communities by going door-to-door. Their practice of pacifism resulted in clashes with the American and Canadian government during World War II. This resulted in many court decisions that made major contributions to the definition of religious freedom in the two countries. Their German members were heavily persecuted during the Nazi Holocaust; thousands were exterminated.

Jerusalem: The "holy city" in Israel. The Temple of David and Temple of Solomon was located there; Yeshua was crucified there. Muhammed was taken up to Paradise from there.

Jesus: The name, in English, of the founder of Christianity. As a newborn, Jesus was given the name **Yehoshua**, which means "*God Salvation*." In 1st century Palestine, he was probably known as **Yeshua of Nazareth**. Yeshua is translated as **Iesous** in Greek, **Iesus** in Latin, and **Jesus** in English. Most Christians consider Jesus to be the second person of the Trinity, along with God the Father and the Holy Spirit.

Jesus Only Movement: The belief that Jesus sequentially took three forms. First, he was God; then he was the Son; finally, he became the Holy Spirit. They reject the concept of the Trinity as believed by almost all other Christians. Synonym for "Oneness theology."

Jewish Star: (a.k.a. Star of David, Magen David, Shield of David: A six-pointed symmetrical star symbol of Judaism.

Jihad: A striving for perfection, frequently used within Islam. Usually, the term refers to an internal struggle that a person has with their imperfections. The term is also used to refer to a defensive war. Some radical Fundamentalist Muslims and the Western media often interpret the term as a synonym for an aggressive "holy war."

Jinn (plural Jinni): A Muslim term which, according to the Qur'an, refers to a species of invisible, intelligent beings created by God who are different from humans. They, along with humans, will be judged in the future and attain either heaven or hell, depending upon their good and bad deeds on earth. Among some Muslims, some Jinni are viewed as evil supernatural beings who can take either human or animal form, and can possess humans.

Jnana: A Sanskrit term used in Buddhism to refer to higher knowledge and wisdom.

Judaism: A world religion whose name comes from the patriarch Judah.

Judaizers: A term used in the Christian Scriptures to refer to various Jewish Christian groups.

Jewish Christianx: One part of the early Christian movement who opposed Paul's teachings. They regarded themselves to be a reform group within Judaism. They followed Jewish laws concerning circumcision and diet, regarded Jesus as a prophet who was not divine, rejected the virgin birth and tried to follow his teachings.

Judaism: This is often regarded as the earliest monotheistic religion. The Christian religion was founded by Jews -- mainly by Yeshua of Nazareth (aka Jesus Christ) and Paul of Tarsus. It currently has 20 million followers, and is the original Abrahamic religions. The Roman army drove Jews out of Palestine and scattered them throughout the known world. Only in 1948 CE was a Jewish state recreated in Israel.

Judaism, Messianic: A conservative Christian religion which blends Jewish tradition and ceremonies with Fundamentalist Christian theological beliefs.

Jews, Completed: A term used by conservative Christians to refer to Jews who have embraced Messianic Judaism -- a blend of Jewish tradition and ceremonies with Fundamentalist Christian theological beliefs about Jesus Christ, salvation, Heaven, Hell, etc. Considered a derogatory term by most Jews who hold to the historical Jewish faith.

Judges: In the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) these were political and religious leaders selected for their leadership abilities, to lead the ancient Hebrews in the era before they were ruled by kings.

Justification: A Christian term that refers to the forgiveness and total elimination of a believer's sin on the grounds of Jesus' righteousness and shed blood at his crucifixion. An individual is "justified" when "*they are brought into right standing and into a right relationship with*" God. To most Protestants, this is a direct action initiated by God on the individual. Many also believe that, once a person is justified, they are saved forever. To Roman Catholics, it is a byproduct of the sacraments; one loses justification by committing a mortal sin; one is able to regain it through the sacraments.

Ka'bah: A structure that Muslims believe was originally constructed by Abraham and his eldest son. Millions of Muslims orient themselves towards the Ka'bah every day during prayers.

Kabala (also spelled Kabalah, Kaballa, Kaballah, Kabbala, Kabbalah, Kabballa, Kabballah, and various spellings starting with the letter C and Q) A Jewish mystical tradition. See Cabbalah.

Kama: From the Sanskrit word for love and desire. Kama is the Hindu God of love and erotic desire.

Karma: the integrated collection of good and evil that a person accumulates during their present and former lives. Hindus, Buddhists and some others believe that the amount and type of karma will determine a person's state when they are reincarnated in their next life. Similarly, the sum total of one's acts in previous lives determines one's current life. Although the term normally applies to individuals, there exists group karma, family karma and even national karma. Some New Agers and Neopagans also believe in Karma, but generally restrict its effect to a person's current lifetime.

Kenosis: A Greek word which means "emptying." Paul used the term in Philippians 2:7 to describe his belief about the process by which Yeshua of Nazareth (Jesus Christ) discarded his supernatural powers and became human.

Ketubah: A Jewish marriage contract which specifies the groom's obligations to the bride.

Khutba: A Muslim term referring to a Friday sermon in a mosque.

Kibbutz: Jewish term for a communal settlement.

Kiddushin: Hebrew for "consecration:" A Jewish engagement to be married.

Kippah: (also spelled kippa): A head covering traditionally used only by male Jews. "...*the Code of Jewish Law says, 'It is forbidden to walk four cubits without a head covering'.*"¹
Synonym: yarmulke.

Koine: "*The common Greek language as distinct from Classical Greek.*" The Septuagint and the Christian Scriptures (New Testament) were written in Koine Greek.

Koinonia: A Greek word (pronounced Koy-no-NEE-ah). It was used in the Christian Scriptures (New Testament) to describe the early Pauline Christian church. It means "*communication,*" "*fellowship*", or "*communion.*"

Koran: The name of the God-inspired text of Islam. Most Muslims prefer an alternative spelling: Qur'an.

Kosher: A set of Jewish dietary rules specified in the Hebrew Scriptures and practiced by many Jews.

Krishna: The eighth or ninth incarnation of a Hindu god Vishnu.

Ksana: A Buddhist term for a short interval of time; about 13.3 millisecond. It takes 4,500 ksanas to equal one minute.

Kufr: A Muslim term for disbelief.

Landmarkism: The belief that Baptist churches are the only [true Christian churches](#).

Last supper: The meal that Jesus and his disciples took just before Jesus' arrest. The term is also used to refer to [communion](#).

LDS: Acronym for the [Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints](#).

Lectionary: A series of Bible passages that are read throughout the year in a church service. Often, the sermon is based on the passage just read.

Legalism: The belief that one's salvation depends upon strictly following religious laws and rituals. The belief that salvation is at least partly dependent on one's good works.

Lectio divina: Latin for "*divine reading*." It is an ancient method of prayer, in which the person meditates on a short passage of the Bible or other written material and waits for God to speak to them through the words of the text.

Lent: A period of spiritual preparation for Easter. It starts 40 days before Easter Sunday in the Roman Catholic church. It starts eight weeks before Easter in the Eastern Orthodox churches. In the early Church, recent converts were taught in preparation for their baptism.

Lesbian: A female who is emotionally and physically attracted only to other females.

Levirite marriage: From the Latin word "*levir*" -- husband's brother. The practice, required by Mosaic law, by which a widow and her former-husband's brother were required to marry. This inevitably involved serial rape in many cases. A child born to the couple would be credited to the former husband.

Lex talionis: Latin for "law of retaliation." The Hebrew Scriptures state that Injury was to be repaid with a similar injury: "*an eye for an eye; a tooth for a tooth*."

LGBT: An acronym that refers to lesbians, male gays, bisexuals and transsexuals. There are many variations to this acronym including the following, which is the most inclusive that we have seen:

LGBTTIQ: An acronym that refers to individuals who identify themselves as lesbian, gay male, bisexual, transgendered, Two Spirit, intersexual, queer, and questioning.

Liberal Christianity (a.k.a. Progressive Christianity): A religious movement that holds beliefs which are very different from those of conservative Christians: Emphasizes human rights, the findings of science, and the higher criticism (analysis) of the Bible; Largely disregards biblical miracles, the infallibility, [inspiration](#) and [inerrancy](#) of the Bible, the [Virgin birth](#); Ignores [passages in the Bible which are immoral](#) by today's standards -- e.g. those dealing with human slavery, oppression of women, religious intolerance, torture of prisoners, genocide, burning some hookers alive, etc.

Liberation theology: The interpretation of religious faith from the perspective of the poor, oppressed and victimized. It seeks God in a world of injustice. Found most often within Christianity.

Lilith: (a.k.a Lillith): Originally, she was a female demon who formed part of Babylonian and Canaanite Pagan religion. She was incorporated into the religion of the ancient Hebrews and is

mentioned in Isaiah 34:14. The *Revised Standard Version* of the Bible refers to her as a Night Hag. She was believed to be a female demon that seduced men, terrified children at night, etc. Some later Jewish sources identified her as the first wife of Adam, created at the same time as he was. She didn't submit to Adam's will and was banished from the Garden of Eden. Eve then became Adam's second wife. Some modern-day feminists have adopted Lilith as a heroine.

Limited atonement: This is the third of *The Five Points of Calvinism*: the belief that Jesus did not die to save all humans. He died only for the sake of specific sins of those who are saved. Sometimes called "*Particular Redemption*."

Literalist: "*One who adheres to the letter or exact word; an interpreter according to the letter.*" (The Free Dictionary) The term is typically used when interpreting scriptures.

Literary criticism: With reference to the Bible, a method of analyzing passages "*that seeks to discover the underlying literary sources, stylistic features, type or genre of literature, authorship, unity, and date of a text, for their value in interpreting the text's meaning in its original historical context.*"

Liturgy: From the Greek word "*leitourgia*" meaning "service." Forms and content of public service for church worship as defined by various faith groups.

Logos: An ancient Pagan Greek term meaning "*word*" or "*reason*", and used to indicate the concept that the universe was governed by a higher form of intelligence. St. Paul and other Christians have used it to describe Jesus as the "*Logos of God*" - the concept that the eternal thoughts of God were made incarnate (endowed with a body) in Jesus.

Lord's Supper: See [Communion](#).

Lower criticism: The analysis of available evidence to determine the original text of the Bible.

● **Lucifer:** Angel of light. Sometimes considered a synonym for Satan.

Lutheranism: The group of denominations that trace their roots to Martin Luther and the German Reformation in the early 16th century. In the U.S. the largest Lutheran denomination is the liberal *Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* (ELCA). Second largest is the conservative *Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod*.

LXX: Roman symbol for the number 70. An abbreviation used to refer to the Septuagint translation of the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) into Koine Greek. The translation was allegedly made by 70 or 72 individuals. This was the version of the Hebrew Scriptures used by the Christians in the primitive Christian church.

Machpela: The *Cave of the Patriarchs* in Hebron, Palestine where the leaders of ancient Israel were buried.

Magic, Magick: The use of blessings, spells, incantations etc. to change outcomes of events. [Wiccans](#) and other Neo-pagans are limited to what is popularly called "White Magic" which is devoid of control, domination, harm or manipulation. [Satanists](#) are free to return harmful magic as vengeance for any harm done to them by others.

Mainline or Mainstream: This is a term that is often used to refer to Christian denominations which are more liberal than [Evangelicals](#). It is not a well-defined word with a universally accepted meaning. In a study comparing Evangelical and mainline denominations, a Princeton University study included the following as large mainline groups: American Baptist Churches in the USA, Episcopal Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Presbyterian Church (USA), United Church of Christ, and the United Methodist Church. ¹ Some theologians and commentators divide Christianity into three groups: Evangelical, mainline and liberal.

Mahayana: A Sanskrit term group of Buddhist traditions called the Great Way, Great Road, Greater Path, or Greater Vehicle. It stresses the importance of helping all beings to achieve enlightenment. It is found in Bhutan, China, Japan, Nepal, Tibet, and East Asia.

Mala beads: This is a string of beads -- 108 is a common number -- of uniform size. There is one larger bead, called the guru mother or focal bead. They are sometimes called "*prayer beads*," "*worry beads*" or "*Buddhist rosaries*". The beads can be made from a variety of materials, such as sandalwood, teak, glass, bone, gemstones, and coconut. The beads are used as counters to help Buddhists, Hindus, and yoga practitioners repeat their mantra a certain number of times. They can also help a person stay focused during meditation.

Mamzer: A Jewish term for an illegitimate person born from an incestuous or adulterous union.

Mandala: An object that one can focus on during meditation. It is usually a painted diagram that shows the unfolding of the cosmos.

Mandap: A sacred wedding tent used by Hindus.

Manicheanism: A religion which synthesized elements of Buddhism, Christianity, Gnosticism, and Zoroastrianism. It was founded by Mani (a.k.a. Manicheus) in Mesopotamia during the third century [CE](#). He believed in two equal deities. One is the Judeo-Christian God who is good, and is responsible for human souls and minds. The other is Satan who is evil and is responsible for human bodies, passions and emotions. It considered sexuality to be evil. Its followers practiced asceticism.

Manifestation. The founder of the [Christadelphians](#), John Thomas, taught his belief about deity. Rejecting the Trinity, he wrote that "*...the Father is God and Jesus is God; and we may add, so are all the brethren of Jesus gods; and a multitude which no man can number*".

Mantra: A word or phrase which is repeated continually in order to achieve relaxation or meditation.

Māra: The Buddhist devil.

Marianist: A group of Christians in the 5th century CE who believed that the Virgin Mary is the "*queen of heaven*." They believed in a Trinity composed of God, Mary and Jesus Christ.

Marriage, protection of: The terms "protection of marriage" or "protection of traditional marriage" are used by religious and social conservatives to refer to activity designed to give opposite-sex couples special privileges and to prevent loving committed same-sex couples from marrying and thereby protecting themselves and their children with approximately 1,500 state and federal government benefits, rights and obligations.

Martyr: Greek for "witness." A person who dies for their faith or cause.

Masjid: This is a [Muslim](#) term for a [mosque](#) -- a house of worship.

Masonic order: See [Freemasonry](#)

Materialism: The belief that only material, physical objects exist. Such items as thoughts, soul, and spirit are properties of the human mind.

Maundy Thursday is the Thursday before Easter Sunday. It commemorates the Last Supper, Jesus agony in the garden and his arrest. "*Maundy*" is derived from the Latin "*mandatum*" (commandment of God in John 13:34-35 For centuries, people in authority have washed the feet of their followers on this day.

Meditation: "Meditation can be considered a technique, or practice. It usually involves concentrating on an object, such as a flower, a candle, a sound or word, or the breath. Over time, the number of random thoughts diminishes. More importantly, your attachment to these thoughts, and your identification with them, progressively become less.

Medium: An individual who claims to be able to make contact with the spirits of dead people.

Mennonites: A faith group which originated within the Anabaptist movement. They hold a variety of theological beliefs, but are all opposed to infant baptism and warfare.

Menorah: A Jewish candle holder. A nine-candle menorah is used at Hanukkah; a seven-candle menorah was used in the Jerusalem Temple.

Messiah: Derived from the Hebrew "*meshiach*" which means "*consecrated person*" or "*anointed one*." It is translated as the Greek word "*Christos*," and the English "*Christ*." In the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament), the Messiah was an anticipated "anointed one": a king of Israel and military leader who would lead the Jewish people to independence from foreign oppression and occupation. The concept of a Messiah who was executed and later resurrected does not appear in the Hebrew Scriptures. According to the Talmud: "*The only difference between the world today and the world after the messiah comes is that when the messiah comes we will be free of foreign subjugation.*" In Christianity, a title used to refer to Yeshua of Nazareth: Jesus Christ -- considered the Son of God and second personality of the Trinity.

Messianic Judaism: A conservative Christian religion which blends Jewish tradition and ceremonies with Fundamentalist theological beliefs about Jesus Christ.

Metaethics: A study of ethical systems to determine whether they are based on objective foundations.

Methodist: An individual, congregation, or denomination whose spiritual heritage can be traced to the teachings of John Wesley. He was an 18th century English preacher, who was influenced by the Pietist movement which started in the 17th century. "*Methodist*" was first used as a

derisive title to refer to the very strict daily schedules observed by members of the *Holy Club* -- a religious society which Wesley organized in Oxford.

Mezuzah means a doorpost in Hebrew. It refers to a scroll with specific verses from the Torah placed inside a container and attached to a doorpost outside of the home of a devout Jew. The most common verses are Deuteronomy 6:4-9 and 11:13-21. A devout Jew touches or kisses their mezuzah when entering or leaving their house.

Midrash: From a Hebrew word "*darash*," meaning "*to seek out*." According to Rabbi Donna Berman, "*Midrash uses [allegory](#) and additional narrative to fill in the gaps left by an often terse biblical text. Midrash is creative and imaginative. It can take the form of artwork, dance, music, as well as poetry and prose.*" ⁸ Midrash can also refer to a book which contains a compilation of Midrashic teachings.

Mihrab: This is a niche in the wall of a mosque. It points in the direction of Qibla -- the direction of the shorter great circle route to the Kaaba in Mecca, Saudi Arabia.

Mikvah (a.k.a. Mikveh, Mikva): A Jewish purification bath.

Minaret: A tower located beside a mosque. It is often used when Muslims are called to prayer.

Mind control cult: a [religious group](#) which uses severe domination and manipulation to rigidly control its followers. Some in the [anti-cult movement](#) believe that members of these groups lose their will to think clearly and almost become zombies. There is little or no evidence of that actually happening.

Millennium: Religious meaning: an interval of 1000 years after Armageddon when, according to Revelation, Jesus Christ will rule on earth. Secular meanings: the beginning of a year ending in "000" or "001" as in "2000" or "2001."

Millennialism: The belief that current society will disintegrate and be replaced with a perfect new world. Some 24% of American adults believe that Jesus Christ will return to earth during their lifetime; most believe that this event will usher in a new world order.

Min: A Jewish term for heretic or schismatic.

Mind control: A spiritually abusive environment in which followers of a faith group are manipulated in order to reduce their ability to think critically. The goal is to turn the membership into near robots who are incapable of independent reasoning and judgment. There is no consensus on whether new religious movements utilize mind control techniques. The existence of mind control is a major part of the belief system of the [anti-cult movement](#) (ACM). Those in the ACM teach that new religious movements (which they call "cults") widely practice mind control and other psychologically abusive methods. Sociologists and psychologists who have studied new religious movements generally deny that it exists.

Mind sciences: A religious movement which believes that humans are divine beings who can change reality through their mind and thoughts.

Minimalism, minimalists: A group of historians, archaeologists and theologians who view the biblical account of creation, the flood, the tower of Babel, the patriarchs, the exodus as religious

myth without any historical reality. They believe that the histories in the Hebrew Scriptures were of recent creation.

Minyan: A quorum of ten or more male Jewish adults -- the number required to conduct a communal worship service.

Miqdash: The name of the Jewish temple in Jerusalem, located on the Temple Mount.

Miracle: An event in which God suspends one or more natural laws and makes an impossible outcome happen. The stopping of the apparent movement of the sun across the sky, as mentioned in the Bible, is regarded by some as a miracle.

Miriam: Hebrew version of the name Mary; the actual name of the mother of Yeshua of Nazareth (Jesus Christ).

Mishnah: From a Hebrew word "gamar" which means "to complete." A collection of early oral interpretations of the Hebrew Scriptures. They were completed about 200 [CE](#).

Missal: A Roman Catholic book which contains all of the mass prayers and readings for three years of Sundays and two years of weekdays.

Mitzvah: Hebrew for "commandment." "*A combination of a religious law, personal obligation, and a privilege.*". Plural is Mitzvot. Often used to refer to a good deed

Modalism: The belief that God is a single entity who has appeared in different modes at different times. He appeared as the Father in the Old Testament, as Jesus during the first century [CE](#), and has since taken the form of the Holy Spirit. This contrasts with the historical concept of the Trinity in which God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit are co-existent as one entity.

Modernism: In a religious sense, the term refers to a movement which started in the 19th century which was skeptical of traditional Christian dogma, such as the inspiration and [inerrancy](#) of the Bible. Modernists applied rationalistic thinking to studies of the Bible and of religious belief. The Bible was studied as a historical document rather than as the Word of God. The [Fundamentalist](#) movement within Christianity was created largely as a response to modernism.

Nabi (a.k.a. Navi): Jewish and Muslim term for prophet.

Name it and Claim it: (a.k.a. Word of Faith movement, Health & Wealth Gospel, Positive Confession, and Faith-formula). A group of conservative Protestant para-church ministries which focus on "anointed" ministers and the health, wealth, and success of their viewers and donors. MinistryWatch estimates that their total income is in excess of a half billion dollars annually. ²

Naturalism: The belief that phenomena in the universe are explained by natural laws, and that there are no supernatural forces at work.

Natural marriage: The union of one man and one women to the exclusion of all others, freely entered into. Most of the [eight family and marriage types](#) mentioned in the Bible do not represent natural marriage. The term is typically used by individuals and groups opposed to [same-sex marriage](#) who wish to keep marriage as a special privilege offered only to opposite-sex couples.

Naturalistic Evolution: The belief that new species of animals develop from existing species over a very long interval of time, in response to purely natural forces and processes -- i.e. without the intervention of a deity.

Near-death Experience: (acronym NDE): An often profoundly moving experience that is sometimes felt by persons who have clinically died and been brought back to life. It often involves the perception of traveling through a tube towards a light. It is often associated with warm feelings of acceptance and love. Some neurologists believe that the NDE does not reflect reality, but is a normal hallucinogenic experience generated by a brain that is being starved of oxygen.

Necromancy: An attempt to communicate with the spirits of the dead. This is forbidden in the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament).

Nenju: Buddhist meditation beads.

Neo-orthodoxy: (a.k.a. Barthianism) A movement within Christianity which was a reaction against liberalism, and based on the leadership of Karl Barth (1886-1968). He taught that God is "*so far transcendent above man that there could be no communication between man and God.*" God cannot be described in human language. Humans can only communicate with God through the Bible, in spite of its human origins. Barth accepted the theory of evolution and higher criticism.

Neopagan: (a.k.a. Neo-pagan, Pagan): A person who follows a religion which is reconstructed from, or based upon, an ancient Pagan religion. e.g. the [Druidic](#) religion is based on the faith and practices of the ancient Celtic professional class; followers of [Asatru](#) adhere to the ancient, pre-Christian Norse religion; [Wiccans](#) trace their roots back to the pre-Christian era in Europe. Other Neo-pagans follow Roman, Greek, Egyptian and other traditions. No Neopagan tradition recognizes an all-evil deity similar to the Christian and Islamic Satan. Neopagans respect other religions and the right of people to follow the faith of their choice. *Conservative usage: a form of [Satanism](#). Neopagans hate Christianity.*

Neo-Pentecostalism: A synonym for the Charismatic movement.

NeoPlatonism: An Alexandrian system of philosophy from the third century CE. It mixed Jewish and Christian concepts with ideas from Plato and other Greek philosophers and with Oriental mysticism.

Neotheism (a.k.a. Open Theism or Open view of God): A belief that God is not omniscient. In particular, God does not know what will happen in the future with precision, because the future has not yet happened. Supporters of this belief back up their position with biblical quotations.

Neshoma: Jewish term for soul.

New Age: Although it is often referred to as a religion, the New Age is in reality an almost completely decentralized and unorganized spiritual movement. It is composed of metaphysical bookstores, seminar leaders, authors, teachers and user/believers of a variety of techniques, such as channeling, past life regressions, pyramid science, crystal power, etc. It is a free-flowing spiritual movement -- a network of believers and practitioners -- where book publishers take the place of a central organization; seminars, conventions, books and informal groups replace of

sermons and religious services. *Conservative usage: closely coordinated groups including occultists, Wiccans, Satanists, astrologers, channelers, spiritists, etc.*

New Covenant Theology: A Christian concept which teaches that God's revelations in the Christian Scriptures (a.k.a. New Testament) possesses a distinctively "new character." Jesus is seen as having changed God's laws as they had been earlier revealed in the Hebrew Scriptures (a.k.a. Old Testament). The laws of Moses are seen as temporary revelations to be superseded with Jesus' disclosures. See also "[covenant theology](#)."

New Jerusalem: A holy city, described in Revelation 21:1-2, descending to earth 1000 years after the battle of Armageddon.

New Testament: A canon of Christian writings accepted in the 4th century CE as scripture. ●

New Thought: A group of metaphysical Christian faith groups including [Unity](#), Religious Science, Science of Mind, Divine Science, [Christian Science](#), etc.

Nikah: Muslim term for marriage.

Nilhilist: One who rejects almost every type of assertion about the nature of the universe. Usually attributes no significance to humankind or to any meaning for existence.

Nirvana: This is a Buddhist term which means a state of mind where all suffering and dissonant emotions which give rise to suffering have ceased and one is released from samsara -- the endless cycle of birth, life, death and rebirth.

Nissiuin: A Jewish wedding ceremony.

Noachide Covenant: A covenant that God made with Noah and his sons after the great flood. In Acts 15, non-Jewish Christians were released from the full requirements of the Hebrew Scriptures, but were expected to follow this covenant.

Noel: The "Christmas" interval from DEC-2 to JAN-6. A French name given to boys; derived from Noël (Christmas). The female equivalent is Noelle. It is derived from the Latin "natalis," referring to the birth of Jesus, An acronym for "No Observable Effect Level:" the greatest concentration or amount of a chemical in a plant or animal that causes no detectable adverse effect. Sometimes called NEL

Non-denominational: The term generally refers to evangelical Protestant congregations that are not affiliated with a specific Christian denomination. The vast majority are fundamentalist in their theological beliefs. Most "... *are loosely Baptist in doctrine*"³ and are often influenced by charismatic, Pentecostal, and Calvinist beliefs and practices. They total about 6 million members in the U.S. Many congregations' senior pastors lack a seminary degree. They have the highest proportion of adults among all Christian groups with what *Barna Research* calls a "biblical worldview." The term "non-denominational" should not be confused with terms like "inter-faith" or "multi-faith" or "all faiths" or "all faith and ethical traditions" etc. These are terms that indicate acceptance of Christianity, Judaism, Islam and many other belief systems.

Normative Ethics: a study into ultimate values and how people should live their lives.

Normative principle: The belief, held by Lutherans and Anglicans that whatever is not specifically forbidden in the Bible is allowed in the church's practice, worship and organization.

Numerology: The use of numerical analysis to uncover hidden knowledge. One of the most famous examples of numerology involves the reference to the [number of the beast -- 666 -- in Revelation 13:18](#). This has led to numerous interpretations.

Occult: There is no generally accepted meaning for this term. The term has been used to refer to such unrelated topics as astrology, palm reading, the Masonic Order, [Satanism](#), tarot card reading, New Age Spirituality and [Wicca](#). Some definitions include: A group of mostly unrelated spiritual and/or magical activities, the detailed knowledge of which is kept secret from the general public. A set of mostly unrelated divination and/or spiritual practices or activities which are not part of a person's faith or of any large world religion. An activity which involves elements of divination, evil sorcery, magic and/or supernaturally gained concrete experiences or truths. *Conservative usage: Satanism the core element of the occult; most of the remaining occult groups are either forms of Satanism or are recruiting groups for Satanism. All Occultic groups are anti-Christian. Rituals are based on demonic powers and fakery. Heavy metal rock music, [fantasy role games](#) etc. are often considered occult pastimes .*

Olber's Paradox: This is a puzzle proposed by Heinrich Olbers, a German astronomer in 1823. He suggested that if the universe is static, infinite in size and uniform, then every line of sight from the earth in any direction must end of the surface of a star. Thus, the night sky should be bright. But it is dark. There are two solutions to the paradox: the age of the universe is finite, and/or the universe is expanding.

Old Catholic Church: This is a Christian denomination which split from the Roman Catholic Church in 1723 because of the Vatican's condemnation of Jansenism and its refusal to allow the democratic selection of an archbishop. Other Roman Catholics joined in 1870 in protest to the decree of papal infallibility. They allow their priests to marry.

Old Testament: The name given by Christians to the Hebrew Scriptures. To Roman Catholics, Greek Orthodox and some Anglicans, this is the Jewish Bible and the [Apocrypha](#). To most Protestants, it is only the Jewish Bible.

Oleh: A Jewish term referring to a Jew who is immigrating into Israel.

Olim: Plural form of "Oleh."

Omnibeneficence: The concept that God is all-good.

Omnipotence: The concept that God has infinite power; he is able to do anything that he wishes that is consistent with his own personality.

Omnipresence: The concept that God is in all places at all times.

Omniscience: The concept that god is in possession of all knowledge. The [theodicy paradox](#) addresses the apparent conflict involved in God having the above four attributes simulataneously.

Oneness Pentecostalism (a.k.a. Jesus Only): A movement within Pentecostalism which rejects the historical definition of the Trinity and adopts a belief system similar to [Monarchianism](#). They believe that Jesus sequentially took three forms. First, he was God; then he was the Son; finally, he became the Holy Spirit. They reject the concept of the Trinity as believed by almost all other Christians. Synonym for "Oneness theology." They believe that one must be baptized in the name of Jesus only in order to be saved. If one does not speak in tongues, then they have not been saved.

Open Theism (a.k.a. Neotheism or Open view of God): A belief that God is not omniscient. In particular, God does not know what will happen in the future with precision. Supporters of this belief back up their position with biblical quotations.

Opus Dei: From a Latin phrase meaning "*the work of God*." The informal name of *The Personal Prelature of the Holy Cross and Opus Dei*. It is a very conservative Roman Catholic lay organization organized in 1928, whose members have a strong dedication to the Vatican.

Ordinary Time: This is a Christian term used mainly by Roman Catholics. It refers to two intervals within each year. One starts on the day following the Baptism of the Lord and ends at Ash Wednesday. The other runs from the day after Pentecost until the day before the first Sunday of Advent.

Original Sin: "*Fallen man's natural sinfulness, the hereditary depravity and corruption of human nature because of Adam's fall.*" ¹ That is, Adam and Eve's transgression when they ate of the forbidden fruit opened a gulf between God and humanity. Pollution from that sin has been inherited by all of Adam and Eve's descendents to the present day.

Orthodox: Greek term for "correct opinion or belief." In a religious sense: When written in lower case, it generally means a traditional or historical belief. When written in upper case, it generally refers to Eastern Orthodoxy.

Orthodox, Eastern: One of the major divisions within Christianity (the others being Roman Catholicism, Anglicanism and Protestantism). It consists of 15 autocephalous churches. Each is headed by a bishop; most are related to a specific country, as in Serbian, Russian and Greek Orthodox. The Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches had been drifting apart in belief, practice and ritual for centuries before they formally split in 1054 [CE](#). Each now regards themselves to be the only true Christian church.

Orthopraxy: Greek term for "correct action." It means to make the religiously appropriate activities.

OSAS: This is an acronym for "*Once Saved, Always Saved*." It is the belief, common among many conservative Protestants, that once a person repents of their sin and trusts Jesus as Lord and Savior, then they are forever [saved](#) and will attain heaven after death. They cannot lose their salvation by changing their belief or by engaging in an evil activity.

Ouija Board: A game using a board which is marked with letters, numbers and the words "yes" and "no." A pointer on a raised platform selects a character or word. One or two players place their fingers on the platform, which moves -- apparently by magic. Many conservative Christians believe that this game is profoundly evil and dangerous and that the pointer is moved by

demonic forces. Scientists who have studied the physics of the board have generally concluded that the pointer is unconsciously moved by the players.

Out-of-body Experience: (acronym OBE): See [Near-death experience](#).

Pacifism of Islam: The belief in Islam that war is an abnormal activity opposed to the will of God. It is sometimes forced on Muslims. When entered into must be limited, humane, and involve minimal damage to the land and possessions.

Padre: This is the word for "*father*" in the Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish languages. Its origin can be traced to the Latin word "*pater*," which also means father. It is often used to refer to a member of the Christian clergy, particularly one who is a military chaplain.

Paedobaptism: Baptism of infants.

Pagan: (From a Latin word for village peasant). This word has many unrelated meanings. Some definitions are: Wiccans and other Neopagans sometimes use *Pagan* as a synonym for *Neopagan*. Religious and social conservatives often use the term as a general-purpose "*snarl*" word to refer to cultures and religions very different from their own. A person who is neither [Christian](#), a [Muslim](#) or a [Jew](#). an animistic, spirits-and-essences filled belief system, usually polytheistic. It is based upon direct perception of the forces of nature and usually involves the use of idols, talismans and taboos in order to convey respect for these forces and beings. The ancient religions of Egypt, Greece, Rome, and other civilizations are often referred to as Pagan religions. Societies surrounding the ancient Israelites are often referred to as Pagan.

Pagoda: A religious building, especially a multistory Buddhist tower in the Far East, erected as a memorial or shrine.

Palm reading: Attempting to foretell a person's future and reveal their past through an analysis of the lines on a person's hand. Fortune tellers generally have great confidence in this technique. Many conservative Christians consider it a dangerous form of divination forbidden in the Bible.

Panentheism, Panentheist: (From the Greek pan-en-theos which means all-in-God) Like Pantheism, Panentheism includes the belief that God is in everything. The belief that the entire universe - substances, forces and laws -- is God - the universe is God's body. But, in addition, God is seen as transcending the universe. This belief is seen in Process Theology and in some components of [New Age](#) belief. Leading Panentheists in the present and recent past are John Cobb, Charles Hartshorne, Shubert Ogden, and Alfred North Whitehead.

Pan Indianism: A a recent and growing movement which encourages Native Americans to return to traditional beliefs, and seek to create a common Native religion.

Pantheism, Pantheist: From the Greek words "*pan*" (all) and "*theos*" (God). God is all. The belief that every existing entity (humans, animals, etc.) together, is a part of God. The entire universe is divine. They do not view God in personal terms, as having a personality, having the ability to make decisions, able to interact with humans, etc.

Pantheon: A group of Gods and/or Goddesses worshiped by a single religion. One example was the Greek pantheon. The term originated with the name of a building: the Pantheon -- a circular temple built in the first century [BCE](#) in Rome, and dedicated to all of the deities.

Parachurch: A religious organization that operates outside of a denomination or sect. Their membership, catchment area, and message often cut across denominational lines. Typical examples are Promise Keepers, Focus on the Family, the Family Research Council.

Paradise: From the Greek word for park or garden. The afterlife destination taught by Islam that will be attained by persons who have done a predominance of good works.

Parchment: Sheets of prepared animal skin used for recording documents.

Parousia: From the Greek word "*parousia*," meaning "*presence*." The second coming when many Christians expect Jesus Christ to return to earth. This is a major focus of most conservative Christians.

Parthenogenesis: Virgin birth.

Partial life: This is a Jewish term to refer to the status of a fetus. In [Jewish law, a fetus normally becomes a full human person](#) when its head emerges from the birth canal. Before that event, the fetus is considered of lesser importance than a full human being. The same term has many other meanings in biology and manufacturing.

Particular Redemption: This is the third of *The Five Points of Calvinism*: the belief that Jesus did not die to save all humans. He died only for the sake of specific sins of those who are saved. Sometimes called "*Limited atonement*."

Passive resistance: A non-violent method of opposing oppression through the use of non-cooperation.

Passover: This is the most important feast of the Jewish calendar, celebrated at the first full moon after the Vernal Equinox. The name "*Passover*" was derived from the actions of the angel of death as described in the book of Exodus. The angel "*passed over*" the homes of the Jews which were marked with the blood obtained from a ritual animal sacrifice. The same angel murdered the first-born child and first-born animals of every Egyptian family whose doorway was not so marked.

Past life regression: A therapeutic technique in which the patient is urged to imagine going back in time, past their birth, into a former lifetime. It is a suggestive treatment method that can easily [generate memories of events that never happened](#) without either the patient or therapist being aware of the process.

Patina: A covering that forms naturally on hard surfaces over a long interval. One example is the green layer that forms on copper metal or copper alloys as a result of corrosion. Another is a varnish-like coating found on limestone ossuaries (bone boxes) such as [James alleged ossuary](#) and the [ossuaries allegedly belonging to Jesus' immediate family](#).

Patriarchs: A groups of early Hebrew leaders, including Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The title given to the current leader of various Eastern Orthodox churches. The title given in early Christianity to the bishops at the five main Christian centers: Alexandria, Antioch, Constantinople, Jerusalem, and Rome.

Peccability: The concept that Jesus Christ [could have sinned](#) if he had wanted to.

Pedobaptism: The practice of baptizing an infant. Most conservative Protestant denominations defer baptism until later in life when a person becomes born again.

Pedophile: From two Greek words: "*pedo*" means "*child*;" and "*philia*" means "*love for*." This is a word whose meaning is changing. In the past, it referred to an adult who is sexually attracted to pre-pubescent children -- often those who fall into a specific age range, like 5 or 6. Currently, it is evolving to mean a person who sexually molests pre-pubescent children. See [hebephile](#).

Pelagianism: A concept proposed by Pelagius (circa 356 to circa 418) who denied the existence of original sin inherited from Adam. He taught that a soul created by God cannot inherit sin from an ancestor. Thus humans are born morally neutral. They can fall into habits of sin but can overcome sin through mental effort. He promoted adult baptism in place of infant baptism. His beliefs were declared heretical by the Christian movement.

Penance: A Roman Catholic sacrament in which sins are forgiven by a priest.

Pentacle: a five pointed star inside a circle -- most commonly used by [Wiccans](#) and other [Neopagans](#). Some [Satanists](#) invert the pentacle so that one point is downwards and two upwards; they often add a goat's head to the inverted pentacle.

Pentagram: a five pointed star. [Wiccans](#) and other [Neopagans](#) are the main North American groups who use a pentagram as a religious symbol. They orient the star with one point upwards, two downwards. The points of the star are often interpreted to refer to earth, air, water, fire and spirit. [Satanists](#), who are numerically much smaller group than Wiccans, sometimes use an inverted pentagram.

Pentateuch: See [Torah](#)

Pentecost: From the Greek word "pentecoste" which means the 50th day. In Christianity, a holy day celebrated 49 days after Easter Sunday. It recalls the visitation of the Holy Spirit to 120 Christians 50 days after Jesus' resurrection. They [spoke in tongues](#). This is usually regarded as the date of the birth of the Christian church. Also known as Whitsunday. In Judaism, a festival which was called "*Pentecost*," because it was observed 50 days after Passover.

Prayer: The act of attempting to verbally communicate with the supernatural. It is found in almost all the religions of the world. [Communal prayer](#), as during a church service, is forbidden in Matthew 6:5-8 in favor of private prayer in isolation. Its purpose within Christianity is to [assess the will of God](#) for one's life, to commune with God, to praise God, to give thanks to God, to repent of sinful behavior, to ask forgiveness, to seek a favor from God, and (occasionally) to ask God to curse an opponent. Prayer is found in almost all religions.

Predestination: This is a controversial doctrine promoted by John Calvin and other theologians. God has divided humanity into two groups: a small percentage of people who God will save and who will attain heaven. God has decided to not save a much larger group; they will spend eternity being tortured without mercy in Hell. Only after God chooses an individual can they understand and accept salvation.

Pregnancy, start of: General medical definition: Pregnancy begins when the pre-embryo attaches to the wall of the uterus, about 12 days after conception. **Common pro-life definitions:** Pregnancy begins at conception, or shortly afterwards when a unique DNA is formed. The difference in definitions makes dialog concerning [abortion](#) and [emergency contraception](#) (a.k.a. the morning after pill) very difficult.

Premillennialism: a belief that the moral condition of the world is degenerating, that a period of great suffering will occur in the near future, that "*born again*" believers will rise from the earth to be with Jesus, and that Jesus Christ will establish himself as king and start a 1,000 year period of peace. Originally a Christian heresy in the early church, this belief is now promoted by most Evangelical Christians.

Presbyterian: The name of a Christian denomination, like the Presbyterian Church, USA, who trace their spiritual roots back to Calvin. A method of church government by the ministers and representative elders from each congregation in a given district.

Presuppositionalism: a conservative Christian method of apologetics that accepts on faith that God exists and that the Bible is true. No attempt is made to prove these beliefs logically or from evidence. Leading proponents of presuppositional apologetics include Greg Bahsen, John Frame, Abraham Kuyper, and Cornelius Van Til. An alternate approach is [evidentialism](#).

Preterism: A Christian belief system in which some or all of the end-time events specified in the Christian Scriptures (New Testament) are believed to have already been fulfilled. They were accomplished in the past, particularly during the Roman-Jewish war of 66 to 73 [CE](#).

Preterist: A Christian who believes in Preterism.

Pre-wrath Rapture (a.k.a. prewrath rapture): The belief among some evangelical Christians that born-again Christians will have to endure much of the tribulation on Earth.

Priest: A religious leader found in ancient Judaism, Christianity, Hinduism, etc.

Priesthood of all believers: The belief that saved individuals can have access to God directly, without the need for a professional priesthood to act as intermediaries.

Pro-aborts: A term used mainly by U.S. religious and social conservatives to refer both to the majority of American adults who favor abortion access (pro-choicers), and to the small number of Americans who actively promote abortion as a solution to unwanted pregnancy.

Pro-choice: A belief that pregnant women should have free, or relatively free, access to abortion. There is a range of beliefs among people who consider themselves pro-choice: some would allow the woman to have an abortion for any reason up to the moment of birth. Others would restrict access to abortion under various conditions. Common reasons held by some pro-choice advocates include a pregnancy in its later stages when the fetus is sentient, abortions for sex selection, and/or cases where the fetus is minimally genetically defective. There is no consensus on the meaning of the term, although many people hold firmly to their own definition as the only correct one.

Pro-life: A belief that pregnant women should have limited or no access to abortion. There is a range of beliefs among people who consider themselves pro-life: some would allow the woman

and the fetus to die rather than terminate the life of the fetus; others would allow abortion for specific reasons but criminalize it under all other situations. Common reasons held by some pro-life advocates to allow abortion are: pregnancies resulting from rape, pregnancies arising from incest, pregnancies in which the fetus is very seriously genetically malformed and would quickly die, and/or pregnancies that would seriously harm the health and perhaps cause permanent disability to the woman if they are not terminated. There is no consensus on the meaning of the term "pro-life", although many people hold firmly to their own definition as the only correct one. In recent years, the meaning of the term has expanded to include matters related to [assisted suicide](#), [in-vitro fertilization](#), [the death penalty](#), [pre-implantation diagnosis](#), etc.

Process Theology: A view of God which is based on the writings of Alfred North Whitehead. The traditional view of a immutable, omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent deity is replaced by a God who is in process. He is constantly changing, learning, and evolving along with humanity. God affects history indirectly through gentle persuasion and not directly by coercion. He does not intrude directly in human activities; he does not violate the laws of nature by creating a miracle. Rather, *"God gently persuades all entities towards this perfection by providing each of them with a glimpse of the divine vision of a better future. And yet all entities retain the freedom to depart from that vision."*

Procreation: Reproduction: conceiving and bearing babies. Among most opposite-sex couples, this is normally done through sexual intercourse. Among same-sex couples and infertile opposite-sex couples, this typically involves in-vitro fertilization or artificial insemination.

Profane: When used to refer to language, "Profane" generally describes cursing, irreverent speech, or action. When used in a religious sense, "profane" means something that is not sacred and not associated with religion.

Progressive Christianity: A loosely organized very liberal wing of Christianity whose believers look upon Christianity as one of many valid spiritual paths and who stress seeking truth, social justice, concern for the environment, and peace. Their groups are open to persons of all genders, races, sexual orientations, classes, abilities and such religious minorities as agnostics and skeptics.

Progressive sanctification: A Christian term which refers to the process by which the Holy Spirit helps a [born-again Christian](#) to grow spiritually, become more Christ-like, and abandon sinful behaviors.

Proof-text: A Bible verse or passage in the Bible, which clearly and directly answers a specific question.

Promise Keepers: A conservative Christian men's movement founded in 1990 by Bill McCartney. It encourages men to accept more responsibilities for their personal behavior and for their family roles. It is strongly opposed to racism. They promote a family structure in which men take a leadership role in families. They oppose equal rights for gays and lesbians.

Prophet: In the times of the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) a person, almost always male, who was a religious reformer. They claimed to speak for God. In more recent times, a person who predicts future events.

Prophecy: The foretelling of the future through a direct revelation from God.

Proselytize: To attempt to convert another person to your beliefs.

Protection of marriage, : The terms "protection of marriage" and "protection of traditional marriage" are used by religious and social conservatives to refer to activity designed to give special privileges to opposite-sex couples and to prevent loving committed same-sex couples from marrying and thereby protecting themselves and their children with approximately 1,500 state and federal government benefits, rights and obligations.

Protestantism: This word has many overlapping definitions. A few are: A grouping of thousands of Christian denominations that trace their history back to the Protestant Reformation, and the split with the Roman Catholic church over the authority of the pope, the grounds for salvation, the status of the Bible, and the priesthood of all believers. A Christian denomination that is not Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, or the Anglican Communion. This is the definition that we generally use on our web site. A Christian denomination that is neither Roman Catholic nor Eastern Orthodox.

Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion: A document forged by the Russian Secret Police in the early 20th century. It was based on an earlier French novel, and was promoted as evidence of an international Jewish conspiracy to rule the world. It is still circulated by some rabidly antisemitic groups, and is referred to by the media in some Muslim countries. It was sold in Wal-Mart online book store until removed shelves on 2004-SEP-21. It is available online at Amazon.com.

Protoevangelium: Greek for "*first message*." This is found in Genesis 3:15. It relates to the relationship between [Eve and the snake in the Garden of Eden](#). Historical Christianity interprets the serpent as Satan, and has taught that this verse predicts how the impact of Adam's and Eve's sin in the Garden of Eden would be undone millennia later by the Messiah, who will bring salvation to all. Thus, the verse anticipates the gospel message.

Pseudobaptist: A term used to refer to Baptist denominations, congregations and ministers who baptize infants.

Pseudepigrapha: The name given to a collection of over 50 anonymous Jewish writings from the 5th century BCE to second century CE that are not part of the Hebrew Scriptures but are often attributed to biblical figures.

Public square: In a religious and moral sense, this is the figurative "place" where opinions are shared in the expectation of influencing government policies. Some faith groups complain that their religious beliefs are not given adequate access to the public square.

Pulpit Theft: A term used to refer to clergy who buy canned sermons from the Internet or elsewhere and pass them on as their own creation. See <http://www.desperatepreachers.com> as one example.

Punya (a.k.a. Puñña): A term in Buddhism, Hinduism, and Jainism that refers to merit that a person accumulates as a result of good deeds, acts or thoughts. This merit carries over into the person's next life.

Pure: *A term used by conservative Christians to refer to the very small percentage of teens or young adults who have not become sexually active before marriage.* Many who are not conservative Christians regard sexual activity within a committed relationship prior to marriage to be a moral decision, which makes neither partner less pure; they consider the term to be offensive.

Pure Land: A Buddhist term for a *Land of Ultimate Bliss* into which a person can be reborn after death and in which they can seek enlightenment without being subject to retrogression (rebirth on earth or in a lower realm).

Purgatory: The Roman Catholic Church teaches that almost everyone who is not sent to hell at death will go to this place and/or state. They will be purified through punishment for an interval of time before going to heaven. Belief in Purgatory was never accepted by the Orthodox Churches; it has been rejected by the Protestant Churches.

Pyramid power: The concept that objects in the shape of the Egyptian pyramids can concentrate power, preserve materials or heal. We have never seen any scientific studies which have supported this belief.

Qabalah, (also spelled Qabala, Qaballa, Qaballah, Qabbala, Qabbalah, Qabballa, Qabballah, and various spellings starting with the letter C and K): A Jewish mystical tradition. See: [Cabbalah](#).

Qadi: A Muslim term for a judge who is competent in Shari'ah law.

Qibla: This is an Islamic term for the direction from the Muslim's current position on earth to the Kabbah in Mecca, Saudi Arabia. This is computed along the shorter of the two great circle routes between the Muslim's current position and the Kabbah. Muslims are expected to pray five times a day with facing Qibla. A Windows program for calculating Qibla ₁ and a mathematical formula ₂ is available.

Quaker: The informal name for the [Society of Friends](#) faith group.

Quartodecimanism: The celebration of Easter on the fourteenth of Nisan according to the Jewish lunar calendar -- regardless of what day of the week on which it occurred. The Council of Nicea in 325 [CE](#) decided to observe the crucifixion on a Friday and the resurrection on the following Sunday.

Queer: Originally a derogatory term, "Queer" is now used by LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered persons) to identify themselves.

Quest for the Historical Jesus: This is a series of attempts over the last few centuries to analyze the books in the Christian Scriptures (New Testament) and other historical writings of the early Christian movement in order to get a greater understanding of the birth, life, personality, religion and teachings of Yeshua of Nazareth. Inherent in this search is a rejection of the beliefs that God [inspired the authors of the Christian Scriptures](#) and that their writings are [inerrant](#). The quest is mainly an activity of religious liberals and non-theists.

Qur'an: The name of the holy book, inspired by God, that Muslims, (followers of Islam) believe to be [inerrant](#). An alternative, but less desirable spelling is "Koran."

Rabbi: From Hebrew phrase meaning "my master." A leader of a Jewish synagogue.

Racism: Any attitude, action or institutional structure which systematically treats an individual or group of individuals differently because of their race. The most common form of racism in North America is in the form discrimination against African-Americans. However, it occasionally is manifested as preferential treatment for blacks. A secondary meaning is the belief that one race -- normally caucasian -- is inherently superior to other races. See also [sexism](#), [religism](#), and [homophobia](#).

Radical theologies: Nonsupernaturalist concepts of deity that reject belief in a personal God -- one who has a personal consciousness, created the world, and interacts with humans.

Ramadan: A Muslim period of daytime fasting and contemplation which lasts for a lunar month of about 28 days. It commemorates the transmission of the Qur'an by the archangel Gabriel to Muhammad.

Rapture: From the Latin "*rapio*" which means to snatch. The belief held by many conservative Protestants that Christ will soon appear in the sky and that all of saved individuals, both living and dead, will rise to meet him. Although this belief is supported by some passages from the Christian scriptures (New Testament), it is not shared by many mainline and liberal Christians. (See also the [secret rapture](#))

Rastafarianism: A new religious movement centered among persons of African origin in Jamaica and the U.S. They revere the late Emperor Selassie of Ethiopia (1892-1975), as the Elect of God and savior of the black race. They regard black people to be the reincarnation of Israel in the Bible.

Rationalism: A movement in the 18th century Protestantism which abandoned the idea of Biblical inerrancy and adopted the belief that the Bible can be analyzed as a historical document. Some Rationalists assert that the existence of some form of deity can be proven by reason. Others see Rationalism and [Atheism](#) as synonyms.

Real Presence: Among Roman Catholics: The belief that the bread and wine at the Eucharist are transubstantiated (transformed) by the Holy Spirit into Jesus' actual body and blood through its belief in [transubstantiation](#); the priest performs a miracle by recreating Jesus' flesh and blood. **Among Lutherans:** They also use the term "*Real Presence*" which they also call "*Sacramental Union*." They believe that the body and blood of Christ are "*truly and substantially present in, with and under*" the bread and wine. This is based on Martin Luther's belief in [consubstantiation](#) -- that Jesus body and blood coexist with bread and wine.

Rebirthing: A form of therapy in which the patient engages in continuous deep breathing. It is supposed to cure emotional problems in adulthood.

Redactor: A document editor. The term is often used to refer to individuals who revised books in the Hebrew Scriptures.

Redaction criticism: A method of analyzing those portions of the Bible which appear to have been created by an editing process in which redactors (editors, compilers) have combined

various source document into the form that we see in the Bible. The Gospel of Luke, for example, is regarded by most liberal theologians as being compiled from the Gospel of Q, the Gospel of Mark, and some independent oral or written material. Through redaction criticism, the theological goals and purposes of the redactors can be inferred. Conservative Christians generally have a dim view of this technique because it impacts on their belief of the [inerrancy](#) of the Bible.

Rede: Old English word for a law or rule. The *Wiccan Rede* is the main behavioral rule for [Wiccans](#). In modern English it can be translated as "*As long as it harm non, do what you wish.*"

Redemption: A general term meaning to set loose or release a person from bondage. In Christianity, it generally refers to the deliverance of believers from a state of sin which is possible because of the death of Jesus on the cross.

Red letter Christian: A Christian who follows a conservative typically Evangelical theology, but who rejects most of the concerns of the religious right. They stresses issues related to human suffering, justice, poverty, and human rights, including the environment, global warming, the AIDS crisis, war, violence, education, gun control, etc.

Reflexology: A holistic, alternative, health treatment which associates each organ in the body with a spot on the individual's foot or hand. Massage of the foot or hand is then believed to unblock the body's energy and heal the organ. Medical researchers generally discount any mechanism linking points on the feet and hand to internal organs.

Reformation: A Christian movement which was started by Martin Luther in the early 16th century as an attempt to reform Roman Catholicism. It was joined by Zwingli, Bucer, Calvin and others, and resulted in a complete break with Catholicism. Millions of people died during the resulting religious wars. The reformation led to the fracturing of Christianity into approximately 35,000 faith groups.

Reformed theology: A system of religious belief based on the writings and beliefs of Calvin.

Regeneration: The process by which God is believed to work on a born-again person, whereby her/his soul is renewed and becomes a new creation.

Reincarnation: the belief that when a person dies, their soul is reborn into another living human. In North America, belief in reincarnation is found among Buddhists, Hindus, followers of the New Age, and most Neopagans. It was a common belief in early Christianity. Often confused with the Hindu concept of the [Transmigration of the Soul](#).

Relativism: A philosophical belief that many forms of "truth" -- particularly in the area of morals and ethics are relative and not absolute. That is, it varies from time to time and culture to culture. Antonym: [absolutism](#).

Relativist: one who is convinced that religious disagreements are neither productive nor important. Relativists tend to emphasize areas of harmony among religions, minimizing or ignoring their differences.

Religion: We define the term very inclusively to include "*Any specific system of belief about deity, often involving rituals, a code of ethics, and a philosophy of life.*" Thus we would include

Agnosticism, Atheism, conservative Christianity, Humanism, Islam, Judaism, liberal Christianity, Native American Spirituality, Wicca and other Neopagan traditions as religions. We deviate from the normal rules of writing by capitalizing all of these religion in our essays. Other sources restrict the definition to include only those systems of belief involving a supreme being.

Religious: Within Roman Catholicism, the Anglican Communion, the Orthodox churches, this term is often used as a noun to refer to an order of nuns. It is also used to refer to individuals such as monks, friars, and other s who have taken vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. Within the field of religion, the term is used as a noun to refer to texts, beliefs, practices, education, etc. A person is often described as religions if they are pious, prayerful, and/or are very committed to a faith group. In a secular sense, it is used to refer to a person who is very scrupulous and conscientious in behaving according to rules.

Religious liberty: Within a religion, this is a measure by which individuals can hold beliefs that deviate from those taught by their faith group, without incurring oppression, expulsion, or trial for heresy. Within a nation, this is a measure of an individual's right to hold beliefs that differ from the dominant religion; to worship freely according to these beliefs; to attempt to peacefully convince others to convert to their faith; and the right to change their religion or set of beliefs. Historically, countries with a strict separation between governments and religion have tended to exhibit the greatest religious liberty for its citizens.

Religious market, Religious marketplace: We have seen the following two uses of these terms: The social arena in which congregations, denominations, and para-church organizations compete for members and resources. The economic expenditure by religious individuals on religious retreats, meetings, conventions, missions, etc.

Religious Right: A group of very conservative, politically active organizations within Fundamentalist Christianity which is attempting to implement conservative changes to society and its laws. The *American Family Association*, *Christian Coalition*, *Concerned Women for America*, *Family Research Council*, *Focus on the Family* form part of the religious right. Their main areas of activity are in reducing choice in [abortion access](#), [homosexual rights](#), [same-sex marriage](#), [physician assisted suicide](#), and [prayer in the public school](#).

Religious tolerance: Among religious conservative, this means that one must accept all religious faiths as equally true. Among others, it means to grant full religious freedom to persons of all religions, including those different from your own faith. The second definition is used in this web site.

Religism: Any attitude, action or institutional structure that systematically treats an individual or group of individuals differently because of their religion. A secondary meaning is the belief that persons who follow one religion are inherently superior to those of other religions. This is a word that is not found in dictionaries, but is badly needed. There are words in the English language that refer to bigotry, hatred and/or a desire to limit the civil rights of people on the basis of race ([racism](#)), sex ([sexism](#)), sexual orientation ([homophobia](#)), nationality ([xenophobia](#)), etc. But we have no word that refers to bigotry based of religion. Yet religious bigotry and hatred may be the most serious threat to the continuation of humanity in the 21st century. Religism seems to be catching on: On 2006-MAY-07, Google found 54 hits for the word. By 2008-JAN-01, there were 345. The most common form of religism in North America is in the form of discrimination against non-Christians, up to and including the promotion of genocide against them. However, it also often surfaces as discrimination against conservative Christians. Unfortunately other people

have latched onto the word and given it different meanings. For example, Globe-Guardian.com defines it as: any religion that is without merit; i.e. phony religion.

Repentance: Being sorry for past sins against God or transgressions against other humans. It implies a sincere desire to change one's behavior in the future. Conservative Protestants generally consider it the first step towards salvation. The second step is to trust Jesus as Lord and Savior. However, some religious conservatives reject repentance as needed for salvation, because it is a form of good works.

Replacement Theology: (a.k.a. Supersessionism). This is the theological concept that, because the vast majority of Jews in the first century [CE](#) did not accept Jesus as their Messiah, God unilaterally terminated his covenants with the Jewish people and transferred them to the followers of Christianity. It relegates Judaism to an inferior position and recognizes Christianity as the 'true' or 'spiritual' Israel. This concept was first developed by Justin Martyr (circa 100 to 165 CE) and Irenaeus of Lyon (circa 130 to 200 CE). It was largely accepted within the church by the 4th century. It has led to a great deal of [persecution of Jews](#) by Christians. Although the Catholic Church reversed its stance on replacement theology in the 20th century, many conservative Protestant groups still believe in this principle. In opposition to replacement theology is the [dual covenant theory](#) that God's covenants in the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) are still in place.

Restorationism: The belief that the true Christian church died out in the early 2nd Century CE, and was restored by Joseph Smith when he established the [Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints](#) (LDS, Mormon). This movement currently consists of almost 100 denominations, many centered in Utah and Missouri.

Resurrection: An even in which a dead person returns to life. It is often used to refer to the belief that Jesus died, and later returned to life after about a day and a half in the grave. This is not to be confused with the resuscitation of Jesus, as taught in Islam. Some Muslims believe that Jesus did not actually die, but perhaps entered into a coma and later returned to consciousness. Others believe that Jesus was not crucified; another person may have been substituted in his place.

Retrogression: A Buddhist term that refers to one's rebirth after death on earth or one of the lower realms.

Revelation: The [last book in the Bible](#), which has been interpreted in many different ways. The gift of knowledge that God gives to humanity through the Bible or other holy text, and by other means.

Rhema: A Greek word that means any spoken word having a definite meaning. Romans 10:8 uses "*rhema*" in place of the more common word "*logos*."

Righteous: This very important term is often mentioned in the Bible. In *2 Corinthians 6:14*, for example, Paul states that all non-Christians are "*unrighteousness*." Unfortunately, the word has three somewhat different meanings. A person: Acting according to divine law, or Who is free from sin, or Consistently exhibits moral behavior. Of course, an individual may be acting according to divine law, be free from sin, and be moral, within the standards of one religion, but not by another.

Righteous among nations: A term used to refer to non-Jews who helped save Jews from the Nazi Holocaust.

Rite, Ritual: Speech, action, singing, and other activities which often contain a symbolic meaning, performed in a specific order - typically during a religious service.

Ritual Abuse: Involuntary psychological, physical, sexual or spiritual maltreatment, associated with a (normally religious) ritual. There is typically one accidental death per year in North America as a result of ritual abuse in the form of a conservative Christian exorcisms. Satanists were widely perceived during the 1980's and early 1990's as perpetrating widespread [Satanic Ritual Abuse \(SRA\)](#) involving the torture, murder and even eating of human sacrifices. After two decades without any evidence of its existence, most investigators regard SRA as non-existent.

Role Playing Games: See [Fantasy Role Playing Games](#)

Roman Catholicism: This is the largest of the four branches of Christianity; the others being the Anglican Communion, Protestant denominations and Eastern Orthodox churches. During the fourth century CE, the branch of the early Christianity which was founded by Paul became the official religion of the Roman Empire. The authority of the Bishop of Rome, the Pope, gradually increased, as Christian missionaries spread out through western and northern Europe. Starting in the 15th century, Roman Catholicism spread to the Americas. The church lost its religious monopoly in Western Europe at the time of the Protestant Reformation in the 16th century, but remains today the largest single Christian faith group, by far, with about a billion members.

Rosary: Prayer beads strung on a thread, used primarily by Roman Catholics.

Rosetta stone: A black basalt stone monument found in Egypt in 1799, which contained the same messages in three different languages: one was ancient Greek, which was known by linguists. The other two were Demotic script and Egyptian hieroglyphics. Over time, the stone enabled linguists to understand both of the latter languages. 1

Rosh Hashanah: The New Year celebration in the fall, according to the Jewish calendar.

Routinization of character: To change your character to have distinct traits that conform to your religious beliefs.

RPG: See [Fantasy Role Playing Games](#)

Ruach: Hebrew word for spirit or wind.

Rupa: A Hindu and Buddhist term which generally refers to religious statues.

Rune: (Derived from an early Anglo-Saxon word "*runa*" meaning "*secret*" or "*mystery*.") It was originally a pictorial alphabet used Northern Italy, circa 500 BCE. Its use later spread across Europe. There are a number of different sets of runes, each derived from a specific alphabet, such as the Elder Futhrk, Saxon Futhork and Norse Younger Futhark. The word "*rune*" also refers to a small piece of material marked with a rune symbol. The latter are used in divination by many Wiccans, other Neopagans and New Agers. Their use is generally condemned by conservative Christians as a practice forbidden by the Bible.

Russelites: An early name for the bible students who later became the [Jehovah's Witnesses](#) in 1931. The name is derived from their founder, Charles Taze Russell..

Sabbat: A seasonal day of celebration observed by Wiccans and other Neopagans. There are eight each year. The two solstices and two equinoxes are minor Sabbats. Between each solstice and equinox is a major Sabbat. Samhain (Oct. 31), Imbolc (Feb. 2), Beltane (May 1), and Lammas (Aug. 1) are among the most common names used. 1

Sabbatarianism: The belief that the weekly Sabbath must be observed from sundown on Friday to sundown on Saturday. Often, Jewish dietary laws and seasonal days of service are also observed by Sabbatarians.

Sabbath, weekly: Originally Saturday: a day of rest and holiness; observed by Jews and a minority of Christian denominations. Most Christian groups observe Sunday as the Sabbath.

Sabellianism: Synonym for [Modalism](#)

Sacramental Union: A Lutheran term meaning "[real presence](#)."

Sacraments: A formal church ritual frequently described as an outward and visible sign of an internal and spiritual grace. The [Roman Catholic](#) and [Orthodox](#) churches recognize seven sacraments, popularly known as: Baptism, Confirmation, Mass, Penance, Anointing the dying, Ordination and Marriage. Most Protestant denominations only recognize two: Baptism and Communion. A few denominations, such as the [Amish](#), add foot washing. Sacraments are believed by most Christian denominations to have been instituted by Jesus. The [Society of Friends](#) (Quakers) and the Salvation Army do not recognize or use any sacraments.

Sacrilege: The violation or misuse of a sacred object. Sometimes used to describe any irreverence to sacred persons, places and things. (From Wikipedia)

Sadaqa: Islamic term for the giving of a charitable donation. This is an obligation for Muslims.

Sadducees: A small group of priests who controlled the temple at Jerusalem. One of about two dozen Jewish religious groups active during the 1st century CE. They rejected belief in immortality. They were religious conservatives who felt threatened by Pagan influences due to Roman and Greek occupation of Israel.

Sahaba: This is the Arabic word for "*companions*." In Islam, it generally refers to the people who lived and witnessed with the Prophet Muhammad.

Saint: In Roman Catholicism, a person of great spirituality who has died, is responsible for at least three miracles, and who has been elevated to the sainthood by the church. In Protestantism, a saint is one of the ancient leaders of the church, like St. Peter and St. Paul. *In Evangelical Christianity, all saved Christians are saints.*

Sajdah: (*Full name: As-sajdah*) This is the the act of prostration by a Muslim during which seven parts of the body are to touch the ground: the forehead, palms, knees and big toes.

Salat: A Muslim prayer. Islam expects each Muslim, where possible, to perform the *salat* prayer five times a day. It is the second of the *Five Pillars of Islam*. This is recited while orienting one's body towards Mecca. ² It is done at specified times in the morning, at noon, mid-afternoon, after sunset and just before sleeping.

Salvation: The remission of sins and healing of the gulf between an individual and God. Various passages in the Christian Scriptures imply that salvation is achieved either by good deeds; or by belief in Jesus' resurrection; or belief that Jesus is the Son of God; or by church rituals such as baptism or penance; or by avoiding certain behaviors; or some combination of the preceding. Various traditions within Christianity have resolved the Bible's ambiguity by stressing some passages and largely ignoring others.

Salvific pluralism: The belief that individuals can achieve salvation by following any one of many different world religions. ⁵ If salvific pluralism is true, then the belief that all those who have *not* repented of their sins and trusted Jesus as Lord and Savior will go to Hell at death is false. [More details](#).

Samahdi: In Buddhism, a type of insight achieved through meditation or wisdom.

Samhain: A major sabbat -- a seasonal day of celebration -- observed by Wiccans and other Neopagans on OCT-31. Samhain is often incorrectly defined as a Wiccan God of the dead within many conservative Christian and secular sources.

Samsara: A Buddhist term referring to the endless cycle of birth, life, death, and rebirth. The goal of a Buddhist is to achieve enlightenment and to escape from samsara.

Sanctification: A Christian term which refers to the process by which the Holy Spirit helps a born-again Christian to grow spiritually, become more Christ-like, and abandon sinful behaviors.

Sangha: A Buddhist term for a community of believers.

Sanhedrin: A council of Jewish leaders in Jerusalem. They formed a court which was the highest religious body in Palestine. They acted as an advisory board to the Roman governor.

Santeria: A syncretistic religion which combined Roman Catholicism with Pagan religions from Western Africa. It is found throughout the Caribbean and in North America.

Satan: (a.k.a. the Devil, Lucifer): In the older parts of the Hebrew Scriptures, he is described as a type of District Attorney in God's court. In the New Testament, he is described as a supernatural being who is profoundly evil and who seeks to destroy people's lives. The religion of Islam also recognizes the existence of Satan. Many

conservative Christians believe that followers of [Wicca](#) and other [Neopagan religions](#) worship Satan. However, the latter do not recognize any all-evil deity called by the name of Satan or by any other name.

Satanism: A religion based upon Satan, either as a form of deity or as a principle. Adherents follow simple rules of behavior: give kindness to those who deserve it; indulge in their lusts and wants; return vengeance rather than turning the other cheek. With some justification, Satanism has been called the religion of the U.S. corporate boardroom. Although their beliefs are different from [Christianity](#), Satanists are not particularly anti-Christian any more than they are anti-[Hindu](#) or anti-[Buddhist](#). However, some have included references opposing [Wicca](#) in their rituals. Most Satanists are either teenage dabblers, or members of the *Church of Satan*, *Temple of Set* or *Church of Satanic Liberation*. Their total membership in North America is unknown, but probably numbers about 10,000. Total membership is believed to be decreasing. *Common Evangelical usage: a violently anti-Christian religion worshipping Satan. Some are teenage dabblers; others are religious Satanists belonging to an established church or temple; others are mass murderers; still others form a secret, underground international, multi-generational conspiracy which engages in [Satanic Ritual Abuse](#) and human sacrifices - usually of infants or children. Membership rapidly rising. Common Fundamentalist usage: Any non-Christian faith group, such as Buddhism, Hinduism, Taoism is Satanic. By this definition, two out of three people in the world are Satanists..*

Satanic Ritual Abuse (SRA): psychological, sexual, and/or physical assault committed by two or more people whose primary motive is to fulfill a prescribed religious ritual involving the worship of the Christian devil, Satan. A large percentage of the population (90% in Utah) believe that SRA is widespread. [Numerous government studies](#) into SRA have revealed it to be non-existent, or essentially so.

Satyagraha: A Sanskrit term that describes a type of nonviolent resistance developed by Mohandas Gandhi to win Indian independence. Later it was used by Martin Luther King, Jr. in the fight against racial discrimination. It is now being used by Soulforce to promote "...*freedom for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people from religious and political oppression through the practice of relentless nonviolent resistance.*"

Scapegoat: Originally a religious term. Ancient Israelite priests would transfer the sins of the community to a goat who would then be driven into the desert to die. The term is currently used to refer to a person or group who is unjustly accused of a crime or improper behavior.

Schism: From the Greek word "*schisma*" - a rent or tear. A division of a faith group into two or more smaller groups. One result of the Protestant Reformation was a series of schisms leading to the approximately 35,000 present-day Protestant faith groups.

Schism, great: The formal split between the Eastern Orthodox and the Roman Catholic churches in 1054 CE. Also used to refer to the interval from 1378 to 1417 [CE](#) when as many as three individuals simultaneously claimed to be pope.

Scripture: In Christianity, this is the Bible. It is composed of the 39 books of the Hebrew Scriptures (a.k.a. Old Testament) and the 27 books of the Christian Scriptures (a.k.a. New Testament). Roman Catholicism, Eastern Orthodox churches and some Protestant denominations add the 14 books of the [Apocrypha](#).

Seance: A gathering of individuals who attempt to communicate with the spirits of the dead, generally with the help of a medium.

Second coming: The return of Jesus Christ to earth.

Second probation: The belief that after death, non-believers will be given a second chance to be saved by accepting Jesus as Lord and Savior.

Second Temple Period: The interval from 520 [BCE](#) to 70 [CE](#), between the reconstruction of Solomon's temple and the destruction of the temple by the Roman Army.

Secret rapture: [The rapture](#) is a belief that Jesus will soon return towards Earth, and that all saved individuals will rise through the air and meet him. The secret rapture is a variation on this belief, that has those left behind confused about the nature and reason for the rapture.

Sect: A small religious group that has recently split away from an established religion. The early Jewish Christian group under James, the Brother of Jesus, in Jerusalem circa 30 [CE](#) would have been considered a sect of Judaism at the time.

Sectarian: Acceptance and adherence to a particular faith group. Often implies rejection of religious beliefs by those outside of the group. Most world conflict today involves violence inspired by sectarian beliefs.

Secular: something that is free of religion.

Secularization: A process in which religious consciousness, activities, and institutions lose social significance

Security, eternal: The concept that once a person is saved, that they cannot lose their salvation. Christian faith groups have different beliefs on this topic.

Seder: A Jewish ceremonial meal held on the first day (and sometimes also on the second day) of Passover. It recalls the alleged Exodus of the Hebrews from slavery in Egypt, variously dated as 1440 to 1290 [BCE](#). The meal and associated rituals are typically held in the home.

Selah: A biblical term used 71 times by itself in the Psalms. It invites the reader to pause and to meditate or reflect on the message. One example is Psalms 3:2: "*Many there be which say of my soul, There is no help for him in God. Selah.*"

Separationist: A person or movement advocating the dividing of a country into two or more parts. *Evangelical Christian use:* A person or group advocating the [separation of](#)

[*church and state*](#) in accordance with the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

Sephardi: Jews who are descended from persons who lived in Spain and Portugal. See also [Ashkenazi](#).

Septuagint: A Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures, made in Egypt, perhaps in the third century [BCE](#). This was the version known to, and used, by the early Christians. Many theologians believe that a mistranslation in Isaiah contributed to the Christian belief in the [virgin conception of Jesus](#).

Serpent Seed doctrine: The belief that Eve's sin in the *Garden of Eden* was to engage in sexual intercourse with the serpent. Together, they produced Cain. Various faith groups identify the descendents of Cain in various ways: They are: "*Jews according to the Christian Identity Movement, Communists/Atheists according to the Unification Church, Whites according to the Nation of Yahweh, and the lost according to William Branham.*" ⁴

Service: In a religious sense, a formal worship meeting of a group of believers.

Sexism: Any attitude, action or institutional structure which systematically treats an individual or group of individuals differently because of their gender. The most common form of sexism is discrimination against females. However, it occasionally is manifested as preferential treatment for women. A secondary meaning is the belief that one gender -- normally female -- is inherently inferior to other genders (male and intersexual). See also [racism](#), [religism](#), and [homophobia](#).

Sexual Orientation: There are at least three quite different meanings to this term. This makes it imperative in reports, essays, legislation etc. to define what the author(s) define the term to mean: Gays, lesbians, sociologists, psychologists, researchers into human sexuality, members of liberal and some mainline faith groups normally define this as a measure of a person's *feelings of sexual attraction* to males and females. In congressional testimony in support of the ENDA bill, the *American Psychological Association* (APA) stated: "Sexual orientation is a component of sexuality that is characterized by enduring emotional, romantic, sexual and/or affectional attractions to individuals of a particular gender. Thus, sexual orientation refers to more than just certain behaviors. Persons may or may not express their sexual orientation in their behaviors. Some people may engage in sexual behaviors with persons of the same gender but not identify themselves as gay. On the other hand, homosexual intimate relationships, like their heterosexual counterparts, do not always include sexually overt behavior. Three sexual orientations are commonly recognized: homosexual, attraction to individuals of one's own gender; heterosexual, attraction to individuals of the opposite gender; and bisexual, attractions to individuals of both genders." Evangelical Christians and some mainline faith groups sometimes define the term more broadly as a measure of a person's sexual *behavior* with men and women, animals, and children. They define sexual orientations as including heterosexuality, homosexuality, bestiality, pedophilia. They consider only the first to be normal and natural. Many conservative Christians do not acknowledge the existence of bisexuals, believing people to be either heterosexual or homosexual, based on their behavior. They often use the term 'sexual preference' in place of

'sexual orientation,' thus implying that orientation is a choice. The *Traditional Values Coalition* (TVC) has created a unique definition of the term "sexual orientation" that differs greatly from the meaning used by others. They took a list of 30 sexual paraphilias -- defined as sexual arousal in response to sexual objects or situations, and including incest, necrophilia, pedophilia, masochism, sadism, voyeurism -- and redefined them as sexual orientations. They state: "A person's sexual orientation can include sexual attraction to children, animals, feet, and a whole range of bizarre behaviors that are listed in the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM). In fact, there are 30 sexual orientations listed in the DSM."

Shalom: A Hebrew word for peace; often used as a greeting and farewell.

Shamanism: This is a "*system of religious and medical beliefs and practices that centers on the shaman, a specific type of magico-religious practitioner...who specializes in contacting and controlling the supernatural.*" ¹ Usually male, his main task is healing. Shamanism was originally centered in central Asia and Siberia.

Shari'ah: Four codes of Islamic law. In some cases, Shari'ah provides for very severe punishment -- even amputation or execution. Some transgressions are viewed as serious crimes, although they are seen as minor and/or victimless crimes in the West.

Shakti: (a. k.a. Chiti, Chit Shakti, Kundalini) The Creative Principle in Hinduism. She is viewed as a female Goddess because she gives birth to all things. Sometimes viewed as Devi in her benevolent aspect.

Shaytan: The Muslim name of the evil entity called Satan -- the Devil -- in Christianity.

Shechitah: A Hebrew term for the ritual sacrifice of animals.

Sheep stealing: The practice of some Christian faith groups who attempt to convert other Christians to membership in their denomination.

Shema: A Jewish prayer, customarily repeated morning, evening and just before going to sleep. It begins: "*Hear, Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One.*" See Deuteronomy 6:4-9

Shepherding: An relationship in which an experienced Christian, a shepherd, is selected to supervise a new convert. In some denominations, the senior person closely controls almost every aspect of the convert's life. This has major potential to generate spiritual abuse.

Shi'a (a.k.a. Shi'ite): The second largest tradition within Islam.

Shinto: This is the indigenous religion of Japan. Starting about 500 [BCE](#) (or earlier) it was originally "*an amorphous mix of nature worship, fertility cults, divination techniques, hero worship, and shamanism.*" ² It later became the state religion of the country. Church and state were separated just after World War II.

Sheol: A Jewish underworld. A place of the dead in which good and the evil persons alike share an energyless existence separated from God. Mistranslated as "Hell" in the King James Version of the Bible.

Shiva: An mourning interval of seven days following the burial of a family member.

Shoa: (a.k.a. Shoa and Sho'ah) the killing of five to seven million of European Jews by the Nazi government during World War II. Sometimes referred to as the Holocaust, although the latter term is sometimes used to refer to all of the ten to fourteen groups of victims, which included Jews, Roma (a.k.a. Gypsies), Russians, Poles, other Slavs, [homosexuals](#), [Jehovah's Witnesses](#), political prisoners, etc.

Shofar: A ram's horn used in some Jewish services.

Shul: A Yiddish word meaning synagogue.

Shunning: (a.k.a. Disfellowshipping): This is a method of disciplining or punishing a member who strays from the group's expected behavior or belief. Other members --often including friends and family -- are expected to have no contact with the shunned individual. In a high intensity faith group where a believer's entire support network is composed of fellow members, this can have disastrous consequences; some have been moved to commit suicide. Various forms of shunning are practiced by [Amish](#) and [Jehovah's Witnesses](#)

Sikhism: Although religious scholars generally view Sikhism as a blend of Hinduism and Islam, most Sikhs believe that their religion is unique without precursors, originating from a series of ten gurus, starting with Guru Nanak. Sikhs believe in a single deity, and reject class differences. There are about 18 million Sikhs in the world; most are concentrated in the Punjab region in northwest India.

Sin: In the Bible, the Hebrew and Greek words which are translated as sin mean failing to hit the target or missing the mark. Most conservative Christians believe that, since God is pure and just, that a person who sins just once cannot come into God's presence unless they first attain [salvation](#).

Sins, The Seven Deadly: The seven deadly sins are: sloth, covetousness, anger, lust, gluttony, envy, and pride.

Six directions: A Buddhist collection of paths: north, south, east, west, up and down. Wiccan, other Neopagan traditions, Native American spirituality and other Aboriginal religions recognize variations of this -- sometimes including center, and the four points on the compass that lie between the cardinal directions.

Skandas: In Buddhism, the five principal components of the personality: form, sensation, perception, impulse, and consciousness.

Slain in the spirit: (a.k.a. "falling under the Spirit's power," "falling before the Lord," resting in the spirit." A religious phenomenon, generally in [Pentecostal](#) or Charismatic meetings in which a person loses motor control over their body, and falls to the floor. It has variously been attributed to religious hysteria by mental health professionals and to a personal encounter with God by fellow believers. Its origins can be traced back to Methodist churches in the late 18th century.

Social Darwinism: An attempt to adapt Charles Darwin natural selection principles to human society, thus producing a culture that embraces the "*survival of the fittest*." This is based on a misunderstanding of Darwin's theories. Natural selection, when applied to a society, also

includes such factors as organizational ability, talent to inspire others, creativity, perseverance, mental flexibility, etc., in addition to physical fitness.

Sodomite: In the Bible, the word refers to an inhabitant of Sodom. In modern usage by religious conservatives: [a homosexual](#). It is regarded as a derogatory term by most homosexuals, religious liberals, and some others. A new meaning is gradually emerging: a person who is insensitive to the needs of the poor, sick, stranger, imprisoned, widowed, etc. This is derived from the growing belief that the [sin described in Genesis 19](#) in the Bible refers to this lack of concern, and not to homosexual behavior or same-sex rape.

Sola Scriptura: (Latin for "by scripture alone"). This was a slogan of the Protestant Reformation that is still active among Protestant faith groups. It is the belief that the Holy Bible is: "... God's written word [and] is self-authenticating, clear (perspicuous) to the rational reader, its own interpreter ("Scripture interprets Scripture"), and sufficient of itself to be the final authority of Christian doctrine.

Solstice: The date and time when the sun reaches its northernmost or southernmost extreme. On the summer solstice, the interval of daylight is at its maximum and the nighttime interval is at its minimum for the year. The reverse occurs at the winter solstice. The solstices happen about June 21 and December 21. Many religious holy days are synchronized to the equinoxes. Wiccans, other Neopagans, Native Americans and followers of many aboriginal religions worldwide celebrate the solstices.

Sorcery: There are two quite different meanings to this term: the use of black magic to kill, injure, harm, dominate, manipulate or control other people. This is the primary meaning. The (usually) benign use of magical powers to influence events or people.

Soteriology: From the Greek words "soteria" -- salvation, and "logos" -- word or reason . The theological study of [salvation](#).

Soul: Equivalent to the Greek word "psyche" -- breath and the Hebrew word "nephesh" . This word has a variety of meanings, including: the seat of personality, the individual or person themselves, the immaterial component of a human, etc. Among Christians, dichotomists believe that a person is composed of a body and soul; trichotomists believe that a person consists of a body, soul, and spirit. Both argue their cases from biblical passages.

Soul Freedom: Freedom of conscience (a.k.a. freedom of thought) as applied to Bible interpretation. This is the concept that an individual has the right and privilege to interpret Scripture for themselves in the context of their religious community, using the best available scholarship. Robert Bellah wrote, in 1997: "*What was so important about the Baptists, and other sectarians such as the Quakers, was the absolute centrality of religious freedom, of the sacredness of individual conscience in matters of religious belief.*" ⁸


Soul sleep: The belief that, after death, one's soul sleeps until the day of resurrection.

Spell: a prayer, or verbal direction of magickal energies toward the accomplishment of some goal. ⁷ Wiccans and other Pagans often use spells, but are not permitted to use them to dominate, manipulate, control or harm another person. For example, a Wiccan is not permitted to cast a love spell to motivate another person to feel attraction towards them.

Spiritism: See [necromancy](#).

Spiritualism: See [necromancy](#).

Spirituality: This term is defined quite differently by monotheists, polytheists, humanists, followers of new age, Native Americans, etc. A common meaning is "*devotion to metaphysical matters, as opposed to worldly things.*" Another is "*Activities which renew, lift up, comfort, heal and inspire both ourselves and those with whom we interact.*"

Srivatsa (a.k.a. Swastika in German and English): A cross symbol with equal arms bent at a right angle:  This is an ancient positive symbol used by many religions around the world -- e.g. [Hinduism](#), [Buddhism](#), [Jainism](#), [Christianity](#), [Judaism](#), and by the ancient Greeks, Germanic tribes, and [Native Americans](#).⁴ It was distorted and adopted by the Nazi regime in Germany; since the 1930s it has been considered a profoundly evil symbol throughout the west.

Star of David: A Jewish symbol consisting of a six-pointed star.

Stewardship: In general usage, stewardship is the wise management and use of resources, whether by an individual, corporation, government, etc. Among many religious conservatives it is the concept that God owns everything and has entrusted certain resources to individual believers who will eventually be held accountable for what they accomplished with those resources.

Stereotype: A process of generalization by which an entire group is found to be at fault because of the actions of a few of their members. One example is to blame all homosexuals for child molestation because of the actions of NAMBLA, a homosexual pedophile group which is composed of a handful of members. The term is sometimes used to refer to the condemnation of an entire group because of events that never happened. One example was the German Nazi government who blamed the loss of World War I on the German Jews -- a very small minority at the time, numbering less than 1% of its citizens.

Stigmata: the presence of wounds on a person's body (usually a woman) in the places where Jesus is believed to have been injured at his crucifixion. Wound's usually appear on the palms of the person even though during his crucifixion, Jesus was either pierced through his wrists or his arms were tied to the crossbar.

Stupa: A Buddhist term that refers to a burial monument that stands for the Buddha and his attainment of enlightenment.

Subliminal Messages: Visual or audible messages shown in a way that prevents the conscious mind from recognizing them. Visual messages may be flashed on a screen too fast for the person to sense; audible messages may be played at too low a volume to be detected. Controlled tests have shown that they are completely ineffective. Some people still believe that such messages can enter the individual's subconscious mind and motivate them to take certain actions. See also [backmasking](#).

Subordinationism: An early Christian heresy that Jesus is eternally subordinated to God the Father. This contrasts with the traditional Christian view that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are co-eternal, interdependent and one in substance -- without any form of heirarchy, order or ranking. The heresy has been adopted by many Evangelical Christians in recent decades.

Subordination of the Son, Eternal: See [Eternal Subordination of the Son](#)

Substance dualism: The concept that the brain and mind are separate entities: the brain is a physical entity controlled by chemical and electrical processes; the mind is not physical.

Succubus: A female demon who would visit men at night and engage in sexual activity. This belief was commonly held during the late Middle Ages and Renaissance. There were also male demons, called incubi who were believed to visit women.

Suffragan bishop: an assistant bishop in a diocese.

Sufism: "*Sufism or tasawwuf, as it is called in Arabic, is generally understood by scholars and Sufis to be the inner, mystical, or psycho-spiritual dimension of Islam.*" Some Muslims reject the concept that Sufism is part of Islam. ³

Sunni: the largest tradition within Islam.

Sunyata: A Sanskrit term for "emptiness." It is a Buddhist term that asserts that "... everything one encounters in life is empty of absolute identity, permanence, or 'self'. This is because everything is inter-related and mutually dependent - never wholly self-sufficient or independent.

Supersessionism: (a.k.a. Replacement Theology). This is the theological concept that, because the vast majority of Jews in the first century [CE](#) did not accept Jesus as their Messiah, God unilaterally terminated his covenants with the Jewish people and transferred them to the followers of Christianity. It relegates Judaism to an inferior position and recognizes Christianity as the 'true' or 'spiritual' Israel. This concept was first developed by Justin Martyr (circa 100 to 165 CE) and Irenaeus of Lyon (circa 130 to 200 CE). It was largely accepted within the church by the 4th century. It has led to a great deal of [persecution of Jews](#) by Christians. *Many conservative Protestants still believe in this principle.* In opposition to supersessionism is the [dual covenant theory](#).

Surah: Any passage from the Qur'an, the Islamic holy book.

Sutra: A Buddhist scripture that includes a teaching by Buddha.

Swastika: See [svastika](#).

Sweat lodge: A Native American ritual for purification involving moist hot air in an enclosed space.

Synagogue: From the Greek word for "gathering." A Jewish house of worship.

Syncretistic Religion: A faith that is created from the merger of concepts from two or more religions. [Santería](#) and [Vodun](#) are two examples.

Synergism: Two or more items interacting in such a way that the end result is greater than each item could have achieved separately. For example, a client who believes in [Satan](#) as an evil, quasi-deity who undergoes [recovered memory therapy](#) (RMT) is very likely to recover false memory of [Satanic ritual abuse](#) (SRA). Just believing in Satan or just undergoing RMT is much less likely to generate false memories of SRA.

Synoptic: From the Greek *syn* (together) and *opsis* (appearance). A term used to refer to the gospels Mark, Matthew and Luke. They are in general agreement with each other; [each conflicts with the Gospel of John](#) in theme, content, time duration, order of events, and style. "*Only ca. 8% of ... [John] is parallel to these other gospels, and even then, no such word-for-word parallelism occurs as we find among the synoptic gospels.*" ⁵

Synod: In Roman Catholicism: any official church meeting. Among Presbyterian denominations, a religious court between the presbytery and the general assembly.

Systematic theology: The study of God and his relationship with humanity.

Tabernacle: From the Latin word "tabernaculum" which means a tent. A tent in which the Jews carried the Ark of the Covenant during the Exodus. A Mormon temple. An early Methodist chapel. A locked box on a Roman Catholic altar where the Host is stored.

Talit, tallit: A Jewish blue-and-white-striped prayer shawl worn by married Jewish men in Orthodox synagogues and any adult Jew in conservative synagogues.

Talmud: From the Hebrew word for "teaching." A body of Jewish oral law and tradition assembled in written form. It is composed of two parts: The Mishna, which is a rabbinic commentary on the Torah, and the Gemara, a commentary on the Mishna. It exists in two versions: The more important is the Babylonian Talmud, completed about 500 CE. The Palestinian Talmud was completed circa 400 CE.

Tanakh (a.k.a. TaNaK): The Jewish Bible, a.k.a. the Jewish Scriptures. The word Tanakh is derived from the letters of the names of its three components: *Torah* (a.k.a. Pentateuch), the Books of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy; the *Nevi'im* (a.k.a. Prophets); and the *Ketuvim* (Writings).

Taoism: This religion of about 20 million followers was founded by Lao-Tse (604-531 BCE), a contemporary of Confucius, and author of *Tao-te-Ching*. Taoism started as a combination of psychology and philosophy but evolved into a state religion in 440 CE. At that time Lao-Tse became popularly venerated as a deity. Taoism, along with Buddhism and Confucianism, became the three great religions of China. Much of Taoism was destroyed since the Communist victory in 1949; it survives mainly in Taiwan.

Tawheed: An Muslim word derived from the Arabic word "Wahhada" which means to join, unite, or combine. In Islam the word refers to Allah (God) and has many shades of meaning, including that God is without partner, a unity, the sole creator and sustainer of the universe, without rival to whom all worship must be directed.

Tefillin (a.k.a. phylacteries): Small black leather boxes worn by Orthodox Jewish males on their forehead and non-dominant arm at weekday morning prayer. They contain passages from the Torah.

Teleological: A system of morality in which the proper choice among two or more options is based on their practical consequences. Whichever choice has the best (or least worse) outcome is the moral decision. Antonym is [deontological](#).

Temple: The term used by Buddhists, Hindus and others to refer to their house of worship. The center for Jewish worship prior to 70 CE was the Temple in Jerusalem. Recently, many Jews use "temple" to refer to the synagogue.

Ten Commandments: A set of about 19 different commands and prohibitions which are intended to govern basic human behavior. Three versions appear in the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) at: Exodus 20:2-17, Exodus 34:12-26, and Deuteronomy 5:6-21.

Tenet: an opinion, principle, dogma, belief, or doctrine that is accepted as true, generally by a faith group.

Territorial Spirits: Many aboriginal religions, and some Evangelical, Pentecostal and Charismatic Christian groups, teach that supernatural forces are associated with a town, city, state, country or other geographic region. Christian groups who believe in these spirits often teach that believers have to aggressively engage in spiritual warfare to defeat these spirits before Christian evangelism can proceed in the area ruled by the spirit.

Terrorism: The use of extreme violence or the threat of violence by states, groups or individuals to generate fear in individuals and thus manipulate their behavior. Currently, most terrorism is either drug or religion based. Some define the term widely to include topics like [spanking of children](#) or the teaching of an [eternity of torture in Hell](#) as forms of physical or spiritual terrorism.

Teshuvot: A Jewish legal opinion.

Tetragram, Tetragrammaton: (From the Greek "tetra" (four) and "gramma" (letter). It consists of four Hebrew letters: Yod, He, Waw and He, transliterated as *YHWH*, *JHVH* or *JHWH* -- the name of God in the Hebrew language. Often translated as "*Lord*" or mistranslated as "*Jehovah*" in English versions of the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament). It could never have pronounced as "*Jehovah*." "*Yahweh*" is probably a more accurate vocalization. Historically, within Judaism, the name of God was neither spoken nor written.

Textual criticism: A study of biblical text, attempting to identify the words of the original autograph copy and eliminate later forgeries, spelling errors, etc.

Theist: A person who believes in the existence of a personal God who is active in the universe. Sometimes used to include persons who believe in the existence of multiple deities, but who worship only one.

Theistic Evolution: The belief that new species of animals develop from existing species over a very long interval of time, in response to the guidance, supervision, and intervention of a deity.

Theocracy: From the Greek words: "Theos" (God) and "cratein" (to rule). A government in which the church and state are unified. Such a union is generally has disastrous effects on human rights, particularly for women and various minorities. This form of government is common among Muslim countries.

Theodicy: From the Greek words "*Theos*" (God) and "*dike*" (justice). Attempts to harmonize the goodness of God with the existence of evil in the world.

Theological anthropology: The study of humanity from the standpoint of our relationship with God.

Theology: From the Greek words meaning "study of deity." The study of religion.

Theology of displacement: A synonym for "*supercessionism*:" the concept that Christianity replaced Judaism because God unilaterally abrogated his Old Testament covenant with the Jewish people.

Theophany: "Theophany" means "*to make known*" or "*to reveal*." It is usually used to refer to a direct communication from God to one or more humans. Eastern Orthodox Christians observe a holy day by this name; it recalls the baptism of Yeshua of Nazareth, allegedly on JAN-6 according to the Julian Calendar. Eastern Christians believe that Jesus' divinity was revealed at his baptism. The Western church celebrates the [Epiphany](#) on JAN-6.

Theosis: (a.k.a. deification, divinization, participation in God) The concept that Christians can become participants in the life of God, while not sharing in God's essence. The precise definition varies among Christian denominations and theologians. This is based, in part, on 2 Peter 1:4: "*Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature...*"

Therapeutic Touch: A holistic health practice in which the practitioner moves their hands above the patient's body, and balance or release the natural energy of the latter's body. This is said to facilitate healing. A high school student conducted a series of experiments for a science project, that proved that therapists cannot measure body energy fields. This appears to destroy the credibility of this therapeutic technique.

Therevada: A Buddhist term in Sanskrit that means the school or way of the elders. It recognizes the *Four Noble Truths* and the *Eightfold Path*. Because it emphasizes personal liberation over collective liberation, it is sometimes referred to as the Hinayana or "*Lesser Vehicle*" school of Buddhism -- a derogatory term. It is found in Sri Lanka and throughout Southern Asia.

Tikkun olam: A Jewish term usually translated as "*repairing the world*." First used by Isaac Luria, a Cabbalist from the 16th century. It describes the obligation of a Jew to do good works, promoting peace, understanding, and help for the hungry, homeless and oppressed.

Tithe: The practice of donating 10% of one's income to the church. "*Triple Tithing*" is also used; it consists of 13% of one's income, donated according to a specified schedule.

Tolerance, General: The willingness to grant to other people equal rights and freedom from persecution and oppression, irrespective of their gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, language, nationality, language, ability status, marital status, etc.

Tolerance, Religious: This very important term unfortunately has multiple, very different, meanings. Conservative Christians often believe that it involves the belief: That all religions are the same, and/or That all religions are equally true, and/or That all religions are simply different paths to God. Others define religious tolerance as: Valuing the human right of other people to freely hold religious beliefs which are different from your own, without oppression or

persecution. With such different definitions for the same term, dialog between conservative Christians and others on this topic is almost impossible.

Tongues, speaking in: See [glossolilia](#).

Torah: From the Hebrew word for "teaching" or "law." The Torah, (a.k.a. Pentateuch, or the Law) are the first 5 books of the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament): Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. Most conservative Christians and Jews believe that they were written mainly or entirely by Moses. There is a near consensus among other theologians that they were [written and edited by many persons or groups of persons](#) over a period of many centuries.

Total inability: Alternative description of the first of the *The Five Points of Calvinism*: the belief that it is impossible for the ordinary "natural" human to understand the Gospel's message. They are spiritually helpless. First, God must first decide to intervene in the form of the third personality within the Trinity, the Holy Spirit. Otherwise, the person is lost.

Total depravity: This is the first of the *The Five Points of Calvinism*: the belief that as a result of Adam and Eve's disobedience to God -- the Fall of Man -- sin has extended to all parts of every person's being: "*his thinking, his emotions and his will.*"

Touch for health: See [Therapeutic Touch](#).

Touch therapy: See [Therapeutic Touch](#).

Tractarianism: Synonym for [Anglo Catholicism](#).

Tradition: a term used by Neopagans to indicate the group that is being referred to. It is analogous to "denomination" in Christianity.

Traditional marriage: The union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others, freely entered into. Most of the [eight family and marriage types](#) mentioned in the Bible do not represent natural marriage. The term is typically used by individuals and groups opposed to [same-sex marriage](#) who wish to keep marriage as a special privilege offered only to opposite-sex couples.

Traditionalism: The belief that, after death, unsaved people will be tormented for all eternity of time in [Hell](#) without hope of mercy or relief. This contrasts with [annihilationism](#) (a.k.a. conditionalism and conditional immortality) which teach that these individuals spend only an interval of time being tortured in Hell; they are then exterminated and cease to exist.

Tradionalism: the concept that deity is remote from the world and the rest of the universe.

Transcendence: Being beyond the limits of all human experience and knowledge.

Transference of the Holy Spirit: The concept that a person can transfer or impart a blessing to another person, often by physical contact, as in the laying on of hands. In some Christian denominations, it is believed that one Christian can transfer either demons or the Holy Spirit to another person by the laying on of hands.

Transferability of sin: A concept, supported by numerous biblical examples, in which the sinful actions of one person can be ethically transferred to an innocent person. This is one of the foundational themes taught in the Bible, but one that is rarely acknowledged today. A logical corollary of the transferability of sin is that the innocent person can then be punished for the sins of the guilty. This concept, considered immoral by all world religions, naturally leads to the idea of [collective responsibility](#).

Transfiguration: In Christianity, this refers to the transfiguration of Jesus as described in three of the gospels: [Mark 9:2-13](#), [Matthew 17:1-13](#), and [Luke 9:28-36](#). Jesus climbed Mount Tabor with three of his disciples, and was joined by Moses and Elija. All three appeared clothed in dazzling white. Luke records how God's voice came from the cloud, saying "*This is my chosen Son; listen to him.*" In the [Harry Potter series of books](#) for children, transfiguration refers to the use of magic to change the appearance of an object - e.g. from a toothpick to a needle.

Transgender: An individual "whose gender identity, outward appearance, expression and/or anatomy does not fit into conventional expectations of male or female."

Transhumanism: This is not a religious or ethical term. We have included it only because some people might confuse it with [Humanism](#). Transhumanism is "...an international intellectual and cultural movement supporting the use of new sciences and technologies to enhance human mental and physical abilities. They hope to eventually eliminate disease, aging and death." ⁴

Transmigration of the Soul: The Hindu belief that at death, a person's soul is reborn into another living entity. Often, this is a new human. But if the individual has accumulated a bad balance of [Karma](#), they may return as an animal. This term is often confused with [Reincarnation](#).

Transsexual: An individual who is severely distressed by a conflict between their assigned birth gender, and their personal feelings of their own gender.

Transubstantiation: The belief, held by Roman Catholics, that during the Lord's Supper, the Holy Spirit transforms the wafer and wine into the actual body and blood of Jesus.

Tribulation: A period of seven years of great misery and death, which is described in Revelation 14:9-16.

Trichotomy: The belief that a person is composed of three parts: body, soul and spirit. An opposing belief, also justified by reference to biblical passages is Dichotomy: In the field of religion, this is the concept that a person is made up of a body and a soul, or of a body and a spirit.

Trickster: Within Native American spirituality, a trickster is a mythical hero who teaches culture, proper behavior and provides sustenance to the tribe.

Tridentine: Latin for "of Trent:" A Roman Catholic term pertaining to the Council of Trent, 1545 to 1563 [CE](#).

Trinity: The [Christian](#) belief that deity is simultaneously a unity and is composed of three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. As the ancient Athanasian Creed is worded, the Trinity is "*one God*" and "*three persons... and yet they are not three Gods, but one God.*" Extensive debate about the nature of God and of Jesus occurred during the early centuries of the Church until this

concept was forced on the church by Constantine. The [Hindu](#) belief that Brahman is simultaneously visualized as a unity, and as a trinity composed of: Brahma the Creator, Vishnu, (Krishna) the Preserver, and Shiva the destroyer. The belief among many [Neopagans](#) that the Goddess exists as a trinity, composed of Maiden, Mother and Crone, representing energy and sexuality, fertility and wisdom.

Trinity, Economic: Christian concepts of how God has revealed himself to humanity.

Trinity, Ontological: Christian concepts of how the three persons in the Trinity relate to each other.

Tritheism: The belief in the existence of three deities. This is one form of polytheism. A small minority of Christians believe that God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit are three different entities, or that God and Jesus are separate and the Holy Spirit is a type of force.

Two Covenant theory: See [dual covenant theory](#)

Two Spirited: An North American Aboriginal term that covers lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgendered persons.

UFO: See [Unidentified Flying Objects](#).

Ulama: Learned scholars of Islamic law and jurisprudence. Singular form: alim

Ummah: A Muslim word that means the community of nation of Muslim believers.

Unbeliever: a person who does not believe in your particular religion, denomination or religious tradition. Similar to **infidel**, but less judgmental. Of course if a person of faith group "A" regards a person of faith group "B" as an unbeliever, then the "Bs" would probably also regard the "As" to be unbeliever.

Unconditional election: This is the second of the *The Five Points of Calvinism*: the belief that God decided before he created the universe that certain people would be chosen to make knowledgeable about himself. The rest would remain ignorant, be damned, and spend eternity in Hell.

Unidentified Flying Objects: (acronym: UFOs). Objects seen flying in the sky whose source and nature cannot be determined. Much of the public believes that these are advanced space ships, perhaps extraterrestrial. Some conservative Christians have speculated that these ships are piloted by demons. A number of religions have been founded that are based on beliefs that UFOs are piloted by an advanced civilization of creatures who are trying to communicate with humans.

Unipersonality: The belief that Jesus had both a divine and a human nature within his personality.

Unitarian: There are two distinct and unrelated meanings for this term, which are often confused by non-Unitarians: A monotheistic belief which was widespread in the early Christian movement, that God is a unity, not a trinity. A series of church councils voted in favor of the belief that God is a Trinity, composed of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Unitarianism then became a heresy and was suppressed. A religious movement, the *American Unitarian*

Association (AUA), which featured a lack of dogma, a belief in the inherent goodness of people, and the obligation for each member to seek out and develop his or her own system of beliefs and ethics. In North America, the AUA merged with the *Universalist Church* to form the *Unitarian Universalist Association*. They strongly support human rights, personal freedoms and behavior choices.

UUA members have been accused of being anti-Christian. In fact, about 10% of the membership considers themselves to be Christian; the rest are un-Christian but not anti-Christian. All promote the freedom of everyone to follow their own religious beliefs.

Universal atonement: The belief that Jesus died for all humans, and not just for those who are [saved](#).

Universalism: Derived from the Greek word *apocatastasis*, which means "*complete salvation*". A Christian belief that everyone would eventually reach heaven after death. It was promoted in the 2nd and early 3rd centuries of the Christian church by Clement and Origen. Traditional Christianity has taught that universalism is a [heresy](#). They believe that heaven is reserved for a small minority of people, and that the vast majority will go to Hell to be tortured for all eternity without mercy. Many Christian individuals and denominations are drifting towards Universalism because an eternity in Hell seem to many people to be incompatible with a loving, just deity. A liberal religious group which merged with the American Unitarian Association to form the [Unitarian Universalist Association](#). A concept in Judaism that "*God created the entire universe as a single entity, that all people were created for a common moral purpose, and that God chose the Jews to convey a moral message to all humanity so that the redemption available to all people through God might occur.*"

Universism: This is a progressive natural philosophy which emphasizes the personal search for truth and understanding of the universe. They have abandoned the rigid teachings of organized religion in favor of relative truth, and acceptance of uncertainty. *Universists apply personal reason and experience to the fundamental questions of human existence, derive inspiration from the natural uncertainty of the human state, and deny the validity of revelation, faith and dogma.*"

Unpardonable sin: Matthew 12:31-32 discusses a sin so serious that a person committing it cannot be pardoned. Unfortunately, the passage is ambiguous, and there have been many conflicting interpretations about what exactly this sin is.

Upanishads: One of the holy texts of the Hindu religion.

Upsherin: A Yiddish word meaning to "shear off." It is a traditional Jewish celebration of a boy's third birthday. This marks the beginning of his formal education and his obligation to keep the commandments and perform mitzvot (good deeds.)

Untermenschen: German for subhuman. Nazi category for Jews, Roma, and others.

Usul: A required, foundational belief within Islam. One example is the unity of God.

Vajrayana (a.k.a. Tantric Buddhism, Mantrayana, Tantrayana, Esoteric Buddhism, or True Words Sect: A Sanskrit term meaning "Diamond Vehicle." A style of Buddhism designed to help a person attain enlightenment quickly -- generally within a single lifetime. It forms part

of Mahayana Buddhism but is sometimes referred to as a third Buddhist path, along with the Theravada and Mahayana schools of Buddhism.

Vatican Council: The first Vatican Council of the Roman Catholic Church was held on 1869 and 1870. Its most famous achievement was to declare that some proclamations by the pope on faith and morals are infallible. The second Vatican Council was held on 1962 to 1965, and introduced many liberalizing reforms, although it did not change any fundamental beliefs.

Vedas: A group of writings which form the oldest of Hinduism's sacred scriptures.

Venial sin: Within the Roman Catholic church, a minor transgression against God, the church or another human. The consequences of a venial sin can be compensated for through good works.

Virgin birth: The belief, as stated in the Gospels of Luke and Matthew, that Mary was a virgin when she conceived Jesus as a result of the intervention of the Holy Spirit. A common belief among Mormons was that God the Father came to earth and engaged in sexual intercourse with Mary. However, this teaching was never declared part of Mormon doctrine by the church. The Roman Catholic church teaches that Mary remained a virgin for the rest of her life, and had no more children.

Vishnu: One of the Gods in the Hindu trinity; the others are Brahma and Shiva. Krishna is one of eight or nine earthly incarnations of Vishnu. There are many points of similarity between the life of Krishna and Jesus. Some have speculated that many events in Jesus' life are mythical in nature, and were copied from Hinduism.

Vision quest: This is an attempt to make contact with a spirit in order to acquire supernatural powers or protection. It is usually restricted to male youth. They undergo rigorous physical challenges such as exposure to the elements and fasting in order to attain their vision. Quests are common throughout many Aboriginal cultures.

Vodun: A benign religion which combines elements of African Native spirituality and Roman Catholicism. This religion is probably the most highly misrepresented religion in the world.

Voluntarism: The concept that belief is a matter of the will.

Voodoo: A popular name for a Hollywood-created, imaginary religion patterned partly on the religion of Vodun.

Vulgate: Latin for "common." Jerome's (circa 342-420 CE) translation of the Bible from the original Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek into Latin.

Walpurgsnacht: A synonym for Beltane, a Celtic holy day celebrated on APR-30.

Waldenses: An early schismatic group that broke away from the Roman Catholic church. Their history is in doubt; they may have existed as early as the eighth century [CE](#). They were viciously persecuted by the Roman Catholic Church from 1209 until 1690. They held many of the beliefs later promoted by Martin Luther and other Protestant reformers.

Warlock: An old-English term for oath breaker. *Conservative Christians and the media often refer to male Witches/Wiccans as Warlocks.* The term is not used by Witches, Wiccans or other Neopagans.

Watchblogger: An derogatory term for an individual who establishes a blog for the purpose of attacking, smearing, and/or discrediting a specific faith group or belief system. They frequently use quotes selected out of context, misquotes, guilt-by-association, [genetic fallacies](#) , [ad-hominem](#) attacks, and other tricks to maximize their impact.

Watchtower Bible and Tract Society: The organization founded by Charles Taze Russell which publishes the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines, and whose followers are called Jehovah's Witnesses -- a high-demand Protestant Christian denomination.

Westminster Standards: The *Westminster Confession of Faith*, the *Larger Catechism*, and the *Shorter Catechisms* were written by the *Westminster Assembly of Divines* from 1643 to 1648. They form the theological basis for the Presbyterian and, with some changes, the Congregational denominations. The *Baptist Confession* of 1689 was largely based on the Westminster standards.

Wicca: [a Neo-pagan](#) polytheistic religion with roots in pre-Christian, pre-Celtic Europe. Wiccans follow the [Wiccan Rede](#): "*do whatever you wish, as long as you harm nobody, including yourself*". Power, manipulation and control of others strictly prohibited. Their drug usage usually confined to wine. Rare ritual sexual activity is practiced, but only in private between a committed adult couple. Wiccans do not proselytize. Most Wiccans are solitary practitioners; some form democratically organized covens, typically of 5 or more people. The minimum age for training or initiation is usually 18. *Conservative usage: evil [occultic practice](#) based on a lust for power, manipulation and control. Rigid ritual practice; heavy illegal drug usage and sexual activity; organize into covens of 13 members each; practice shape shifting (human to animal). Active recruiters, particularly of young people.*

Wiccan: a follower of Wicca

Widdershins: The counter-clockwise direction. The term is often used in describing Neopagan rituals.

Will: One of the basic functions of the human soul; the other is understanding.

Witch: a follower of Witchcraft. It has so many conflicting meanings that it should be used with great care (or perhaps never at all) in public, in order to avoid confusion. 18 common meanings are: A Gothic Satanist; a worshiper of Satan who, during the late Middle Ages and Renaissance, was believed to use black magic to harm others, by involving the aid of Satan and his demons. They didn't exist then and don't exist now. A Wiccan; a follower of [Wicca](#), a recently created, benign, Neopagan religion which is largely based on the some of the symbols, deities, seasonal days of celebration of an ancient European Celtic religion. Wiccans are prohibited from using magic to harm others; they do not believe in the existence of Satan or demons. A woman of such incredible beauty that she bewitches others. A woman of incredible ugliness; a hag. A person who practices benign Magick to influence the world through rituals. A magician with unusual knowledge who can apparently perform miracles during ceremonial magic rituals. In ancient Native American usage and the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament): an evil person who secretly uses evil sorcery (black magic) to intentionally harm others. In the Christian Scriptures (New Testament): a criminal who murders people by administering poisons. A follower of modern-day [Religious Satanism](#). They recognizing Satan as a virile pre-Christian, pagan principle, but do not

believe in his existence as a living entity. A member of an underground, evil religious group who worship Satan who engage in [ritual abuse, murder and sometimes cannibalism -- largely involving children](#). During the 1980s and early 1990s, many North Americans believed that this group exists; some still do, although hard evidence is lacking. A wizard who inhabits an alternative world of fantasy and magic, filled with good and evil people with magical powers, flying broomsticks, invisibility cloaks, dragons, talking animals, magical quills, etc. e.g. [Harry Potter™ books](#). A person, usually a woman, who was born with supernatural abilities and is capable of performing miracles by waving a wand, wiggling their nose, etc. This is often seen in TV programs, like *Bewitched* or *Charmed*. They don't exist either. Followers of a group of Caribbean religions which combine elements of tribal African religions with Christianity; e.g. [Santeria](#) and [Vodun](#). In some African Aboriginal religions, a person who unknowingly has supernatural powers capable of hurting others. *Witch doctors* attempt to counteract these evil energies. An expert, as in: "*She is a witch of a writer.*" A person who uses a forked stick or other instrument to locate sources of underground material -- typically water. A woman who is not submissive to her husband. A general "*snarl*" word for a nasty, vicious person, typically female. A follower of any religion other than Christianity (e.g. of Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, Native American Spirituality, etc.). **Note:** *The first and second definitions are mutually exclusive; the third and fourth definitions are also mutually exclusive.*

Witchcraft: a religion or practice followed by a Witch. It has so many meanings that it should be used with great care (or perhaps never at all) in order to avoid confusion.

Womanism, Womanist: "*Womanist and womanism are populist and poetic synonyms for black feminist and black feminism.*" ^{4,5}

Womym: A synonym, often used by feminists, for the word "woman," . "Woman" comes from the Old English term "wif-man." Womym was coined recently.

Word: In common usage, a unit of language that can be combined with other words to create phrases and sentences. In Christianity, the Bible is frequently referred to as "God's word." Yeshua of Nazareth (Jesus Christ), the second person of the Trinity, is often referred to as the Word, as in John 1:1.

Word of Faith movement: (a.k.a. Health & Wealth Gospel, Positive Confession, Name it and Claim it, and Faith-formula). A group of conservative Protestant para-church ministries that focus on "anointed" ministers and the health, wealth, and success of their viewers and donors. MinistryWatch estimates that their total income is in excess of a half billion dollars annually.

Word of God: An expression used primarily by conservative Protestants to refer to the text of the Holy Bible. It assumes that God inspired the authors of the Bible to write either [inerrant text](#) (free of errors) and/or [infallible text](#) (fully trustworthy. i.e. it does not deceive the reader into falsehood.)

Word of Knowledge: A belief or instruction that a Christian believes comes directly from the Holy Spirit. This is found almost exclusively among Charismatic and Pentecostal Christians.

Word of Wisdom: A code of health that Mormons believe was given by God to their founder, Joseph Smith on 1833-FEB-27.

World Council of Churches: An umbrella group formed in 1948. They promote inter-faith dialog and ecumenical cooperation among mainline and liberal Christian denominations.

World view (a.k.a. worldview): "...a set of presuppositions (assumptions which may be true, partially true or entirely false) which we hold (consciously or subconsciously, consistently or inconsistently) about the basic make-up of our world." ¹ See also [biblical worldview](#)

Worship: In a religious sense, the act of expressing reverence to a deity or supernatural entity.

Wrath, God's: God's judgment on sinners, fueled by his anger, hatred, revulsion and indignation of sin. In the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) there are many descriptions of [mass murders and genocides](#) either created or ordered by God. Author Martyn Lloyd-Jones found that the Hebrew Scriptures contains 20 words which describe God's wrath, and that they are used 580 times. In the Christian Scriptures (New Testament) the topic is discussed in detail in Romans 1:18 and in the Book of Revelation. Author Cairns comments: "...the full power of the wrath of God has never yet been manifested on earth - not in the deluge, or in the destruction of Sodom, or in any other judgment. The full fury of God's anger will be seen when 'the great day of his wrath is come' and the ungodly feel the indescribable torment of 'the wrath of the Lamb' Revelation 6:16-17." ² Martin Luther felt that the wrath of God, as described in Revelation, was incompatible with the loving God that Jesus referred to as "Abba" during his prayers. When Luther translated the Bible into German, he downgraded Revelation, by placing it in an appendix.

Xenophobia: Hatred or fear of persons of a different nationality or ethnicity than one's own.

Xylolaters: Literally "wood worshipers." A disrespectful term used to refer to Eastern Orthodox believers who revered images and icons.

Yahweh: A vocalization, favored by most theologians, of the tetragrammaton -- the name of God ("JHWH") found throughout the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament). An alternative pronunciation is Jehovah, a popular name but one that was probably never used in ancient times.

Yana: A Sanskrit word meaning vehicle, or path. It is used in Buddhism to refer to a school or tradition of Buddhist teaching. Some group Buddhist traditions into two Yana: Theravada and Mahayana Vajrayana. Others consider a part of Mahayana Buddhism called Vajrayana (a.k.a. Tantric Buddhism, Mantrayana, Tantrayana, Esoteric Buddhism, or True Words Sect) to be a third Buddhist path.

Yarmulke: a Jewish head covering traditionally restricted to males. "...the Code of Jewish Law says, 'It is forbidden to walk four cubits without a head covering'." ¹ Synonym: kippah (also spelled "kippa")

Year-day theory: A theory in which a day in some passages of biblical prophecy is held to be equal to a calendar year. This relationship is stated in Numbers 14:34. The theory has found extensive application in interpreting prophecies in Daniel and Revelation. It has been used repeatedly to estimate the second coming of Christ; the answers have always been wrong.

YHWH: See tetragram.

Yiddish: A language primarily used by Jews in Europe. It uses the Hebrew alphabet, and includes a mixture of words from Hebrew, German and other European languages.

Ying and yang: A Taoist belief that the universe is made up of pairs of opposing forces, like male and female, positive and negative. One's task is to harmonize these forces, both within one's body and in the rest of the universe. A mythical "Yellow Emperor" wrote: *"The principle of Yin and Yang is the foundation of the entire universe. It underlies everything in creation. It brings about the development of parenthood; it is the root and source of life and death it is found with the temples of the gods...Heaven was created by the concentration of Yang, the force of light, earth was created by the concentration of Yin, the forces of darkness. Yang stands for peace and serenity; Yin stands for confusion and turmoil. Yang stands for destruction; Yin stands for conservation. Yang brings about disintegration; Yin gives shape to things..."*

Yoga: A Hindu method of learning that includes exercises, breathing sequences and meditation. It is designed to aid in enlightenment. The exercise component of Yoga is often practiced in the West as an aid to healthy living.

Yom Kippur: Hebrew for "Day of Atonement." The most important annual day of observance in Judaism.

Yule: An ancient Celtic seasonal day of celebration at the time of the winter solstice. Depending upon the year, the solstice may fall on DEC-20 to 23. A popular minor Sabbat (holy day) observed by Wiccans and other Neopagans.

Zealots: From the Greek phrase "to be enthusiastic." Originally, the name of a small group of Pharisees in 1st Century CE Judea who used terrorist tactics to attack the occupying Roman Army. Their goal was religious and political independence from Rome. The term has since evolved to refer to any extreme radical religious group or individual.

Zen: A Japanese school of Buddhism which has become popular in North America. It is similar to the Chinese school of Buddhism known as Chan.

Zionism: Derived from "Zion," an ancient Hebrew name for Jerusalem. Zionism is a movement created during the 1860s and 1870s in Europe to create a homeland for the Jewish people in Palestine. Some religious Zionists believe that this would fulfill biblical prophecy and trigger the coming of the millennium and the arrival of the Messiah.

Zoroastrianism: This religion was founded in ancient Persia, perhaps during the sixth and seventh century BCE. Many scholars believe that numerous religious concepts first appeared in Zoroastrianism, and were later adopted by Judaism, and Christianity. These include: heaven, hell, resurrection of the body, the Messiah, final judgment, and the battle of Armageddon. Once a religion with many followers, it currently only has about 200,000 members; most live in Iran and India.

Aeromancy:

Divination by observation of atmospheric phenomena, such as clouds, storms, winds etc.

A(i)lectryomancy:

Divination by the actions of a cockerel placed within a circle marked round with the alphabet, each letter covered by a grain of corn. An aspect of ornithomancy.

Aleuromancy:

Divination practised with flour. One method is to roll possible actions/futures into balls of flour, mix the balls, and draw one at random. Apollo is said to have presided over this form of divination. Cf. the modern "fortune cookie".

Alomancy:

Divination by salt, possibly similar to sand reading.

Alphitomancy:

Divination, especially of guilt, by wheat or barley. It was believed that the guilty would suffer unconcealable stomach pains after eating such.

Amniomancy:

Divination by the caul that may cover a child's face at birth.

Astragalomancy:

Divination by casting ankle or knuckle bones (the precursors of dice) onto which symbols or words might have been inscribed.

Astrology:

Divination by the stars and planets, their positions and movements.

Augury:

Divination by study of the auspices, i.e. signs from birds, animals, the heavens etc. Roman.

Austromancy:

Divination by the winds.

Axinomancy:

Divination by the axe. One method was to toss the axe into the air so that it would come down blade first; the direction and angle of the handle was then studied. This was sometimes done to aid in the location or identification of a thief or stolen object. Another method was to place a piece of agate or jet on a red hot axe blade and study its motion - this was used to find buried treasure, or (by the ancient Greeks) to identify criminals. Axinomancy was sometimes used to determine an auspicious place for giving birth.

Belomancy:

Divination by arrows. Many forms are known. The Babylonians and Syrians attached labels were to a number of arrows, that which was shot furthest being accepted (see Ezekiel 21:21). Alternatively, an arrow was shot straight up in the air, and its course and landing observed. A third method, used by the Greeks and later the Arabians) was to shoot arrows at a rock and then interpret the resultant marks. The Tibetans placed two arrows, tip downwards, in a vessel and interpreted their movements. Another method was to inscribe or attach possible futures to arrows in a quiver, one then being selected at random.

Bibliomancy:

Divination by means of the random selection of passages from the Bible or other tome. (A good literary example is the use of "Robinson Crusoe" in Wilkie Collins' *The Moonstone*.)

Botanomancy:

Divination by leaves (various methods).

Capnomancy:

Divination by smoke.

Catoptromancy:

Divination through the use of mirrors.

Cartomancy:

Divination by cards (esp. Tarot)

Causmomancy:

Divination by watching burning embers

Cephalomancy:

Divination by use of a donkey's skull.

Ceraunomancy:

Divination by observation of wind strength, direction etc.

Ceroscopy:

Divination by molten wax, which is poured onto cold water - the resultant patterns of hardening wax are observed.

Cheirromancy:

Palmistry; divination by the marks and lines on the hands.

Cleidomancy:

Divination by a key suspended by thread, held between thumb and forefinger. On being lowered into a glass, and a question asked, the key would tap once on the side of the glass for a positive answer, and twice for a negative.

Cleromancy:

Divination by the casting of lots or dice.

Coscinomancy:

Divination by use of a sieve and tongs or shears; apparently used to identify the perpetrator of a crime.

Critomancy:

Divination by food, esp. by offerings left or burnt on altars.

Cromniomancy:

Divination by use of onions.

Crystallomancy:

Divination by use of transparent bodies such as quartz, precious stones (esp. beryl) or the traditional 'crystal ball'.

Cyclomancy:

Divination by the study of a turning wheel (perhaps the origin of the "wheel of fortune"?)

Dactyliomancy:

Divination by finger-rings.

Daphnomancy:

Divination using bay (laurel) leaves or branches.

Dendromancy:

Divination by use of oak and mistletoe. (?)

Elaeolancy:

Divination by the study of a liquid surface.

Empyromancy:

Divination by the action of items thrown onto a fire.

Extispicy:

Divination by the entrails of sacrifices. Roman.

Geomancy:

Divination by earth. Methods included the study of points on the earth, or the study of patterns made by a handful of earth falling on the ground. Alternatively, the interpretation of the swelling, noises and movement of the earth, or of the cracks made in drying mud.

Gyromancy:

Divination by the falling or stepping of dancers (dizzy from whirling or spinning) onto a ring marked by letters or symbols. Alternatively, by the falling of a subject who has walked around in circles until dizzy.

Haruspex:

see Extispicy.

Heptascopy:

Divination by inspection of the liver of sacrifices.

Hippomancy:

Divination by the behaviour of horses. Used by the ancient Wends, among others.

Hydromancy:

Divination by water. The Incas are believed to have practiced hydromancy.

Lampadomancy:

Divination by the observation of flickering torches.

Lecanomancy:

Divination by the observation of patterns formed by oil dropped onto water.

Libanomancy:

Divination by the observation of smoke rising from incense.

Lithomancy:

Divination by the use of stones. Either the use of polished rather than faceted stones in a manner similar to Crystallomancy, or the study of patterns formed by the veins in a stone.

Lychnomancy:

Divination by the observation of an oil lamp's flame, or that of a candle.

Margaritomancy:

Divination by pearls.

Metoscopy:

Divination of character by the study of the subject's forehead.

Molybdomancy:

Divination by lead - the study the patterns of shapes created by molten lead being poured onto cold water or onto the ground

Myomancy:

Divination by mice, their behaviour, sounds or damage.

Necromancy:

Divination by the summoning of the dead.

Nephelomancy:

Divination by the appearance of clouds.

Oenomancy (oinomancy):

Divination by study of the surface of dark wine in a goblet.

Ololygomancy:

Divination by the interpretation of the howling of dogs.

Oneiromancy:

Divination by the interpretation of dreams. Joseph in the Old Testament.

Onomancy:

Divination on the basis of names, perhaps related to numerology.

Onychomancy:

Divination by gazing into highly polished fingernails.

Ornithomancy:

Divination by study the flight and behaviour of birds.

Ovomancy:

Divination by the inspection of egg whites. Also known as oomantia.

Pegomancy:

Divination by the sounds and appearance of water flowing from a fountain or spring.

Pessomancy:

Divination by pebbles.

Phyllorhodomancy:

Divination by rose leaves.

Plastrumancy:

Divination by turtle shell, as applied in ancient China.

Psephomancy:

See Cleromancy.

Pyromancy:

Divination by fire or the shapes observed therein.

Rhabdomancy:

Divination by wand or dowsing, used especially to locate water, treasure (e.g. as by the Etruscans), or other substances such as oil.

Rhapsodomancy:

A form of bibliomancy using a book of poetry or verse.

Scyphomancy:

Divination by cups or vases.

Sideromancy:

Divination by the burning of straws.

Spodomancy:

Divination by ashes.

Stolisomancy:

Divination by observation of the act of dressing, e.g. by errors, the reversal of items of clothing etc.

Sycomancy:

Divination by leaves, especially those of the fig tree.

Tasseomancy (tasseography):

Divination by tea leaves.

Tephramancy:

Divination by the breath or the wind.

Tiromancy (tyromancy):

Divination by cheese or the holes therein, or by the observation of milk as it curdles.

Xylomancy:

Divination by the use of twigs, their patterns on the ground, size etc. **Age, Ages**

In the NT, this term often refers to one or both of the eons understood by late Jewish thought, namely “this age” and the “age to come.” The two-age eschatology of the rabbis failed to recognize the intervening Age of the Spirit predicted by Joel 2.28-32 which would precede what they thought of as “the age to come” and what the prophets referred to as the [Day of the Lord \(Yom YHWH\)](#). Paul mentions multiple ages yet to come (Eph. 2.7), which will include the [Millennial Reign](#) during the [Yom YHWH](#).

Antichrist, The

The false Messiah, energized by Satan, who will arise in opposition to God, Christianity and Israel just prior to Christ’s Coming (2 Thess. 2.3-10).

Antinomianism

Literally, *anti-law-ism*. In history this was the heretical and cultish doctrine that the moral law was not binding Christians as a rule of life. In recent [eschatology](#) the term has been adopted by some [Dispensationalists](#) to describe their belief that Christians are not under law since law pertains to an earlier [dispensation](#).

Apocalypse

Literally an unveiling, that is, a revealing of a person or thing in its true character. Synonymous to revelation, and an alternate title for the book of Revelation. Because of its association with the “end of the world,” apocalypse is sometimes used to denote a radical destruction or purge.

Apocalyptic

Pertaining to the end of the world, or to some awesome destruction.

Apostasy

A spiritual falling away, i.e., a rebellion, as described in 2 Thessalonians 2.3.

Apostate

Adjective: having fallen away spiritually.

Armageddon

Literally *the mountain of Megiddo*. The name given to the valley below the ancient city (now a ruin) of Megiddo in northern Israel. Also the name given to the final eschatological battle for Jerusalem, since the military staging for the battle will occur at the valley of Megiddo.

Metaphorically, Armageddon is commonly used with reference to a catastrophic or devastating event, military or otherwise. When a city water storage tank ruptured in Westminster, California at the end of September, 1998, temporarily flooding a residential neighborhood, a police officer said: “A whole series of condo garages are gone. It’s a mess out there. It’s like Armageddon.”

The loss of a dozen garages is less than trivial compared to the biblical Armageddon, but the recent movie entitled Armageddon errs on the other extreme of usage. In that film, the fictional President of the United States defines Armageddon as “the end of everything.” Armageddon is not the end of everything, but it is more than ruined garages: it is the end of the militant enemies of Messiah who are consumed by His coming.

Day of the Lord, The

The period that begins suddenly with the destruction of the ungodly (including Antichrist and his followers; see 1 Thess. 5.2,3).

Dispensation

Literally an administration, a period or process of management. To Dispensationalists, the term has come to mean an era in which God administers a redemptive plan in a fashion different from the way He administered redemption in other eras.

Dispensationalism

A form of biblical interpretation derived from the teachings of John Nelson Darby (1800-82) of Dublin, Ireland, a leader of the Plymouth Brethren, and popularized by C. I. Scofield (1843-1921) in his Scofield Reference Bible (1902-1909 and revised in 1917). It emphasizes the idea that God dispenses redemption differently in different eras, and maintains a rigid discontinuity between the different dispensations.

End Time, The

The epoch in which some of God's people will be refined by tribulation (Dan. 11.33-35), as a rebel king affronts Messiah (Dan. 8.17-25), and invades Israel (Dan. 11.40-45). It is the apocalyptic time leading up to the resurrection and judgment (Dan. 12.1-2). Not to be confused with, but included in, the [Last Days](#).

Eschatology

The study of last things, that is, the final events of redemption described in Bible prophecy. Derived from the Greek word meaning *last*.

Eschaton

The climax of history at which Christ returns to reestablish His reign over the earth.

Futurist

The view that the prophecies of Revelation (and related passages) focus upon the end of the age (world), and that therefore the greater part of the book has yet to be fulfilled.

Gematria

Numerology; the mystical interpretation of the numerical value of letters and words. Leo Rosten, in his *Joys of Yiddish*, explains that "mystics converted the numerical values [of words] into supposed keys to the meanings of passages in the holy texts and 'equated' different words and phrases according to the total values of their letters...Here is a pretty example of Gematria: The Hebrew word for 'pregnancy,' *herayon*, turns out to have the numerical value of 270, which is also 30 times 9 — 'the number of days a woman carries a child.'"

Hades

Originally the name of the Homeric god of the underworld, a Greek word used to denote the state or place of the dead. All the dead alike go into this place. To be buried, to go down to the grave, to descend into Hades, are equivalent expressions. In the LXX this word is the usual rendering of the Hebrew [Sheol](#), the common receptacle of the departed (Genesis 42.38; Psalm 139.8; Hos. 13.14; Isaiah 14.9). This term occurs rarely in the Greek New Testament, but now

takes on decidedly punitive and Satanic connotations. Our Lord speaks of Capernaum as being “brought down to Hades”, i.e., to the lowest debasement (Matthew 11.23). Jesus also portrays Hades as a kingdom (or city) in opposition to the Church (Mat. 16.18), and in Luke 16.23 Jesus makes Hades the place of the rich man’s doom and misery in contrast to the blessed state of Lazarus in the bosom of Abraham. In the Revelation, Hades personified hungrily follows behind Death as the latter rides forth to devastate the earth (6.8), and in the end is cast with Death into the Lake of Fire (20.14).

Hell

Derived from the Saxon *helan*, to cover; hence the covered or the invisible place. In King James Bible there are three words so rendered. (1.) Sheol, the place of disembodied spirits, which word is also often rendered “grave” (Genesis 37.35; 42.38; 44.29, 31; 1 Samuel 2.6, etc.). The inhabitants of Sheol are “the congregation of the dead” (Proverbs 21.16). It is (a) the abode of the wicked (Numbers 16.33; Job 24.19; Psalm 9.17; 31.17, etc.); (b) of the good (Psalm 16.10; 30.3; 49.15; 86.13, etc.). Sheol is described as deep (Job 11.8), dark (10.21, 22), with bars (17.16). The dead “go down” to it (Numbers 16.30, 33; Ezekiel 31.15, 16, 17). (2.) The Greek word *Hades* of the New Testament, which term has similar connotations to the Sheol of the Old Testament. It is a prison (1 Peter 3.19), with gates and bars and locks (Matthew 16.18; Revelation 1.18), and it is downward (Matthew 11.23; Luke 10.15). (3.) Gehenna, which in most of its occurrences in the Greek New Testament designates the place of the lost (Matthew 23.33). The fearful nature of their condition there is described in various figurative expressions (Matthew 8.12; 13.42; 22:13; 25:30; Luke 16:24, etc.).

Hermeneutics

The science of interpretation, particularly of texts.

Historic Premillennialism

A system of [eschatological](#) belief emphasizing the literal, premillennial coming of Christ, but not holding to a rigid [Dispensationalism](#) nor to belief in a pre-tribulational rapture.

Historicist

The view that the prophecies of the Revelation (and related passages) provide a preview of history from the time of the writer to the end of the world, and therefore have been already fulfilled in part. As W. Graham Scroggie summarizes: “In this view the Seals apply to the history of the Roman Empire during the second and third centuries; the sealing of the 144,000 tells of the revival of the saints subsequent to the revolution under Constantine, and under the leadership of Augustine; the trumpets tell of the decline and fall of the Roman Empire; the Little Books announce the Protestant Reformation under Luther; the beasts of ch. xiii. represent the Papacy; the outpourings of the vials predict the French Revolution and subsequent events; and in chs. xvii. and xviii. we learn of the yet future destruction of the Papacy, and the city of Rome.”

Idealists Interpretation

See [Poetic Interpretation](#).

Last Days, The

The epoch that began with the earthly ministry of Christ (Heb. 1.2), was marked by the outpouring of the Spirit on Pentecost (Acts 2.17), and that will continue until the Lord rules the nations from Jerusalem (Micah 4.1-4). Daniel refers to the final segment of this period as the “[End Time](#).”

Mahdi

Also [al-Mahdi or al-Mehdi](#). The legendary 12th imam of Islam held in occultation for centuries, and now expected to reappear at any moment to convert the globe to Islam.

Millennial Kingdom, Millennial Reign

The thousand-year earthly kingdom set up by Christ at His second coming.

Millennium

The thousand-year period during which Christ will reign on earth after His second coming, and during which Satan will be bound.

Mystery

A mystery in the NT is not something obscure or incomprehensible, but rather a truth that can only be known by revelation or by special insight given to the initiated. See Rev. 10.7.

Opisthograph

A scroll with writing on the exterior surface (the verso) as well as on the interior surface (the recto, which on papyrus provided the smoother surface with horizontal fibers), as that of Rev. 5.1. Normally, writing only appeared on the verso when the recto had insufficient space.

Poetic Interpretation

The view that the prophecies of Revelation are to be taken metaphorically of the sure triumph of God over evil in the world, and not as predictions of literal cataclysms in the cosmos. More or less synonymous with the [Idealists'](#) interpretation.

Post-apocalyptic

A literary term referring to a scene or story set in a recently destroyed world.

Postmillennialism

Belief in the restoration of society, primarily through the influence of the church, before the return of Christ. It is the return of Christ that is post, i.e., after, the millennium. This view tends to equate the "millennium" with "the church age." [Reconstructionism](#) is a form of postmillennialism.

Post-tribulationist

One who believes that Christ will rapture Christians after the Great Tribulation.

Premillennialism

Belief in a literal coming of Christ before the thousand-year reign of world peace.

Preterist

The view that the prophecies of the book of Revelation (along with the prophecies of Matthew 24, etc.) commented on events of John's day and did not make predictions about the future end of the world. Compare the [historicist](#) view.

Pre-tribulationist

One who believes that Christ will rapture Christians before the beginning of the Great Tribulation.

Rapture

Literally a catching up, based on the Latin word used in the Vulgate version of 1 Thessalonians 4.17. It refers to the catching up to the clouds of Christians who are alive at the coming of Christ, an event immediately preceded by the resurrection of Christians who have already died.

Reconstructionism

A [postmillennial](#) view that calls believers to aggressively bring change to society, with the ultimate goal of establishing a Christian Republic ordered by the Mosaic Law.

Reconstructionism sees the homeschool movement as the primary vehicle for bringing societal change, but also encourages Christian involvement in government and other social institutions for the sake of pursuing its goals in the world.

Replacement Theology

A system of interpretation based on the idea that “the church” replaces national Israel as God’s vehicle of redemption, appropriating for herself all the promises made to Israel and rendering the Jewish nation irrelevant eschatologically.

Second Coming

Also “Second Advent.” The return of Christ in glory, as differentiated from his first coming in humiliation. Christ will return in bodily form to destroy His enemies and glorify His elect. (See Acts 1.11.)

Syllogism

A form of deductive reasoning consisting of a major premise, a minor premise, and a conclusion; for example, All human beings are mortal, the major premise, I am a human being, the minor premise, therefore, I am mortal, the conclusion.

Synchronological

Occurring at more or less the same time rather than in consecutive order. Descriptions of synchronological events in prophecy tend to double back after the description of one event in order to describe other events decreed to occur at the same time, or to describe the first event again but from a different perspective.

Syncretism

The blending of elements from two different philosophies or religions.

Terminus Ante Quem

The date before which an event must have occurred.

Terminus Post Quem

The date after which an event must have occurred.

Theophany

A vision or other manifestation of God.

Tribulation, The Great

A period of unparalleled hardship (Dan. 12.1) and Satanic persecution directly preceding the Coming of Christ. It is also called the “Time of Jacob’s Trouble” (Jeremiah 30.7) since Israel

will endure much of the brunt of the persecution.

Type

A person, thing or event in the Bible that foreshadows a greater person, thing or event. A sort of three-dimensional prophecy. This is simply another meaning of the word for printers' type and is derived from the phenomenon of correspondence between type and the impression it makes in printing.

Typology

The study of biblical types.

Ancestral Curse Evil, misfortune, or harm that comes as a response to or retribution for deeds or misdeeds committed against or by one's ancestor(s). Figures largely in the "first" gothic romance, Walpole's *Castle of Otranto*. Example: A deserved ancestral curse can be found in Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The House of the Seven Gables*. In the story, Colonel Pyncheon steals the home and land of Matthew Maule, who, in turn, curses the Colonel and his descendants for the Colonel's heinous act. A slight variation of this convention is the "burden of the past," which, like the ancestral curse, concerns misfortunes and evil befalling one as a result of another's past actions. However, this particular form is not necessarily restricted to one character and his or her descendants, and usually the actions which have caused the present character's ill fate occur closer to the present than in the case of the ancestral curse. Such an example exists in Henry James' *The Turn of the Screw*, when the two children are "possessed" by the evil spirits of the dead maid and caretaker.

Anti-Catholicism A frequent and, for some critics, foundational feature of early Protestant gothic fiction. In this fiction Catholicism comes to be associated with forces of horrid repression, greedy corruption, and mysterious persecution, wrapped in the cloaks of a superstition that prevents scrutiny of authority. The frequent appearance of the [Inquisition](#) in the first gothics epitomizes all of these things. Example: (from Fred Frank) In his Gothified anti-Catholic tragedy, Coligny, Baculard d'Arnaud anticipated the fiendish Catholicism of the English horror novel of the late 1790s by mounting a morbid pageant of Catholic maliciousness and Protestant suffering that featured malicious Trappist fathers, "Corridors, labyrinthes, et caveaux de châteaux," and other prime examples of Gothic scenery and atmosphere. The play was set during the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, an apt historical choice that evoked the kind of atmosphere of religious terror later common in the pages of the Gothic from Lewis's *Monk* to "The Spaniard's Tale" in Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer*. The virulent anticlericalism of Coligny would leave its mark on future French Gothic drama as seen in the theme and structure of Boutet de Monvel's Gothic extravaganza of monkish cruelty, *Les Victimes de cloîtrées* (1792).

Body-Snatching (grave-robbing) Body-snatching is the act of stealing corpses from graves, tombs or morgues. This act was quite prominent during the period of time wherein cadavers were unavailable for dissection and scientific study (early 18th century to middle 19th century). Body-snatching came to represent a particularly horrid instance of sacrilege, an invasion of religious space by an aggressive and often commercially motivated science. Knowledge of this act resulted in mass riots and even the ransacking of medical dormitories. Example: R. L. Stevenson's "The Body-Snatcher" employs the grisly profession of corpse stealing to weave a tale in which two grave robbers are horrified to find in their latest disinterred coffin the body of a man they had previously killed and served up to the medical profession. The most famous example of a Gothic story which involves the theft of a corpse

in order to bring it back to some form of life is *Frankenstein*: Victor frequents "the dissecting room and the slaughter-house" for his "workshop of filthy creation"--apparently his monster comes from some kind of *assemblage*. A more recent example of body-snatching comes from Stephen King's *Pet Semetary* (actually spelled this way). In the novel, the father of a newly dead boy digs up the body hours after burial. The father proceeds to re-bury the boy, Gavin, in a place known as Pet Semetary in hopes that the child will come back to life. Although the corpse of the boy does in fact re-animate, it is controlled by an evil demon bent upon the murder of surrounding mortals. Also see [revenant](#).

Cemetery A cemetery defines a place which is used for the burial of the dead. This term *koimeterion* ("place of rest") was primarily applied by early Christians to the Roman catacombs--a subterranean labyrinth of galleries with recesses for tombs originally used by the city's Jewish population--and became widely used within the 15th century. All cultures seem to have participated in the idea of a cemetery in a form at some time. Paleolithic caves, temples, sanctuaries, grave mounds and necropolii are just a few different types differentiated cemeteries. Christian belief formed the idea of the cemetery as a churchyard or crypt, but we must remember that a cemetery is any place which is used to house the dead. Cemeteries are widely used in Gothic Literature as oftentimes frightening places where [revenge](#) can occur. Catacombs are especially evocative Gothic spaces because they enable the living to enter below ground a dark labyrinth resonating with the presences and mysteries of the dead.

Claustrophobia An abnormal dread of being confined in a close or narrow space. Often attributed to actual physical [imprisonment or entrapment](#), claustrophobia can also figure more generally as an indicator of the victim's sense of helplessness or horrified mental awareness of being enmeshed in some dark, inscrutable destiny. If one were to formulate a poetics of space for the gothic experience, claustrophobia would comprise a key element of that definition. Example: Sophia Lee's *The Recess* chronicles the story of two ill-fated sisters literally born into an underground recess; in this novel the idea of claustrophobia extends beyond just the obvious physical entrapment to serve as a metaphor of woman's *recessive* existence in a world of cruel court and male intrigue. Another intriguing example can be found in Melville's "Bartelby, the Scrivener." Bartelby occupies a very small and dark cubicle. It has no view other than that of a brick wall. This small space without much light and no view creates a feeling of claustrophobia, but, oddly, this sense seems to afflict the narrator and reader more than it does the inscrutable scrivener.

Gothic Counterfeit A playful fakery of authenticity. From the *Castle of Otranto* (1764) onwards, many gothic texts present themselves as an editor's recovery and presentation of some ancient text, cloaking the true author's writing of the story. Such "counterfeit" framing narratives frequently complicate the [point of view](#) and "authenticity" of gothic stories. Jerald Hogle has written extensively about the "counterfeit" as a trope of Gothic textual instability. Examples: William Beckford's infamous *Vathek* first appeared as a counterfeit editor's recovery of an anonymous translation of an Arabian tale. Henry James' "The Friend of the Friends" is presented as excerpts from a young woman's diary retrieved by an un-named narrator, when, of course, the tale is by Henry James.

Devil The Devil, as portrayed in Judaism and Christianity, stands as a spirit of incarnate evil who rules over a dark kingdom. This spirit stands in constant opposition to God. The actual term 'Devil' comes from the Latin term *diabolus* which is an adjective meaning slanderous. Within the *Septuagint*, the Greek translation of the Bible, the *diabolus* is translated as the

Hebrew "he-satan". Also within this translation, the diabolus is characterized as God's personal spy who travels the earth to gather information concerning human existence. Later, in Jewish tradition, the term satan becomes the proper Satan who is seen as an adversary of human beings as well as God. The base of this belief possibly stems from Persian philosophy. In many areas of Jewish thought, Satan is linked with the idea of evil impulses, i.e. the Devil made me do it. Milton's powerful characterization of a brilliant, still-proud, and almost tragic Satan in *Paradise Lost* profoundly influenced the evolution of the Gothic [villain-hero](#). Examples: There generally exist two different ways that the old Adversary can appear in Gothic works, ways that tell us much about the moral universe of the literary work. If, as in Bloch's *Rosemary's Baby*, the Devil's visitation is arbitrary and he selects a good or innocent person as his victim, we witness a dark, pessimistic moral universe, in which an expansive sense of evil randomly blights the human world. If, on the other hand, the victim deserves demonic punishment (for example, Ambrosio in Lewis's *The Monk*), his appearance signals a more traditional and Christian moral universe, in which sinners receive their due punishment. The literary stakes get a bit higher in variations of the Faust legend, in which Satan appeals to potentially noble human qualities (e.g. the thirst for knowledge) but twists those qualities in a way that parallels his own alienation from God.

Doppelgänger *Dopplegänger* comes from German; literally translated, it means "doublegoer." A *dopplegänger* is often the ghostly counterpart of a living person. It can also mean a double, alter ego, or even another person who has the same name. In analyzing the *dopplegänger* as a psychic projection caused by unresolved anxieties, Otto Rank described the double as possessing traits both complementary and antithetical to the character involved. Example: In *Psycho*, by Robert Bloch, Norman Bates becomes so distraught after killing his mother in a jealous rage that he gradually takes on her personality. She becomes his alter ego, and by the end of the novel has taken over his mind completely. Other famed doubles in Gothic lore include Jekyll/Hyde, Victor Frankenstein/his monster, Caleb Williams/Falkland, and Jane Eyre/Bertha. Perhaps the most perfect literary example of a *dopplegänger* can be found in Henry James' "The Jolly Corner."

Dreaming / Nightmares Dreaming is characterized as a form of mental activity that takes place during the act of sleep. Dreams invoke strong emotions within the dreamer, such as ecstasy, joy and terror. Dreams dredge up these deep emotions and premonitions that reflect tellingly upon the dreamer, what one might conceal during waking hours but what emerges in sleep to haunt and arouse the dreamer. It is most likely due to this heightened emotional state that dreams are used so often within Gothic Literature. For by invoking dream states within their characters, authors are able to illustrate emotions on a more unmediated and, oftentimes, terrifying level. Dreams reveal to the reader what the character is often too afraid to realize about himself or herself. Dreaming also has an ancient relation with the act of foretelling wherein the future is glimpsed in the dream state. The actual term nightmare seems to be a bastardization of the Old Norse and Anglo-Saxon term *mara*. A *mara* is defined as a demon which sits upon the chests of sleepers and brings bad dreams. Most cultures seemed to characterize nightmares as being caused by demons; for example, in Germany the demon is known as an Alp, in relation to elf. Etymological confusion led English writers and painters to portray graphically the nightmare as a night + horse (mare): see [Fuseli's famous example](#). An important point concerning the dream state was proposed by Sigmund Freud at the start of the 20th century. Freud believed that a unique mental process is used within dreams that is rarely activated during the waking hours. He defined this state as the "primary process" and theorized that this state was marked by a more primitive thought process ruled by the emotions. This theory helps explain widespread occurrence of dreams in Gothic Literature as

a state during which characters express their deepest emotions of horror and terror. Freud essentially "psychologizes" the older, folk (and still prevalent) tradition that dreams foretell future events: what the ancients widely and superstitiously regarded as portents, Freud read as telling illuminations of the buried psychic life of individuals--and their success in dealing with these dream-state phantoms might very well direct their future success in life.

Entrapment & Imprisonment:

A favorite horror device of the Gothic finds a person confined or trapped, such as being shackled to a floor or hidden away in some dark cell or cloister. This sense of there being *no way out* contributes to the [claustrophobic](#) psychology of Gothic space.

Example: Poe's "Fall of the House of Usher." Madeline Usher is buried alive in a coffin (the ultimate entrapment) to cure a strange malady but then left by Roderick who thinks she is dead. The reader experiences the full Gothic horror of her awakening within her own tomb. For an illustration of imprisonment from a Gothic chapbook, visit [*Douglas Castle; or, the Cell of Mystery*](#)

The Explained Supernatural Bearing close similarities to what Todorov will later term the "[uncanny](#)," the explained supernatural is a genre of the Gothic in which the laws of everyday reality remain intact and permit an explanation or even dismissal of allegedly supernatural phenomena. Example: In Ann Radcliffe's novels, the author allows both the character and reader to question throughout the entire novel whether the weird phenomena described are happening in a setting of known laws of nature or in a setting where miracles or supernatural intervention must be in place to account for the strange events. At the end of the novel Radcliffe always reveals her rationalist allegiances by identifying normal explanations for what seemed supernatural events.

Exorcism Exorcism is the religiously based act of forcing the Devil or a demon from the body of a possessed person. This act is usually performed by a religious figure, such as a priest or shaman, and involves the performing of rituals. Various cultures including the Greeks, Babylonians and Egyptians all had forms of what we term today as exorcism. For instance, the Babylonian exorcism consisted of the formation and eventual destruction of a clay doll fashioned in the shape of the demon. Supposedly, with the destruction of the doll the Devil or demon would be forced from the mortal body. Many cultures and religions practice the act of exorcism to this day. It is known that the current Pope of the Roman Catholic Church has participated in an exorcism although he refuses to divulge the exact details.

The Female Gothic One of the earliest forms of Gothic literature, the Female Gothic often aims to socialize and educate its female readers and is usually morally conservative. Yet the Female Gothic can also express criticism of patriarchal, male-dominated structures and serve as an expression of female independence. This form is often centered on gender differences and oppression. Female Gothic works usually include a female protagonist who is pursued and persecuted by a villainous patriarchal figure in unfamiliar settings and terrifying landscape. While achieving a considerable degree of terror and chills, the Female Gothic usually eschews the more overt and graphic scenes of violence and sexual perversion found in [the literature of horror](#), often opting for the "[explained supernatural](#)" instead of the real thing. This kind of fiction first achieved controversial prominence in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. The initial development of this form was led by writers such as Clara Reeve, Sophia Lee, and Anne Radcliffe, and then later by Mary Shelley, the Brontes and

Christina Rossetti ("Goblin Market"). A durable strain of the Gothic, it can be found everywhere in later 19th and 20th century women writers and even in the Harlequin romances of today.

Grotesque (1) This term originated from oddly shaped ornaments found within Roman dwellings, or grottoes, during the first century. From a literary standpoint, this term implies a mutation of the characters, plants and/or animals. This mutation transforms the normal features and/or behaviors into veritable extremes that are meant to be frightening and/or disturbingly comic (Cornwell 273). Example: An example of the term grotesque can be found within the short story "Rappaccini's Daughter." Within the tale, the flowers found within the garden of the inventor have been mutated into beautiful harbingers of death. While the physical features of the plants have grown more exquisite, their interior workings have become a frightening caricature of normal plant-life.

(2) The term grotesque also defines a work in which two separate modes, comedy and tragedy, are mixed. The result is a disturbing fiction wherein comic circumstances prelude horrific tragedy and vice versa.

The Haunted Castle or House

A dwelling that is inhabited by or visited regularly by a ghost or other supposedly supernatural being. Examples: Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto*. Walpole's novel first introduced to gothic literature its single most influential convention, the haunted castle. The castle is the main setting of the story and the center of activity. It is an old, dark, decaying castle plagued by an elf who finds herself haunted by that "horrid paper." Some other novels that retool this durable gothic convention include the haunted house in *The Amityville Horror* by Jay Anson and *Psycho* by Robert Bloch. *Coastal Ghosts* by Nancy Rhyne offers a study of haunted houses in our Georgia and South Carolina low country.

Incubus The incubus is characterized as a male demon who forces himself sexually upon mortal women as they sleep. This type of coupling is theorized to result in the subsequent births of demons, witches, sorcerers or children with noted deformities. Legend attests that the incubus and his female counterpart, the [succubus](#), were angels fallen from Heaven. The belief in incubii was very strong during the Middle Ages and stories of such attacks were common.

Inquisition The Inquisition was a permanent institution in the Catholic Church charged with the eradication of heresies. The judge, or inquisitor, could bring suit against anyone. The accused had to testify against himself and did not have the right to face and question his accuser; torture became a frequent means of soliciting testimony from the accused. It was even acceptable to take testimony from criminals, persons of bad reputation, excommunicated people, and heretics. The accused did not have right to counsel, and blood relationship did not exempt one from the duty to testify against the accused. Sentences could not be appealed. Abuses by local Inquisitions early on led to reform and regulation by Rome, and in the 14th century intervention by secular authorities became common. At the end of the 15th century, under Ferdinand and Isabel, the Spanish inquisition became independent of Rome. In its dealings with converted Moslems and Jews and also illuminists, the Spanish Inquisition with its notorious *autos-da-fé*, represents a particularly dark chapter in the history of the Inquisition. The presence of the Inquisition in Gothic literature functions as a synecdoche of its Lamia."

The Literature of Terror vs. the Literature of Horror: Following a distinction drawn by Ann Radcliffe in her essay "[On the Supernatural in Poetry](#)", many critics rely upon a sharp division between the literatures of terror and horror. Works of terror create a sense of uncertain apprehension that leads to a complex fear of obscure and dreadful elements (see the [sublime](#)). The essence of terror stimulates the imagination and often challenges intellectual reasoning to arrive at a somewhat plausible explanation of this ambiguous fear and anxiety. Resolution of the terror provides a means of escape. Works of horror are constructed from a maze of alarmingly concrete imagery designed to induce fear, shock, revulsion, and disgust. Horror appeals to lower mental faculties, such as curiosity and voyeurism. Elements of horror render the reader incapable of resolution and subject the reader's mind to a state of inescapable confusion and chaos. The inability to intellectualize horror inflicts a sense of obscure despair.

The Marvelous vs. the Uncanny According to Tsvetan Todorov, a certain hesitation exists throughout a Gothic tale: the hesitation of the reader in knowing what the rules are in the game of reading. Can our understanding of familiar perceptions of reality account for strange goings-on or do we have to appeal to the *extraordinary* to account for the setting and circumstances of the mysterious story? At the novel's close, the reader makes a decision, often apart from the character's or narrator's point of view (see [unreliable narrator](#)), as to the laws that are governing the novel. If she decides that new laws of nature must be in place for the phenomena to occur, the novel is classified in the genre of "the marvelous," also called supernatural accepted. If she decides that the laws of nature as she knows them can remain unchanged and still allow for the phenomena described, the novel is in the genre of "the uncanny," or supernatural explained.

Masochism The word "masochism" is derived from Chevalier Leopold von Sacher-Masoch, an Austrian writer. Masochism is a psychosexual perversion where one person gains erotic pleasure by having pain inflicted on them. A looser definition is used to describe the behavior of a person who actively seeks out pain and/or humiliation.

Mist A grouping of water particles due to a change in atmosphere. This convention in Gothic Literature is often used to obscure objects (see Burke's notion of the [sublime](#)) by reducing visibility or to prelude the insertion of a terrifying person or thing. Example: Within the short story "The Mist," written by Stephen King, a typical summer day in Maine is transformed into a strange new world. An odd mist, clearly demarcated, begins to creep upon the town and by midday it has taken it over. However, terrifying creatures ranging from insect-like birds to dog-sized spiders reside within the mist and are bent upon destroying any mortal who dares venture outside. Also see the mist which preludes the horrific in George's ascent of Arthur's Seat in Hogg's *Confessions*.

Mystery A term derived from the Latin word *mysterium*. Mystery is also closely related to the Latin word *mysterium tremendum*, which is a term used to express the overwhelming awe and sense of unknowable mystery felt by those to whom some aspect of God or of divine being is revealed. Mystery is an event or situation that appears to overwhelm understanding. Its province is the unnatural, unmentioned, and unseen.

Necromancy Necromancy is the black art of communicating with the dead. This is usually done to obtain information about the future, but can also be used for other purposes, such as getting the dead to perform deeds of which humans are not capable.

The conjurer often stood in a circle, such as a pentagram, in order to protect himself from the dead spirit, yet he was often overpowered by the spirit. Examples: The most famous examples of necromancy can be found in literary renditions of the Faust legend, from Marlow to Johann Wolfgang von Goethe to Byron with his *Manfred*. In these works, Faust not only speaks with the devil in order to strike a deal but necromantically invokes various dead, famous figures from the past for his amusement and edification.

Gothic Parody A form of satirical criticism or comic mockery that imitates the style and manners of a particular writer, often employing, self-consciously and ironically, the narrative devices of the Gothic (Jones 271). Parody of the gothic often relies on travesty and burlesque: a favorite strategy transports the exotic, aristocratic, antique, and foreign setting of the gothic tale to a contemporary lower-class British setting, and lets the resulting dislocation indict both gothic absurdity and the English taste for it. But some parodies can express some sympathy for their alleged targets, confirming Graeme Stone's recent contention that Romantic parody involves a "simultaneous commitment to exalted visions and to a renegade impulse which mockingly dissolves them" (*Parodies of the Romantic Age* xxi).

Possession The popularity of belief in demonic possession seems to have originated within Christian Theology during the Middle Ages. During this time, Christians lived in fear concerning the war being waged between God and the Devil over every mortal soul. Hence, this fear of possession seemed to culminate into an act that could be viewed by the mortal eye. This act is defined as the forced possession of a mortal body by the Devil or one of his demons. There are two types of possession and either can be voluntary or involuntary. Voluntary possession seems to involve a willing exchange in the form of some compact between evil spirit and mortal, often involving wealth, power or goods; involuntary possession occurs when the devil randomly selects an unwitting host. The two types of possession consist of the transference of the Devil or demon directly into the mortal body or the sending of the Devil or demon into the body by a third party, usually a mortal dabbler in the dark arts. Following the act, the possessed is said to show many symptoms including abnormal strength, personality changes, fits, convulsions, bodily odors resembling sulfur, lewd and lascivious actions, the ability to levitate, the ability to speak in tongues or the ability to foretell future events. Many religions acknowledge the act of possession still today, most notably the Catholic Church. There seem to be three ways in which to end a possession. These include the voluntary departure of the possessing Devil or demon, the involuntary departure of the possessing Devil or demon through an act such as < span>

The Pursued Protagonist Refers to the idea of a pursuing force that relentlessly acts in a severely negative manner on a character. This persecution often implies the notion of some sort of a curse or other form of terminal and utterly unavoidable damnation, a notion that usually suggests a return or "hangover" of traditional religious ideology to chastize the character for some real or imagined wrong against the moral order. Example: This crime and retribution pattern interestingly emerges in the work of many "free-thinkers" and political radicals of the Romantic Age, including such haunted and hounded figures as Godwin's Caleb Williams and St. Leon, Coleridge's Mariner, and Mary Shelly's Frankenstein, who both is pursued by and pursues his monster. A classic contemporary example of an infamous pursuer/pursued can be found in Anne Rice's Vampire series. These works typically employ a [villain-hero](#), the vampire, who is *both*

compelled and pursued by a greater force that causes him "to wander the earth in a state of permanent exile, persecuting others as a result of a contradiction of being which is itself the mark of his own persecution by another" (Mulvey-Roberts 115).

The Wandering Jew is perhaps the archetypically pursued/pursuing protagonist.

Pursuit of the Heroine The pursuit of a virtuous and idealistic (and usually poetically inclined) young woman by a villain, normally portrayed as a wicked, older but still potent aristocrat. While in many early Gothic novels such a chase occurs across a Mediterranean forest and/or through a subterranean labyrinth, the pursuit of the heroine is by no means limited to these settings. This pursuit represents a threat to the young lady's ideals and morals (usually meaning her virginity), to which the heroine responds in the early works with a passive courage in the face of danger; later gothic heroines progressively become more active and occasionally effective in their attempts to escape this pursuit and indict patriarchy. Examples: The pursuit of the heroine can be physical, such as in Ann Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, or more of an emotional/mental pursuit, as found in Joyce Carol Oates "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?"

Revenant The return of the dead to terrorize or to settle some score with the living. Examples: See "The Ostler" (first published in the Christmas 1855 number of *Household Words*), which redeploys the figure of the revenant or ghostly being who "returns" to life to achieve its sensational effects. The Dream Woman is a knife-wielding [succubus](#) whose horrid appearance at her victim's bedside is one of Wilkie Collins's best night shades and jolting moments: "Between the foot of his bed and the closed door there stood a woman with a knife in her hand, looking at him. He was stricken speechless with terror, but he did not lose the preternatural clearness of his faculties, and he never took his eyes off the woman. She said not a word as they stared each other in the face, but she began to move slowly towards the left-hand side of the bed. Speechless, with no expression in her face, with no noise following her footfall, she came closer and closer and stopped and slowly raised the knife. He laid his right arm over his throat to save it; but, as he saw the knife coming down, threw his hand across the bed to the right side, and jerked his body over that way just as the knife descended on the mattress within an inch of his shoulder."

Revenge Revenge is characterized as the act of repaying someone for a harm that the person has caused; the idea also points back generically to one of the key influences upon Gothic literature: the revenge tragedies of Elizabethan and Jacobean drama. Revenge may be enacted upon a loved one, a family member, a friend, an object or even an area. Within Gothic Literature, revenge is notably prominent and can be enacted by or upon mortals as well as spirits. Revenge can take many forms, such as harm to body, harm to loved ones, and harm to family. The most Gothic version of revenge in Gothic Literature is the idea that it can be a guiding force in the revenance of the dead.

Romanticism/Dark Romanticism Why does the Romantic era offer, amidst its soaring affirmations of the human imagination and the passions, powerful explorations of the dark side of human nature? Why, right alongside (or maybe just beneath the surface of) the dreams of "natural piety," the dignity of the individual, and the redemptive power of art do we find the nightmare world of the gothic, the grotesque, and the psychotic? Critics and literary historians have come up with three main ideas: 1. the [sleep of reason produces monsters](#): the Romantic rebellion against Right Reason undermines the moral, primarily didactic role of art, opening it up to all kinds of previously forbidden or irrational and maybe even immoral subjects; an aesthetics based on the imagination can

just as well lead us down a "dark chasm" as deliver us to a new paradise. 2. "reason" is in-itself a kind of sleep (Blake calls it "Newton's stony sleep"); over-reliance on rationalism will invariably breed fascination with the terms it banishes; we remember that the first gothic novels came during the zenith of the Enlightenment; this is essentially a Freudian model: the return of repressed content to haunt the official aesthetic doctrine--the eruption of the id upon a too restrictive super-ego. 3. "sinners in the hands of an angry God": this theory stresses the return of traditional understandings of guilt and divine retribution upon the freethinkers of this revolutionary age; this is a rich source of terror, from Coleridge's "Rime of the Ancient Mariner" to Shelley's *Frankenstein*. James Rieger calls it the "Protestant as Prometheus" complex. (See the [Wandering Jew](#) entry.)

Sadism The word "sadism" was coined to describe the writings of Donatien-Alphonse-Francois, the Marquis de Sade. Sadism is a sexual perversion where one person gains gratification by inflicting physical or mental pain on others. It can also mean a delight in torment or excessive cruelty.

Sensibility Deals with an acutely sensitive response to the afflicted or pathetic in literature, art, and life. Originally formulated by Adam Smith as a positive force of compassion and moral sympathy, sensibility soon degenerated into something of a cult wherein its members (usually upper-class women or those aspiring to be so) proved their exquisite sensitivity through tears, blushes, palpitations, and fits of fainting. Many gothic heroines exhibit sensibility, but the term becomes a hotly contested one in the culture wars of the 1780's and '90's.'

Examples: We generally associate sensibility with the poetic reveries of Radcliffe's heroines and her many followers. Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey* and *Sense and Sensibility* parody this sentiment. An example of how slippery the term can be in terms of gender and politics: Mary Wollstonecraft accuses Edmund Burke of a gothic sensibility in his swooning sympathy for the sufferings of the French court.

To learn more, visit UVa's [Dictionary of Sensibility](#)

Somnambulism Somnambulism, better known as sleepwalking, exists as a type of dissociated mental state which occurs during sleep. Studies indicate that sleepwalking occurs during the period of "deep sleep," a time during which no dreams are taking place within the mind of the sleeper. While sleepwalking, a person may engage in a varied array of motor activities deemed as common during waking life. Many onlookers find this act to be frightening, noting that the sleepwalker is not propelled by any type of lucid mental activity. Through sleepwalking, characters often reveal hidden sources of stress and replay acts of guilt. Example *par excellence*: Charles Brockden Brown's *Edgar Huntly*

The Sublime The definition of this key term has evolved from the early days of Longinus through to various 18th and 19th century formulations. Always a contested term, the idea of the sublime is essential to an understanding of Gothic poetics and, especially, the attempt to defend or justify the literature of terror. Longinus believes that power is the essence of the sublime style, as it literally moves or transports its hearers, and he offers among many examples a rare reference to the Hebrew scriptures, Genesis 1:3, "And God said, Let there be light; and there was light." This is an example of the absolute power in which word and effect are one. Longinus also foreshadows the

development of the sublime in England in his attention to the rhetorical effect of natural forces: "Nature impels us to admire not a small river that ministers to our necessities but the Nile, the Ister, and the Rhine." "Samuel Monk's study of the sublime argues that the term became a repository for all the emotions and literary effects unacceptable to the dominant neo-classical virtues of balance, order and rationality" (Milbank). Edmund Burke locates the sublime purely in terms of fear, the source of which is the "king of terrors" himself-- Death-- and a sense of possible threat to the subject's self-preservation: "In essence, whatever is fitted in any sort to excite the ideas of pain, and danger, or is conversant about terrible objects, or operates in a manner analogous to terror, is a source of the sublime; it is productive of the strongest emotion which the mind is capable of feeling" ([*A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful* \[1759\]](#).) The threat must not be direct, else "delight" (a lesser form of literary "pleasure") cannot be experienced from the sublime moment. Burke's insistence on framing and distancing the sublime moment helped shape a Gothic aesthetic in which obscurity, suspense, uncertainty, ambivalence, and play attend presentations of terror. Anna Letitia Aikin (later Barbauld) and John Aikin follow Burke's lead but go a step further in proclaiming a positive "pleasure" to be derived from the sublime in ways that anticipate later romantic theorists: "A strange and unexpected event awakens in the mind, and keeps it on the stretch; and where the agency of invisible beings is introduced, of 'forms unseen, and far mightier than we,' our imagination, darting forth, explores with rapture the new world which is laid open to its view, and rejoices in the expansion of its powers. Passion and fancy cooperating elevate the soul to its highest pitch; and the pain of terror is lost in amazement" ("[On the Pleasure Derived from Objects of Terror](#)"). Kant's *Critique of Judgement* (1790) sees sublime pleasure as disinterested because it seeks no knowledge of the object. In Kant the sublime becomes a heightened and ennobled capacity of thinking in the human subject which enables the mind to rise above its physical limitations after an initial check to its vital forces. In essence for Kant, the sublime is not so much located in the direct experiencing of a terrific object but in the way that experience signals an apprehension of the infinite capacities of the mind's imaginative powers. (Indeed, in language that recalls Wordsworth's sublime mountain ascents, Kant speaks of the mind *usurping* upon nature during these visionary moments.)

Succubus The succubus is characterized as a female counterpart of the incubus. The core of this belief is said to stem from the legend in Jewish folklore of a demon named Lilith. In later Jewish literature, Lilith is identified as Adam's first wife who ran from him instead of acting as his subservient. Following, God sent three angels to bring her back to Adam. If she refused, one of her children would be killed each day. Lilith refused and, in an act of vengeance, vowed that she would bring harm to future infants of other mothers. Belief in Lilith still persists, in some cultures, to this day.

Supernatural Gadgetry Supernatural gadgetry refers to the physical elements in Gothic works that represent the means by which the various supernatural beings and or powers display their presence and uncanny abilities. Some common examples of supernatural props are "vocal and mobile portraits; veiled statues that come to life; animated skeletons; doors, gates, portals, hatchways, and other means of egress which open and close independently and inappropriately; secret messages or manuscripts delivered by specters; forbidden chambers or sealed compartments; and casket lids seen in the act of rising" (Frank 437). Example: Supernatural gadgetry can be found in John and A. L. Aikin's "Sir Bertrand; A Fragment". When Sir Bertrand first attempts to enter the antique mansion, the light moves

about by some unknown power, and the door mysteriously slams shut as soon as the knight enters the castle. And a casket lid mysteriously opens to reveal a sarcophagal *belle dame*.

Superstition A pivotal term for the religious and political dimensions of Gothic Literature, especially its reception. "Superstition" generally gathered its sharply negative connotations in the late 18th century from two sources: 1) Protestant disdain for the ritualistic and miraculous character of Catholic worship; 2) rationalist opposition to unexamined systems of belief that impeded the search for truth (see the early Wordsworth: "Science with joy saw Superstition fly / Before the lustre of Religion's eye; . . . / No shadowy forms entice the soul aside, / Secure she walks, Philosophy her guide"). The term is also frequently invoked by conservative writers to characterize the potential volatility of the masses (*The Monthly Review*, 1794: "that superstition which debilitates the mind, that ignorance which propagates terror"). Or it can figure as a kind of cultural malaise, a psychic compensation for a time of troubles (Wordsworth in his "Preface" to *The Borderers* on the character of Rivers, but also of his age: "Having shaken off the obligations of religion and morality in a dark and tempestuous age, it is probable that such a character will be infected with a tinge of superstition"). In his discussion of the sublime, Kant distinguishes the good religious life, which is characterized by a kind of quiet sublimity, from superstition: "The latter establishes in the mind, not reverence for the sublime, but fear and apprehension of the all-powerful Being to whose will the terrified man sees himself subject, without according Him any high esteem." Early critics of the Gothic constantly accuse it of appealing to and fueling readers' inclination for "superstition."

Freud's *Unheimlich* (the Uncanny) "For Freud, the uncanny derives its terror not from something external, alien, or unknown but--on the contrary--from something strangely familiar which defeats our efforts to separate ourselves from it" (Morris 222). According to Freud, we find things to be uncanny (*unheimlich*) when they are familiar to us (*heimlich* or "belonging to the home") yet also somehow foreign or disturbing. Uncanny feelings can arise when something seemingly inconsequential in our everyday lives calls forth repressed content stemming from past experience, especially experiences linking back to childhood and our passage into sexual awareness. Examples: A non-gothic example of this train of association can be found in Virginia Woolf's story "The Mark on the Wall." The story in itself isn't all that scary, but it is a good example of the uncanny. Woolf's story tells of a woman who notices a small mark on the wall just above the mantle. Rather than getting up from her chair to investigate the mark, she sits and ponders what the mark could be—exploring everything from a small nail hole to the shadow of some small protrusion. The mark itself isn't all that unfamiliar—after all how many marks do we see upon walls on a daily basis? The mark however does evoke a number of strange thoughts within the narrator, including a lyrical meditation about people who lived in the house before her.

Transformations (Shape-changing) The metamorphosis of one being into another. Examples: H. G. Wells' *The Island of Dr. Moreau* and Stevenson's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* feature horrid transformations as part of their warning about the dangers of unreflective scientific progress. King's protean It takes the convention to furthest extreme.

Unreliable Narrator A narrator tells a story and determines the story's point of view. An unreliable narrator, however, does not understand the importance of a particular situation or

makes an incorrect conclusion or assumption about an event that he/she witnesses. An important issue in determining the *The Turn of the Screw*.

Vampire A word of Slavonic origin, a vampire is a preternatural being of a malignant nature (or a reanimated corpse) who seeks nourishment and often bodily harm by sucking the blood of the living. Usually but not always described as highly sexual beings, vampires are often but not exclusively found in European folklore. Examples of vampires found in Gothic Literature include John Polidori's "The Vampyre," Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (which tells the story of a Transylvanian vampire Count Dracula who can only be defeated by the occultist Van Helsing), and Ann Rice's *Interview with the Vampire*, which brings to the forefront the old bloodsucker's status as a villain-hero and even (gasp) invites our sympathy for him.

Villain-Hero (Satanic, Promethean, Byronic Hero) The villain of a story who either 1) poses as a hero at the beginning of the story or 2) simply possesses enough heroic characteristics (charisma, sympathetic past, etc) so that either the reader or the other characters see the villain-hero as more than a simple charlatan or bad guy. Three closely related types exist: **Satanic Hero:** a Villain-Hero whose nefarious deeds and justifications of them make him a more interesting character than the rather bland good hero. Example: The origin of this prototype comes from Romantic misreadings of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, whose Satan poets like Blake and Shelley regarded as a far more compelling figure than the moralistic God of Book III of the epic. Gothic examples: Beckford's *Vathek*, Radcliffe's *Montoni*, Wordsworth's *Rivers* (in *The Borderers*); Polidori's *Ruthven* and just about any [vampire](#). **Promethean:** a Villain-Hero who has done good but only by performing an overreaching or rebellious act. Prometheus from ancient Greek mythology saved mankind but only after stealing fire and ignoring Zeus' order that mankind should be kept in a state of subjugation. Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* is tellingly subtitled the "Modern Prometheus." **Byronic Hero:** a later variation of the "anthithetically mixed" Villain-Hero. Aristocratic, suave, moody, handsome, solitary, secretive, brilliant, cynical, sexually intriguing, and nursing a secret wound, he is renowned because of his fatal attraction for female characters and readers and continues to occasion debate about gender issues. Example: Byron's *Childe Harold* and, more gothically, *Manfred* are the best examples, but this darkly attractive and very conflicted male figure surfaces everywhere in the 19th and 20th century gothic.

The Wandering Jew Also known as Ahasuerus, Cartaphilus, Malchus, or John Buttadeus. The term originates from a legend about a Jew who either ridiculed Jesus or refused to allow him to rest at his door on his way to the cross. As a result, Jesus condemned the Jew to roam the earth until judgement day. Some variations of the legend connect this figure to the story of Cain. God condemned Cain for killing Abel and cursed him to wander the earth with a mark upon his forehead to protect him. In Gothic works, the Wandering Jew often symbolizes the curse of immortality. Some characteristics include large, black, flashing eyes; a look of deep melancholy; a black velvet band across his forehead; slow steps; a vast knowledge of distant countries and events from long ago (Railo 191-7). Examples: from Matthew Lewis' *The Monk*. The Wandering Jew known as "the stranger" says: "No one is adequate to comprehending the misery of my lot! Fate obliges me to be constantly in movement. I am not permitted to pass more than a fortnight in the same place. I have no friend in the world, and from the restlessness of my destiny I never can acquire one. Fain would I lay down my miserable life, for I envy those who enjoy the quiet of the grave but

death eludes me, and flies from my embrace" (169).

Werewolf In European folklore, a werewolf is a normal human by day that turns into a wolf at night. These wolves eat people, animals, or even corpses. The condition can be hereditary, or acquired through a werewolf bite. Also, some werewolves are able to control when they change shape, while others are unavoidably turned by the fullmoon. In countries where wolves are not common animals, people can change into other dangerous animals. There is a psychological condition for people who believe themselves to be werewolves, called lycanthropy.

Witches and Witchcraft Within Gothic Fiction, the witch is normally depicted as an elderly hag-like crone or as a beautiful, seductive woman (and she is frequently both). However, the term witch applies not only to these stereotypes but also to Gypsies, heretics, and women of loose virtue. Witches, in Gothic Literature, are able to perform various acts of witchcraft including "divination; communing with spirits of the dead; maleficia and heresy; sexual magic; healing and white magic" (Ringel 254). This depiction of witches and witchcraft is quite common within Gothic Tales and has seemingly set the standard within the minds of the readers.

Allah The Creator of the Universe known as "God the Father" to Christians and "El" or "Yahweh" to the Jews. Allah^(SWT) is singular and is not human nor part of a Trinity, as in Christianity. The Holy [Quran](#) contains around 100 beautiful names (attributes) for Allah^(SWT) through which [Muslims](#) may understand and recognize the Creator of the Universe.

Allahu Akbar Literally means "[Allah](#) is the Greatest". This is perhaps the most frequently used expression around the world. [Muslims](#) use it to praise Allah^(SWT) throughout the day.

Alham Dolellah Literally means "Praise be to Allah" or "Thanks to Allah".

Aqeedah One's belief or way of thinking.

Asr The obligatory late afternoon prayer.

Assalamu Alaikum Literally means "Peace be Upon You". It is the expression used by [Muslims](#) to greet each other.

Astaghforellah Literally means "I ask forgiveness from Allah".

Auzo Bellahe Menash Shaitaner Rajim Literally means "I seek [Allah](#) refuge from the treachery of the outcasted [Satan](#)".

Ayah Literally translates as a "miracle or sign". This is the smallest unit of revelation (verse) contained in the Holy [Quran](#).

Ayat Literally translates as "miracles or signs". This refers to several verses in the Holy [Quran](#).

Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim Literally means "In the name of [Allah](#) the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful". It is recorded at the beginning of all, except one, chapter of the Holy [Quran](#).

Dajjal A great liar or deceiver. (Anti-Christ)

Dawah Missionary work to invite all people to [Islam](#).

Deen Way of life or religion.

Dua A prayer.

Dunya Human life in this world and current form.

Eid [Islamic](#) Religious holidays and occasions for celebration. [Muslims](#) have two such days: The first occurs after the month of fasting and the second in remembrance of the Prophet Abraham.

Fajr The obligatory prayer to be offered before sunrise.

Fard Something that every [Muslim](#) has to perform. (5 daily prayers, fasting, helping the needy, pilgrimage, etc.).

Fatwa Legal opinion concerning [Islamic](#) Law.

Fiqh Having a complete understanding of [Islamic](#) jurisprudence.

Fitnah Translates into "civil strife, war, riot, or satanic act".

Hadith This word literally means "sayings" and could refer to the recorded quotes of anyone. Usually, it is the title given to the collection of recorded words and actions of the prophet [Muhammad](#)^(SAW) which serve as an explanation of the meaning of the Holy [Quran](#) (the way Prophet^(SAW) taught it). Some well-known collectors of Hadith are [Imam](#) Al-Bukhari, Imam Muslim, Imam An-Nasa'i, Imam Abu Dawood, Imam At-Tirmizi, and Imam Majah.

Hajj The mandatory pilgrimage to [Mekkah](#) during a predefined period of time. Each [Muslim](#), who has the means, is required to perform this trip at least once in his/her life time.

Halal Something lawful or permitted in [Islam](#).

Haraam Something unlawful or forbidden in [Islam](#).

Imam Imam is a religious scholar or someone very knowledgeable about [Islam](#) who leads the congregational prayers.

In Sha Allah "If [Allah](#) wills" or "I pray that Allah wills".

Isha The obligatory prayer to be offered after sunset in late evening.

Islam Literally means "Submission to the Creator of the Universe". In this context, Islam is the only religion recognized by God. Its message ([There is no Deity but God](#)) was the same Message delivered by all Prophets. This divine religion was completed with revelations ([Quran](#)) given to the last Prophet [Muhammad](#)^(SAW) of Arabia.

Istighfar To ask for God's forgiveness.

Istekhara Prayer to request guidance from [Allah](#)^(SWT) on a matter of great importance.

Jahannam Hell.

Jazakallahu Khayran Literally means "May [Allah](#) reward you for your good deed."

Jannah Paradise.

Jihad To strive hard for a better way of life or to fight to defend one's life, property, freedom, and religion. It can also refer to attempt to free other people from oppression and tyranny. [Islam](#) strongly opposes Kidnapping, Terrorism, or hijacking against civilian targets, even at the time of war.

Kabah The cubed looking structure in [Mekkah](#) toward which all [Muslims](#) pray. This is the first house of worship built by Abraham^(pbuh) to glorify The Creator of the Universe.

Kafir Literally means "to cover up the truth". It is used to refer to someone who is made aware of the Truth of [Islam](#) but refuses to worship [Allah](#)^(SWT) or submit to the will of God.

Kalima

Khatmay Nabuwat It translates into "The Finality of Prophethood". It is the [Quranic](#) message to humanity that the Prophet [Muhammad](#)^(SAW) of Arabia was the last Prophet or Messenger commissioned by [Allah](#)^(SWT) to humanity.

Khalifah The religious and political head of the state for the [Muslims](#).

Kuffar Plural of [Kafir](#) meaning "Unbelievers".

Kufr Blasphemous act or speech which shows one's ungratefulness to The Creator.

La Ilaha Illallah Literally means "There is nothing worthy of worship except [Allah](#)".

Madinah/Medina The city which was the first political center of [Islam](#). The Prophet [Muhammad](#)^(SAW) grave site and [mosque](#) are located in this city.

Maghrib The obligatory prayer to be offered right after sunset.

Masjid The place of worship and prayer. Also called "[Mosque](#)".

Mekkah The sacred city located in Saudia Arabia where [Kabah](#) is situated. This is also the city where millions of [Muslims](#) perform their pilgrimage to.

Moemen A Muslim with deep devotion and belief in Allah^(SWT) and Islam.

Mosque The place of worship and prayer. Also called "[Masjid](#)".

Mubahala This is a [Quranic](#) prayer duel in which two parties who differ on fundamental [Islamic](#) teachings get together and pray face to face asking for the intervention of [Allah](#)^(SWT).

Muhammad The last Messenger of God to humanity. He was the last of the Prophets in a line which included such great prophets as Abraham, Noah, Moses, Jesus^(pbuh). No new Prophets or Messengers will ever be sent to humanity. Muhammad^(SAW) was a direct descendant of Abraham([pbuh](#)).

Munafiq A Hypocrite [Muslim](#) who will be punished worst than an Unbeliever in the hereafter.

Mushrik A polytheist or someone who puts something ahead of his/her obligation to The Creator.

Muslim The name given to the followers of the divine religion of [Islam](#). This name was first used by Abraham who is recognized as the father of Islam.

pbuh Acronym for "Peace Be Upon Him or Her". Used most often in reference to prophets of God.

pbut Acronym for "Peace Be Upon Them". Used most often in reference to prophets of God.

People of the Book This is the term used by God in the holy [Quran](#) to refer collectively to the Jews and Christians.

Qiblah The direction to [Kabah](#) in [Mekkah](#). [Muslims](#) should face the Kabah during every formal prayer.

Qiyamah The day of resurrection and judgment.

Quran The infallible holy book of the [Muslims](#). It contains the word of God in its original form and without any modifications. Refuting one single verse if the Holy Quran is equivalent to denouncing one's faith.

RA This Acronym for "Radhiallahu anhu" is used when referring to close companions of the Prophet^(SAW). It translates into "May Allah be pleased with him or her."

SAW Acronym for Arabic "Salla Allahu alaihi Wa Sallam". It means "peace be upon him", but it is used when referring to Prophet [Muhammad](#)^(SAW).

Sahabah The term referring to the close companions of the [Prophet](#)^(SAW).

Salah One the five formal and required daily prayers to be offered by all [Muslims](#).

Sawm Abstinence from food, drink, and bad habits, acts, or words from sunrise to sunset for an entire month. Fasting is required from all [Muslims](#) who are not ill.

Seerah A recount of the life and accomplishments of the Holy Prophet of Islam.

Shaikh A wise or elderly person.

Shaitan Satan; the source of all evil in this world.

Sharia The Set of Rules of Islam

Shirk The act of holding any object, concept, or person in higher esteem or devotion than [Allah](#)^(SWT).

Shura Consultation.

SWT This is the Acronym for "Subhanahu wa ta'ala" meaning "[Allah](#) is pure of having partners and He is exalted from having a son."

Sunnah A recount of the way prophet [Muhammad](#)^(SAW) conducted his life. It is meant to serve as an example for [Muslims](#) to follow.

Surah One of the 114 chapters of the Holy Quran.

Ulama The learned [Muslim](#) scholars.

Ummah The community of [Muslims](#).

Wudu Purification (ablution) to be done prior to reading [Quran](#) or offering formal prayers.

Zakah The portion of one's savings (after expenses) that needs to be donated to poor and the needy.

Zuhr The obligatory prayer to be offered at noon, after sun moves always from its zenith.

Abiegnus (Mons Abiegnus) In the lore of the [Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn](#), **Mons Abiegnus** (Latin, 'fir covered mountain') was a mythical mountain that symbolized the spiritual journey of the initiate. Borrowed from Rosicrucian symbolism, Abiegnus is visualized as the kabbalistic tree of life in the form of a subteranean mountain, with the legendary tomb of Christian Rosencreutz (symbolic of the Hermetic/Alchemical initiation) contained within.

Abiegnus The tomb of Christian Rosencreutz

Abacadabra The word **abracadabra** is known universally as the "magic word" of stage conjurers. What little is known is that it is a word of ancient origin, used by genuine magicians from about the third century. The word abracadabra is derived from a Aramaic phrase (Avarah K'Davarah) meaning, "I will create as I speak." (Harry Potter fans might recognize this spelling; however, it is not a curse.) It has appeared in Kabbalistic and Gnostic texts alike. Used in the second century in [Talismans](#) against illness, it was written in an inverted pyramid, removing a letter from each end until only one remained. Some, including mystic occultist Aleister [Crowley](#), believed the word to be related to the Gnostic God [Abraxas](#). Crowley "corrected" the spelling to *Abrahamadabra*, in order to achieve a particular [gematric](#) value.

Abramelin Commonly known as **Abramelin the Mage**, Abra Melin was a pseudo-historical wandering Eastern sage whose magick is supposedly enshrined in the fourteenth century book, *The Sacred Magick of Abramelin the Mage*, a highly-esteemed Grimoire containing a detailed and precise system of Ritual Magick. The authorship is attributed to one "Abraham the Jew," an equally mythical character. The Book of Abramelin is probably the most 'practically' used of the

old grimoires. Abramelin *Oil* is used in [Thelemic](#) and other rituals. It was dubbed "Abramelin" oil by Aleister Crowley, who adapted his own version of the biblical recipe he found in the Grimoire "*The sacred Magick of Abramelin the Mage*." Abramelin consists of varying proportions of cinnamon, myrrh, galangal (a root related to turmeric), and olive oil.

Abraaxas, also known as Abrasax, is a Gnostic solar deity associated with Yahweh, Mithras and the Celtic Belenus, as well as Yeshu (Jesus). Amulets and seals bearing the figure of Abraaxas were common in the second century, and were used as recently as the thirteenth century in the seals of the Knights Templar. By medieval times, Abraaxas was relegated to the ranks of demons. The image most associated with abraaxas is that of a composite creature with the head of a rooster, the body of a man, and legs made of serpents or scorpions. He carries a whip and shield, called wisdom and power. Abraaxas is occasionally depicted driving a chariot drawn by four horses, probably representing the elements. The word Abraaxas was first proposed by the Alexandrian Gnostic scholar Basilides. Gematrically, the letters in Abraaxas add to 365, the number of days in a solar year, and the number of Aeons, or emanations, in Gnostic cosmology. Each of the seven letters represents one of the seven planetary powers. Tertullian, speaking of Basilides' description of Abraaxas: "Afterwards broke out the heretic Basilides. He affirms that there is a supreme Deity, by name Abraaxas, by whom was created Mind, which in Greek he calls Nous; that thence sprang the Word; that of Him issued Providence, Virtue, and Wisdom; that out of these subsequently were made Principalities, powers, and Angels; that there ensued infinite issues and processions of angels; that by these angels 365 heavens were formed, and the world, in honour of Abraaxas, whose name, if computed, has in itself this number. Now, among the last of the angels, those who made this world, he places the God of the Jews latest, that is, the God of the Law and of the Prophets, whom he denies to be a God, but affirms to be an angel."

Abulafia Abraham Abulafia, a thirteenth century Jewish mystic most notable for transcribing Jewish oral [Kabbalah](#) into written form, making the information, which was previously very jealously guarded, widely available. Abulafia eschewed the study of the [Tree of Life](#), believing it to resemble Paganism too closely.

Abyss In Ritual Magick and Kabbalah, the **Abyss** is the divide between individual ego-consciousness and enlightenment/Cosmic consciousness. In the practice of Kabbalah, it is the divide between the Supernal and the lower [Sephiroth](#), the divide between the higher and lower states of existence. The abyss is the abode of the serpent [Choronzon](#).

Achamoeth is an alternate title for the Gnostic Sophia as an allegory of the sphere of the zodiac; achamoeth is equivalent to the Hebrew Chokmah, the sphere of wisdom. While the original Sophia remains within the Pleroma, Sophia-achamoeth is trapped outside.

Adept An **adept** is a magician who has attained spiritual mastery. In a magickal order, usually an initiate of a certain rank.

Adytum The inner sanctum of a [Temple](#).

Religious Holiday Calendar An interactive, illustrated calendar of religious holidays encompassing more than 300 annotated entries. Includes the Holy days of more than thirty faiths and traditions, as well as astrological and celestial events.

Sacred texts and scripture

Scriptures and other sacred texts, from ancient times to modern theological musings.

Alternative spirituality in a nutshell Basic facts about alternative spiritual traditions- history, founders, misconceptions and other basic facts to give a clearer understanding of the varieties of religious expression.

Aeon In some [Gnostic](#) cosmological models, **Aeons** are divine emanations from God, sent to redeem spirit from the material state. They reside in the [Pleroma](#), or the world of spirit. In other models, aeons are the creations of the evil [demiurge](#), each a state of existence successively grosser and denser and further removed from the [pleroma](#). In the former view, they are quite similar to the [Amesha Spentas](#) or "bounteous immortals" of [Zoroastrianism](#).

Aethyr An **aethyr** is one of a succession of worlds in the [Enochian](#) Astral planes, and the fifth element, or spirit, in Wicca and Ceremonial magick. Also, depending on tradition, a formless and invisible substance that pervades the universe.

Age of Aquarius According to most astrologers, the "Age of Aquarius" will begin with an astronomical event, when the constellation Aquarius rises on the horizon at the spring equinox. This phenomena is known as the [Precession of the equinoxes](#), with each cycle lasting about two thousand years. We are currently in the Age of Pisces according to this system. Some believe [Mithraism](#) to be based on the procession from Taurus to Aries, with the [taurobolium](#) presented as a pictorial representation of this event.

Ain From the Hebrew, nothing, or no-thing. The highest state of existence in Kabbalah. [Samadhi](#). One of the "Three veils of negative existence-" Ain (no-thing, limitless), ain soph (unlimited light), ain soph aur (absoluyte limitless light), each successive emanations from the unknowable source.

Air Alchemical symbol for **air**. One of the four alchemical elements, Air has the qualities of coolness and dryness, associations with breath, life, communication, and the holy spirit. In the Latin Alchemical language, it is Flatus, gas. In Ritual Magick and Kabbalah, it is the element overseen by the Archangel, Raphael. The ruler of Air is [Peralda](#), and the elemental spirits associated with air are [Sylphs](#). In Astrology, it rules the signs Aquarius, Gemini, and Libra. The elemental sybols are derived from the hexagram.

Akasha One of the hindu Tattwas, or elements. The substance of spirit.

Absolute A term which unfortunately is much abused and often misused even in theosophical writings. It is a convenient word in Occidental philosophy by which is described the utterly unconditioned; but it is a practice which violates both the etymology of the word and even the usage of some keen and careful thinkers as, for instance, Sir William Hamilton in his *Discussions* (3rd edition, p.13n), who apparently uses the word **absolute** in the exactly correct sense in which theosophists should use it as meaning "finished," "perfected," "completed." As Hamilton observes: "The **Absolute** is diametrically opposed to, is contradictory of, the **Infinite**." This last statement is correct, and in careful theosophical writings the word Absolute should be used in Hamilton's sense, as meaning that which is freed, unloosed, perfected, completed. **Absolute** is from the Latin **absolutum**, meaning "freed," "unloosed," and is, therefore, an exact English parallel of the Sanskrit philosophical term **moksha** or **mukti**, and more mystically of the Sanskrit

term so commonly found in Buddhist writings especially, *nirvana* -- an extremely profound and mystical thought. Hence, to speak of parabrahman as being the Absolute may be a convenient usage for Occidentals who understand neither the significance of the term parabrahman nor the etymology, origin, and proper usage of the English word Absolute -- "proper" outside of a common and familiar employment. In strict accuracy, therefore, the student should use the word Absolute only when he means what the Hindu philosopher means when he speaks of moksha or mukti or of a mukta -- i.e., one who has obtained mukti or freedom, one who has arrived at the acme or summit of all evolution possible in any one hierarchy, although as compared with hierarchies still more sublime, such jivanmukta is but a mere beginner. The Silent Watcher in theosophical philosophy is an outstanding example of one who can be said to be absolute in the fully accurate meaning of the word. It is obvious that the Silent Watcher is not parabrahman. (*See also Moksha, Relativity*)

Adept The word means one who is "skilled"; hence, even in our ordinary life, a chemist, a physician, a theologian, a mechanic, an engineer, a teacher of languages, an astronomer, are all "adepts," persons who are skilled, each in his own profession. In theosophical writings, however, an Adept is one who is skilled in the esoteric wisdom, in the teachings of life.

Agnishvatta(s)(Sanskrit) A compound of two words: *agni*, "fire"; *shvatta*, "tasted" or "sweetened," from *svad*, verb-root meaning "to taste" or "to sweeten." Therefore, literally one who has been delighted or sweetened by fire. A class of pitris: our solar ancestors as contrasted with the barhishads, our lunar ancestors. The kumaras, agnishvattas, and manasaputras are three groups or aspects of the same beings: the kumaras represent the aspect of original spiritual purity untouched by gross elements of matter. The agnishvattas represent the aspect of their connection with the sun or solar spiritual fire. Having tasted or been "sweetened" by the spiritual fire -- the fire of intellectuality and spirituality -- they have been purified thereby. The manasaputras represent the aspect of intellectuality -- the functions of higher intellect. The agnishvattas and manasaputras are two names for the same class or host of beings, and set forth or signify or represent two different aspects or activities of this one class of beings. Thus, for instance, a man may be said to be a kumara in his spiritual parts, an agnishvatta in his buddhic-manasic parts, and a manasaputra in his purely manasic aspect. Other beings could be called kumaras in their highest aspects, as for instance the beasts, but they are not imbodyed agnishvattas or manasaputras. The agnishvattas are the solar spiritual-intellectual parts of us, and therefore are our inner teachers. In preceding manvantaras, they had completed their evolution in the realms of physical matter, and when the evolution of lower beings had brought these latter to the proper state, the agnishvattas came to the rescue of these who had only the physical "creative fire," thus inspiring and enlightening these lower lunar pitris with spiritual and intellectual energies or "fires." When this earth's planetary chain shall have reached the end of its seventh round, we, as then having completed the evolutionary course for this planetary chain, will leave this planetary chain as dhyanchohans, agnishvattas; but the others now trailing along behind us -- the present beasts -- will be the lunar pitris of the next planetary chain to come. While it is correct to say that these three names appertain to the same class of beings, nevertheless each name has its own significance in the occult teaching, which is why the three names are used with three distinct meanings. Imagine an unconscious god-spark beginning its evolution in any one solar or maha-manvantara. We may call it a kumara, a being of original spiritual purity, but with a destiny through karmic evolution connected with the realms of matter. At the

other end of the line, at the consummation of the evolution in this maha-manvantara, when the evolving entity has become a fully self-conscious god or divinity, its proper appellation then is agnishvatta, for it has been "sweetened" or purified by means of the working through it of the spiritual fires inherent in itself. Now then, when such an agnishvatta assumes the role of a bringer of mind or of intellectual light to a lunar pitri which it overshadows and in which a ray from it incarnates, it then, although in its own realm an agnishvatta, functions as a manasaputra or child of mind or mahat. A brief analysis of the compound elements of these three names may be useful. **Kumara** is from **ku** meaning "with difficulty" and **mara** meaning "mortal." The significance of the word therefore can be paraphrased as "mortal with difficulty," and the meaning usually given to it by Sanskrit scholars as "easily dying" is wholly exoteric and amusing, and doubtless arose from the fact that kumara is a word frequently used for child or boy, everybody knowing that young children "die easily." The idea therefore is that purely spiritual beings, although ultimately destined by evolution to pass through the realms of matter, become mortal, i.e., material, only with difficulty. **Agnishvatta** has the meaning stated above, "delighted" or "pleased" or "sweetened," i.e., "purified" by fire -- which we may render in two ways: either as the fire of suffering and pain in material existence producing great fiber and strength of character, i.e., spirituality; or, perhaps still better from the standpoint of occultism, as signifying an entity or entities who have become one in essence through evolution with the aethery fire of spirit. **Manasaputra** is a compound of two words: **manasa**, "mental" or "intellectual," from the word **manas**, "mind," and **putra**, "son" or "child," therefore a child of the cosmic mind -- a "mind-born son" as H. P. Blavatsky phrases it. (**See also Pitris, Lunar Pitris**)

Ahankara (Sanskrit) A compound word: *aham*, "I"; *kara*, "maker" or "doer," from the verb-root *kri*, "to do," "to make"; egoism, personality. The egoistical and mayavi principle in man, born of the ignorance or avidya which produces the notion of the "I" as being different from the universal One-Self.

Akasa (Sanskrit) The word means "brilliant," "shining," "luminous." The fifth kosmic element, the fifth essence or "quintessence," called Aether by the ancient Stoics; but it is not the ether of science. The ether of science is merely one of its lower elements. In the Brahmanical scriptures akasa is used for what the northern Buddhists call svabhavat, more mystically Adi-buddhi -- "primeval buddhi"; it is also mulaprakriti, the kosmical spirit-substance, the reservoir of Being and of beings. The Hebrew Old Testament refers to it as the kosmic "waters." It is universal substantial *space*; also mystically Alaya. (**See also Mulaprakriti, Alaya**)

Alaya (Sanskrit) A compound word: *a*, "not"; *laya*, from the verb-root *li*, "to dissolve"; hence "the indissoluble." The universal soul; the basis or root or fountain of all beings and things -- the universe, gods, monads, atoms, etc. Mystically identical with akasa in the latter's highest elements, and with mulaprakriti in the latter's essence as "root-producer" or "root-nature." (**See also Akasa, Buddhi, Mulaprakriti**) [NOTE: *The Secret Doctrine* (1:49) mentions Alaya in the Yogachara system, most probably referring to *alaya-vijnana*, but adds that with the "Esoteric 'Buddhists' . . . 'Alaya' has a double and even a triple meaning." -- PUBLISHER]

Antaskarana (Sanskrit) Perhaps better spelled as antahkarana. A compound word: *antar*, "interior," "within"; *karana*, sense organ. Occultists explain this word as the bridge between the higher and lower manas or between the spiritual ego and *personal* soul of man. Such is H. P. Blavatsky's definition. As a matter of fact there are several antahkaranas in the human septenary constitution -- one for every *path* or *bridge* between any two of the several monadic centers in

man. Man is a microcosm, therefore a unified composite, a unity in diversity; and the antahkaranas are the links of vibrating consciousness-substance uniting these various centers.

Arupa (Sanskrit) A compound word meaning "formless," but this word formless is not to be taken so strictly as to mean that there is no form of any kind whatsoever; it merely means that the forms in the spiritual worlds (the arupa-lokas) are of a spiritual type or character, and of course far more ethereal than are the forms of the rupa-lokas. Thus in the arupa-lokas, or the spiritual worlds or spheres or planes, the vehicle or body of an entity is to be conceived of rather as an enclosing sheath of energetic substance. We can conceive of an entity whose form or body is entirely of electrical substance -- as indeed our own bodies are in the last analysis of modern science. But such an entity with an electrical body, although distinctly belonging to the rupa worlds, and to one of the lowest rupa worlds, would merely, by comparison with our own gross physical bodies, seem to us to be bodiless or formless. (*See also* Rupa, Loka)

Asana (Sanskrit) A word derived from the verbal root *as*, signifying "to sit quietly." Asana, therefore, technically signifies one of the peculiar postures adopted by Hindu ascetics, mostly of the hatha yoga school. Five of these postures are usually enumerated, but nearly ninety have been noted by students of the subject. A great deal of quasi-magical and mystical literature may be found devoted to these various postures and collateral topics, and their supposed or actual psychological value when assumed by devotees; but, as a matter of fact, a great deal of this writing is superficial and has very little indeed to do with the actual occult and esoteric training of genuine occultists. One is instinctively reminded of other quasi-mystical practices, as, for instance, certain genuflections or postures followed in the worship of the Christian Church, to which particular values are sometimes ascribed by fanatic devotees. Providing that the position of the body be comfortable so that the mind is least distracted, genuine meditation and spiritual and actual introspection can be readily and successfully attained by any earnest student without the slightest attention being paid to these various postures. A man sitting quietly in his armchair, or lying in his bed at night, or sitting or lying on the grass in a forest, can more readily enter the inner worlds than by adopting and following any one or more of these various asanas, which at the best are physiological aids of relatively small value. (*See also* Samadhi)

Asat (Sanskrit) A term meaning the "unreal" or the manifested universe; in contrast with sat, the real. In another and even more mystical sense, asat means even beyond or higher than sat, and therefore asat -- "not sat." In this significance, which is profoundly occult and deeply mystical, asat really signifies the unevolved or rather unmanifested nature of parabrahman -- far higher than sat, which is the reality of manifested existence.

Ascending Arc or Luminous Arc This term, as employed in theosophical occultism, signifies the passage of the life-waves or life-streams of evolving monads upwards along, on, and through the globes of the chain of any celestial body, the earth's chain included. Every celestial body (including the earth) is one member in a limited series or group of globes. These globes exist on different cosmic planes in a rising series. The life-waves or life-streams during any manvantara of such a chain circle or cycle around these globes in periodical surges or impulses. The ascent from the physical globe upwards is called the ascending arc; the descent through the more spiritual and ethereal globes downwards to the physical globe is called the descending arc. (*See also* Planetary Chain)

Asrama (Sanskrit) A word derived from the root *sram*, signifying "to make efforts," "to strive"; with the particle *a*, which in this case gives force to the verbal root *sram*. Asrama has at least two main significations. The first is that of a college or school or a hermitage, an abode of ascetics,

etc.; whereas the second meaning signifies a period of effort or striving in the religious life or career of a Brahmana of olden days. These periods of life in ancient times in Hindustan were four in number: the first, that of the student or brahmacharin; second, the period of life called that of the grihastha or householder -- the period of married existence when the Brahmana took his due part in the affairs of men, etc.; third, the vanaprastha, or period of monastic seclusion, usually passed in a vana, or wood or forest, for purposes of inner recollection and spiritual meditation; and fourth, that of the bhikshu or religious mendicant, meaning one who has completely renounced the distractions of worldly life and has turned his attention wholly to spiritual affairs. **Brahmasrama.** In modern esoteric or occult literature, the compound term Brahmasrama is occasionally used to signify an initiation chamber or secret room or adytum where the initiate or neophyte is striving or making efforts to attain union with Brahman or the inner god.

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Astral body This is the popular term for the model-body, the linga-sarira. It is but slightly less material than is the physical body, and is in fact the model or framework around which the physical body is builded, and from which, in a sense, the physical body flows or develops as growth proceeds. It is the vehicle of prana or life-energy, and is, therefore, the container of all the energies descending from the higher parts of the human constitution by means of the pranic stream. The astral body precedes in time the physical body, and is the pattern around which the physical body is slavishly molded, atom by atom. In one sense the physical body may be called the deposit or dregs or lees of the astral body; the astral body likewise in its turn is but a deposit from the auric egg.

Astral light The astral light corresponds in the case of our globe, and analogically in the case of our solar system, to what the linga-sarira is in the case of an individual man. Just as in man the linga-sarira or astral body is the vehicle or carrier of prana or life-energy, so is the astral light the carrier of the cosmic jiva or cosmic life-energy. To us humans it is an invisible region surrounding our earth, as H. P. Blavatsky expresses it, as indeed it surrounds every other physical globe; and among the seven kosmic principles it is the most material excepting one, our physical universe. The astral light therefore is, on the one hand, the storehouse or repository of all the energies of the kosmos on their way downwards to manifest in the material spheres -- of our solar system in general as well as of our globe in particular; and, on the other hand, it is the receptacle or magazine of whatever passes out of the physical sphere on its upward way. Thirdly, it is a kosmic "picture-gallery" or indelible record of whatever takes place on the astral and physical planes; however, this last phase of the functions of the astral light is the least in importance and real interest. The astral light of our own globe, and analogically of any other physical globe, is the region of the kama-loka, at least as concerns the intermediate and lower parts of the kama-loka; and all entities that die pass through the astral light on their way upwards, and in the astral light throw off or shed the kama-rupa at the time of the second death. The solar system has its own astral light in general, just as every globe in the universal solar system has its astral light in particular, in each of these last cases being a thickening or materializing or concreting around the globe of the general astral substance forming the astral light of the solar system. The astral light, strictly speaking, is simply the lees or dregs of akasa and exists in steps or stages of increasing ethereality. The more closely it surrounds any globe, the grosser and more material it is. It is the receptacle of all the vile and horrible emanations from earth and earth beings, and is therefore in parts filled with earthly pollutions. There is a

constant interchange, unceasing throughout the solar manvantara, between the astral light on the one hand, and our globe earth on the other, each giving and returning to the other. Finally, the astral light is with regard to the material realms of the solar system the copy or reflection of what the akasa is in the spiritual realms. The astral light is the mother of the physical, just as the spirit is the mother of the akasa; or, inversely, the physical is merely the concretion of the astral, just as the akasa is the veil or concretion of the highest spiritual. Indeed, the astral and physical are one, just as the akasic and the spiritual are one.

Astrology The astrology of the ancients was indeed a great and noble science. It is a term which means the "science of the celestial bodies." Modern astrology is but the tattered and rejected outer coating of real, ancient astrology; for that truly sublime science was the doctrine of the origin, of the nature, of the being, and of the destiny of the solar bodies, of the planetary bodies, and of the beings who dwell on them. It also taught the science of the relations of the parts of kosmic nature among themselves, and more particularly as applied to man and his destiny as forecast by the celestial orbs. From that great and noble science sprang up an exoteric pseudo-science, derived from the Mediterranean and Asian practice, eventuating in the modern scheme called astrology -- a tattered remnant of ancient wisdom. In actual fact, genuine archaic astrology was one of the branches of the ancient Mysteries, and was studied to perfection in the ancient Mystery schools. It had throughout all ancient time the unqualified approval and devotion of the noblest men and of the greatest sages. Instead of limiting itself as modern so-called astrology does to a system based practically entirely upon certain branches of mathematics, in archaic days the main body of doctrine which astrology then contained was transcendental metaphysics, dealing with the greatest and most abstruse problems concerning the universe and man. The celestial bodies of the physical universe were considered in the archaic astrology to be not merely time markers, or to have vague relations of a psychomagnetic quality as among themselves -- although indeed this is true -- but to be the vehicles of starry spirits, bright and living gods, whose very existence and characteristics, individually as well as collectively, made them the governors and expositors of destiny.

Asvattha (Sanskrit) The mystical tree of knowledge, the mystical tree of kosmical life and being, represented as growing in a reversed position: the branches extending downwards and the roots upwards. The branches typify the visible kosmical universe, the roots the invisible world of spirit. The universe among the ancients of many nations was portrayed or figured under the symbol of a tree, of which the roots sprang from the divine heart of things, and the trunk and the branches and the branchlets and the leaves were the various planes and worlds and spheres of the kosmos. The fruit of this kosmic tree contained the seeds of future "trees," being the entities which had attained through evolution the end of their evolutionary journey, such as men and the gods -- themselves universes in the small, and destined in the future to become kosmic entities when the cycling wheel of time shall have turned through long aeons on its majestic round. In fact, every living thing, and so-called inanimate things also, are trees of life, with their roots above in the spiritual realms, with their trunks passing through the intermediate spheres, and their branches manifesting in the physical realms.

Atman (Sanskrit) The root of *atman* is hardly known; its origin is uncertain, but the general meaning is that of "self." The highest part of man -- self, pure consciousness per se. The essential and radical power or faculty in man which gives to him, and indeed to every other entity or thing, its knowledge or sentient consciousness of selfhood. This is not the ego.

This principle (atman) is a universal one; but during incarnations its lowest parts take on attributes, because it is linked with the buddhi, as the buddhi is linked with the manas, as the

manas is linked to the kama, and so on down the scale. Atman is also sometimes used of the universal self or spirit which is called in the Sanskrit writings Brahman (neuter), and the Brahman or universal spirit is also called the paramatman. Man is rooted in the kosmos surrounding him by three principles, which can hardly be said to be *above* the first or atman, but are, so to say, that same atman's highest and most glorious parts. The inmost link with the Unutterable was called in ancient India by the term "self," which has often been mistranslated "soul." The Sanskrit word is atman and applies, in psychology, to the human entity. The upper end of the link, so to speak, was called paramatman, or the "self beyond," i.e., the permanent SELF -- words which describe neatly and clearly to those who have studied this wonderful philosophy, somewhat of the nature and essence of the being which man is, and the source from which, in beginningless and endless duration, he sprang. Child of earth and child of heaven, he contains both in himself. We say that the atman is universal, and so it is. It is the universal selfhood, that feeling or consciousness of selfhood which is the same in every human being, and even in all the inferior beings of the hierarchy, even in those of the beast kingdom under us, and dimly perceptible in the plant world, and which is latent even in the minerals. This is the pure cognition, the abstract idea, of self. It differs not at all throughout the hierarchy, except in degree of self-recognition. Though universal, it belongs (so far as we are concerned in our present stage of evolution) to the fourth cosmic plane, though it is our seventh principle counting upwards.

Atom This word comes to us from the ancient Greek philosophers Democritus, Leucippus, and Epicurus, and the hundreds of great men who followed their lead in this respect and who were therefore also atomists -- such, for instance, as the two Latin poets Ennius and Lucretius. This school taught that atoms were the foundation-bricks of the universe, for *atom* in the original etymological sense of the word means something that cannot be cut or divided, and therefore as being equivalent to particles of what theosophists call homogeneous substance. But modern scientists do not use the word atom in that sense any longer. Some time ago the orthodox scientific doctrine concerning the atom was basically that enunciated by Dalton, to the general effect that physical atoms were hard little particles of matter, ultimate particles of matter, and therefore indivisible and indestructible. But modern science [1933] has a totally new view of the physical atom, for it knows now that the atom is not such, but is composite, builded of particles still more minute, called electrons or charges of negative electricity, and of other particles called protons or charges of positive electricity, which protons are supposed to form the nucleus or core of the atomic structure. A frequent picture of atomic structure is that of an atomic solar system, the protons being the atomic sun and the electrons being its planets, the latter in extremely rapid revolution around the central sun. This conception is purely theosophical in idea, and adumbrates what occultism teaches, though occultism goes much farther than does modern science. One of the fundamental postulates of the teachings of theosophy is that the ultimates of nature are atoms on the material side and monads on the energy side. These two are respectively material and spiritual primates or ultimates, the spiritual ones or monads being indivisibles, and the atoms being divisibles -- things that can be divided into composite parts. It becomes obvious from what precedes that the philosophical idea which formed the core of the teaching of the ancient initiated atomists was that their atoms or "indivisibles" are pretty close to what theosophical occultism calls monads; and this is what Democritus and Leucippus and others of their school had in mind. These monads, as is obvious, are therefore divine-spiritual life-atoms, and are actually beings living and evolving on their own planes. Rays from them are the highest parts of the constitution of beings in the material realms.

Aupapaduka (Sanskrit) A compound term meaning "self-produced," "spontaneously generated." It is a term applied in Buddhism to a class of celestial beings called dhyani-buddhas; and because these dhyani-buddhas are conceived of as issuing forth from the bosom of Adi-buddhi or the

kosmic mahat without intermediary agency, are they mystically said to be, as H. P. Blavatsky puts it, "parentless" or "self-existing," i.e., born without any parents or progenitors. They are therefore the originants or root from which the hierarchy of buddhas of various grades flows forth in mystical procession or emanation or evolution. There are variants of this word in Sanskrit literature, but they all have the same meaning. The term *aupapaduka* is actually a key word, opening a doctrine which is extremely difficult to set forth; but the doctrine itself is inexpressibly sublime. Indeed, not only are there *aupapaduka* divinities of the solar system, but also of every organic entity, because the core of the core of any organic entity is such an *aupapaduka* divinity. It is, in fact, a very mystical way of stating the doctrine of the "inner god." [NOTE: Later research shows that *anupapadaka*, as found in Monier-Williams' *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, is a misreading of *aupapaduka*. Cf. Franklin Edgerton, *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1953, 2:162]

Aura An extremely subtle and therefore invisible essence or fluid that emanates from and surrounds not only human beings and beasts, but as a matter of fact plants and minerals also. It is one of the aspects of the auric egg and therefore the human aura partakes of all the qualities that the human constitution contains. It is at once magneto-mental and electrovital, suffused with the energies of mind and spirit -- the quality in each case coming from an organ or center of the human constitution whence it flows. It is the source of the sympathies and antipathies that we are conscious of. Under the control of the human will it can be both life-giving and healing, or death-dealing; and when the human will is passive the aura has an action of its own which is automatic and follows the laws of character and latent impulses of the being from whom it emanates. Sensitives have frequently described it in more or less vague terms as a light flowing from the eyes or the heart or the tips of the fingers or from other parts of the body. Sometimes this fluid, instead of being colorless light, manifests itself by flashing and scintillating changes of color -- the color or colors in each case depending not only upon the varying moods of the human individual, but also possessing a background equivalent to the character or nature of the individual. Animals are extremely sensitive to auras, and some beasts even describe the human being surrounded with the aura as with a cloud or veil. In fact, everything has its aura surrounding it with a light or play of color, and especially is this the case with so-called animated beings. The essential nature of the aura usually seen is astral and electrovital. The magnificent phenomena of radiation that astronomers can discern at times of eclipse, long streamers with rosy and other colored light flashing forth from the body of the sun, are not flames nor anything of the sort, but are simply the electrovital aura of the solar body -- a manifestation of solar vitality, for the sun in occultism is a living being, as indeed everything else is.

Auric Egg A term which appertains solely to the more recondite teachings of occultism, of the esoteric philosophy. Little can be said here about it except to state that it is the source of the human aura as well as of everything else that the human septenary constitution contains. It is usually of an oviform or egg-shaped appearance, whence its name. It ranges from the divine to the astral-physical, and is the seat of all the monadic, spiritual, intellectual, mental, passionate, and vital energies and faculties of the human septiform constitution. In its essence it is eternal, and endures throughout the pralayas as well as during the manvantaras, but necessarily in greatly varying fashion in these two great periods of kosmic life.

Avalokitesvara (Sanskrit) A compound word: *avalokita*, "perceived," "seen"; *Isvara*, "lord"; hence "the Lord who is perceived or cognized," i.e., the spiritual entity, whether in the kosmos or in the human being, whose influence is perceived and felt; the higher self. This is a term commonly employed in Buddhism, and concerning which a number of intricate and not easily understood teachings exist. The esoteric or occult interpretation, however, sees in Avalokitesvara

what Occidental philosophy calls the Third Logos, both celestial and human. In the solar system it is the Third Logos thereof; and in the human being it is the higher self, a direct and active ray of the divine monad. Technically Avalokitesvara is the dhyani-bodhisattva of Amitabha-Buddha -- Amitabha-Buddha is the cosmic divine monad of which the dhyani-bodhisattva is the individualized spiritual ray, and of this latter again the manushya-buddha or human buddha is a ray or offspring.

Avatara (Sanskrit) The noun-form derived from a compound of two words: *ava*, prepositional prefix meaning "down," and *tri*, verb-root meaning to "cross over," to "pass"; thus, *avatri* -- to "pass down," or to "descend." Hence the word signifies the passing down of a celestial energy or of an individualized complex of celestial energies, which is equivalent to saying a celestial being, in order to overshadow and illuminate some human being -- but a human being who, at the time of such connection of "heaven with earth," of divinity with matter, possesses no *karmically* intermediate or connecting link between the overshadowing entity and the physical body: in other words, no human soul *karmically* destined to be the inner master of the body thus born. The intermediate link necessary, so that the human being-to-be may have the human intermediate or psychological apparatus fit to express the invisible splendor of this celestial descent, is supplied by the deliberate and voluntary entrance into the unborn child -- and coincidentally with the overshadowing of the celestial power -- of the psychological or intermediate principle of one of the Greater Ones, who thus "completes" what is to be the pure and lofty human channel through which the "descending" divinity may manifest, this divinity finding in this high psychological principle a sufficiently evolved link enabling it to express itself in human form upon earth. Hence an avatara is one who has a combination of three elements in his being: an inspiring divinity; a highly evolved intermediate nature or soul, which is loaned to him and is the channel of that inspiring divinity; and a pure, clean, physical body.

Avichi (Sanskrit) A word, the general meaning of which is "waveless," having no waves or movement, suggesting the stagnation of life and being in immobility; it also means "without happiness" or "without repose." A generalized term for places of evil realizations, but not of punishment in the Christian sense; where the will for evil, and the unsatisfied evil longings for pure selfishness, find their chance for expansion -- and final extinction of the entity itself. Avichi has many degrees or grades. Nature has all things in her; if she has heavens where good and true men find rest and peace and bliss, so has she other spheres and states where gravitate those who must find an outlet for the evil passions burning within. They, at the end of their avichi, go to pieces and are ground over and over, and vanish away finally like a shadow before the sunlight in the air -- ground over in nature's laboratory. (*See also* Eighth Sphere)

Avidya (Sanskrit) A compound word: *a*, "not"; *vidya*, "knowledge"; hence nonknowledge, ignorance -- perhaps a better translation would be nescience -- ignorance or rather lack of knowledge of reality, produced by illusion or maya.

Bhakti Yoga (Sanskrit) A word derived from the verbal root *bhaj*. In connection with yoga and as being one of the recognized forms of it, the general signification of bhakti yoga is devotion, affectionate attachment. (*See also* [Yoga](#))

Bhuta(s) (Sanskrit) The past participle of the verb-root *bhu*, meaning "to be," or "to become"; hence *bhutas* literally means "has been" -- entities that have lived and passed on. The bhutas are "shells" from which all that is spiritual and intellectual has fled: all that was the real entity has fled from this shell, and naught is left but a decaying astral corpse. The bhutas are the spooks, ghosts, simulacra, reliquiae, of dead men; in other words, the astral dregs and remnants of human

beings. They are the "shades" of the ancients, the pale and ghostly phantoms living in the astral world, or the astral copies of the men that were; and the distinction between the bhuta and the [kama-rupa](#) is very slight. Bereft of all that pertains to the real entity, the genuine man, the bhuta is as much a corpse in the astral realms as is the decaying physical body left behind at physical death; and consequently, astral or psychical intercourse of any kind with these shells is productive only of evil. The bhutas, although belonging in the astral world, are magnetically attracted to physical localities similar in type to the remnants of impulses still inhering in them. The bhuta of a drunkard is attracted to wine cellars and taverns; the bhuta of one who has lived a lewd life is attracted to localities sympathetic to it; the thin and tenuous bhuta of a good man is similarly attracted to less obnoxious and evil places. All over the ancient world and throughout most of even the modern world these eidola or "images" of dead men have been feared and dreaded, and relations of any kind with them have been consistently and universally avoided. (See also [Eidolon](#))

Bija (sometimes Vija) (Sanskrit) This word signifies "seed" or "life-germ," whether of animals or of plants. But esoterically its signification is far wider and incomparably more abstruse, and therefore difficult to understand without proper study. The term is used in esotericism to designate the original or causal source and vahana or "vehicle" of the mystic impulse or urge of life, or of lives, to express itself or themselves when the time for such self-expression arrives after a pralaya, or after an obscuration, or again, indeed, during manvantara. Whether it be a kosmos or universe, or the reappearance of god, deva, man, animal, plant, mineral, or elemental, the seed or life-germ from and out of which any one of these arises is technically called bija, and the reference here is almost as much to the life-germ or vehicle itself as it is to the self-urge for manifestation working through the seed or life-germ. Mystically and psychologically, the appearance of an avatara, for instance, is due to an impulse arising in Maha-Siva, or in Maha-Vishnu (according to circumstances), to manifest a portion of the divine essence, in either case, when the appropriate world period arrives for the appearance of an avatara. Or again, when from the chela is born the initiate during the dread trials of initiation, the newly-arisen Master is said to have been born from the mystic bija or seed within his own being. The doctrine connected with this word bija in its occult and esoteric aspects is far too profound to receive more than a cursory and superficial treatment.

Bodhi (Sanskrit) This word comes from the root *budh*, meaning "to awaken." It is the state when man has so emptied his mind that it is filled only with the self itself, with the selfless selfhood of the eternal. Then he realizes the ineffable visions of reality, of pure truth. The man who reaches this state is called a buddha, and the organ in and by which it is manifested, is termed [buddhi](#).

Bodhisattva (Sanskrit) A compound word: literally "he whose essence (sattva) has become intelligence (bodhi)." As explained exoterically, a bodhisattva means one who in another incarnation or in a few more incarnations will become a buddha. A bodhisattva from the standpoint of the occult teachings is more than that. When a man, a human being, has reached the state where his ego becomes conscious, fully so, of its inner divinity, becomes clothed with the buddhic ray -- where, so to say, the personal man has put on the garments of inner immortality in actuality, on this earth, here and now -- that man is a bodhisattva. His higher principles have nearly reached nirvana. When they do so finally, such a man is a buddha, a human buddha, a manushya-buddha. Obviously, if such a bodhisattva were to reincarnate, in the next incarnation or in a very few future incarnations thereafter, he would be a manushya-buddha. A buddha, in the esoteric teaching, is one whose higher principles can learn nothing more. They have reached nirvana and remain there; but the spiritually awakened personal man, the bodhisattva, the person made semi-divine to use popular language, instead of choosing his

reward in the nirvana of a less degree, remains on earth out of pity and compassion for inferior beings, and becomes what is called a [nirmanakaya](#). In a very mystical part of the esoteric philosophy, a bodhisattva is the representative on earth of a dhyani-buddha or celestial buddha -- in other words, one who has become an incarnation or expression of his own divine monad.

Brahma (Sanskrit) A word of which the root, *brih*, means "expansion." It stands for the spiritual energy-consciousness side of our solar universe, i.e., our solar system, and the Egg of Brahma is that solar system. A Day of Brahma or a maha-manvantara is composed of seven rounds, a period of 4,320,000,000 terrestrial years; this period is also called a kalpa. A Night of Brahma, the planetary rest period, which is also called the parinirvanic period, is of equal length. Seven Days of Brahma make one solar kalpa; or, in other words, seven planetary cycles, each cycle consisting of seven rounds (or seven planetary manvantaras), form one solar manvantara. One Year of Brahma consists of 360 Divine Days, each day being the duration of a planet's life, i.e., of a planetary chain of seven globes. The Life of Brahma (or the life of the universal system) consists of one hundred Divine Years, i.e., 4,320,000,000 years times 36,000 x 2. The Life of Brahma is half ended: that is, fifty of his years are gone -- a period of 155,520,000,000 of our years have passed away since our solar system, with its sun, first began its manvantaric course. There remain, therefore, fifty more such Years of Brahma before the system sinks into rest or pralaya. As only half of the evolutionary journey is accomplished, we are, therefore, at the bottom of the kosmic cycle, i.e., on the lowest plane.

Brahman (Sanskrit) A word of which the root, *brih*, means "expansion." It is that part of the celestial being which first initiates manifestation through the various Brahmas, the expansion of the one into the many. It is what is called the unmanifest Logos. It may also be called the impersonal and uncognizable principle of the universe, and must be sharply distinguished from the masculine Brahma of which there are many in a universe. Note: In early theosophical literature, as well as in translations of the Hindu writings, Brahman is sometimes spelled Brahma or even Brahm; but this should not be confused with Brahma. (See also [Parabrahman](#), [Brahma](#))

Brahmana (Sanskrit) A word having several meanings in Hindu sacred literature. Brahmana is both noun and adjective, as noun signifying a member of the first of the four Vedic classes, and as adjective signifying what belongs to a Brahmana or what is Brahmanical. Secondly, it signifies one of the portions of the Vedic literature, containing rules for the proper usage of the mantras or hymns at sacrifices, explanations in detail of what these sacrifices are, illustrated by legends and old stories. Another adjective with closely similar meaning is Brahma. An old-fashioned English way of spelling Brahmana is Brahmin.

Brother(s) of the Shadow A term given in occultism and especially in modern esotericism to individuals, whether men or women, who follow the path of the shadows, the left-hand path. The term "shadow" is a technical expression and signifies more than appears on the surface: i.e., the expression is not to be understood of individuals who live in actual physical obscurity or actual physical shadows, which literalism would be simply absurd; but applies to those who follow the path of matter, which from time immemorial in the esoteric schools in both Orient and Occident has frequently been called shadow or shadows. The term originally arose, without doubt, in the philosophical conception of the word [maya](#), for in early Oriental esotericism maya, and more especially maha-maya, was a term applied in one of its many philosophical meanings to that which was contrary to and, indeed, in one sense a reflection of, light. Just as spirit may be considered to be pure energy, and matter, although essentially crystallized spirit, may be looked upon as the shadow world or vehicular world in which the energy or spirit or pure light works, just so is maya, as the garment or expression or sakti of the divine energy, the vehicle or shadow

of the divine side of nature, in other words its negative or nether pole, as light is the upper or positive pole. The Brothers of the Shadow are therefore those who, being essentially of the nature of matter, instinctively choose and follow the path along which they are most strongly drawn, that is, the path of matter or of the shadows. When it is recollected that matter is but a generalizing term, and that what this term comprises actually includes an almost infinite number of degrees of increasing ethereality from the grossest physical substance, or absolute matter, up to the most ethereal or spiritualized substance, we immediately see the subtle logic of this technical term -- shadows or, more fully, the Path of the Shadows, hence the Brothers of the Shadow. They are the so-called black magicians of the Occident, and stand in sharp and notable contrast with the white magicians or the Sons of Light who follow the pathway of self-renunciation, self-sacrifice, self-conquest, perfect self-control, and an expansion of the heart and mind and consciousness in love and service for all that lives. (See also [Right-hand Path](#)) The existence and aims of the Brothers of the Shadow are essentially selfish. It is commonly, but erroneously, supposed that the Brothers of the Shadow are men and women always of unpleasant or displeasing personal appearance, and no greater error than this could possibly be made. Multitudes of human beings are unconsciously treading the path of the shadows and, in comparison with these multitudes, it is relatively only a few who self-consciously lead and guide with subtle and nefast intelligence this army of unsuspecting victims of maya. The Brothers of the Shadow are often highly intellectual men and women, frequently individuals with apparent great personal charm, and to the ordinary observer, judging from their conversation and daily works, are fully as well able to "quote scripture" as are the Angels of Light!

Buddha (Sanskrit) The past participle of the root *budh*, meaning "to perceive," "to become cognizant of," also "to awaken," and "to recover consciousness." It signifies one who is spiritually awakened, no longer living "the living death" of ordinary men, but awakened to the spiritual influence from within or from "above." When man has awakened from the living death in which ordinary mortals live, when he has cast off the toils of both mind and flesh and, to use the old Christian term, has put on the garments of eternity, then he has *awakened*, he is a buddha. He has become one with -- not "absorbed" as is constantly translated but has *become one with* -- the Self of selves, with the paramatman, the Supreme Self. (See also [Bodhi](#), [Buddhi](#))

A buddha in the esoteric teaching is one whose higher principles can learn nothing more in this manvantara; they have reached nirvana and remain there. This does not mean, however, that the lower centers of consciousness of a buddha are in nirvana, for the contrary is true; and it is this fact that enables a Buddha of Compassion to remain in the lower realms of being as mankind's supreme guide and instructor, living usually as a nirmanakaya.

Buddha(s) of Compassion One who, having won all, gained all -- gained the right to cosmic peace and bliss -- renounces it so that he may return as a Son of Light in order to help humanity, and indeed all that is. The Buddhas of Compassion are the noblest flowers of the human race. They are men who have raised themselves from humanity into quasi-divinity; and this is done by letting the light imprisoned within, the light of the inner god, pour forth and manifest itself through the humanity of the man, through the human soul of the man. Through sacrifice and abandoning of all that is mean and wrong, ignoble and paltry and selfish; through opening up the inner nature so that the god within may shine forth; in other words, through self-directed evolution, they have raised themselves from mere manhood into becoming god-men, man-gods -- human divinities. They are called Buddhas of Compassion because they feel their unity with all that is, and therefore feel intimate magnetic sympathy with all that is, and this is more and more the case as they evolve, until finally their consciousness blends with that of the universe and lives eternally and immortally, because it is at one with the universe. "The dewdrop slips

into the shining sea" -- its origin. Feeling the urge of almighty love in their hearts, the Buddhas of Compassion advance forever steadily towards still greater heights of spiritual achievement; and the reason is that they have become the vehicles of universal love and universal wisdom. As impersonal love is universal, their whole nature expands consequently with the universal powers that are working through them. The Buddhas of Compassion, existing in their various degrees of evolution, form a sublime hierarchy extending from the Silent Watcher on our planet downwards through these various degrees unto themselves, and even beyond themselves to their chelas or disciples. Spiritually and mystically they contrast strongly with what Asiatic occultism, through the medium of Buddhism, has called the [Pratyeka Buddhas](#).

Buddhi (Sanskrit) Buddhi comes from a Sanskrit root *budh*, commonly translated "to enlighten," but a better translation is "to perceive," "to cognize," "to recover consciousness," hence "to awaken," and therefore "to understand." The second counting downwards, or the sixth counting upwards, of the seven principles of man. Buddhi is the principle or organ in man which gives to him spiritual consciousness, and is the vehicle of the most high part of man -- the atman -- the faculty which manifests as understanding, judgment, discrimination, an inseparable veil or garment of the atman. From another point of view, buddhi may truly be said to be both the seed and the fruit of manas. Man's ordinary consciousness in life in his present stage of evolution is almost wholly in the lower or intermediate duad (manas-kama) of his constitution; when he raises his consciousness through personal effort to become permanently one with the higher duad (atma-buddhi), he becomes a mahatma, a master. At the death of the human being, this higher duad carries away with it all the spiritual essence, all the spiritual and intellectual aroma, of the lower or intermediate duad. Maha-buddhi is one of the names given to the cosmic principle mahat. (See also [Alaya](#))

Buddhism The teachings of Gautama the Buddha. Buddhism today is divided into two branches, the Northern and the Southern. The Southern still retains the teachings of the "Buddha's brain," the "eye doctrine," that is to say his outer philosophy for the general world, sometimes inadequately called the doctrine of forms and ceremonies. The Northern still retains his "heart doctrine" -- that which is hid, the inner life, the heart-blood, of the religion: the doctrine of the inner heart of the teaching. The religious philosophy of the Buddha-Sakyamuni is incomparably nearer to the ancient wisdom, the esoteric philosophy of the archaic ages, than is Christianity. Its main fault today is that teachers later than the Buddha himself carried its doctrines too far along merely formal or exoteric lines; yet, with all that, to this day it remains the purest and holiest of the exoteric religions on earth, and its teachings even exoterically are true -- once they are properly understood. They need but the esoteric key in interpretation of them. As a matter of fact, the same may be said of all the great ancient world religions. Christianity, Brahmanism, Taoism, and others all have the same esoteric wisdom behind the outward veil of the exoteric formal faith.

Causal Body For a proper explanation of the doctrine connected with this term the student is referred to *karana-sarira* and *karanopadhi* as defined in this volume. Technically speaking, causal body is a misnomer, for, in fact, the element of man's constitution here referred to and, *mutatis mutandis*, when reference is made to beings above and below man, is no body at all, properly speaking, but rather what one might call a soul, although strenuous objection could very logically be taken to the use of this word soul because of the many and often contradictory meanings that common usage has given to it. Furthermore, the expression "causal body" refers to two different things. The meaning, therefore, is dual -- a statement which will be explained under *karanopadhi*. It may be stated here, however, that the two meanings have reference, the first to a lower part of man's septenary constitution, and the second to a higher part, both parts

acting as causes, or instrumental causes, in producing reappearances, or new manifestations, of a re embodying monad or entity.

Chakra (*Cakra*, Sanskrit) A word signifying in general a "wheel," and from this simple original meaning there were often taken for occult and esoteric purposes a great many subordinate, very interesting, and in some cases highly mystical and profound derivatives. Chakra also means a cycle, a period of duration, in which the wheel of time turns once. It also means the horizon, as being circular or of a wheel-form. It likewise means certain centers or pranic spherical loci of the body in which are supposed to collect streams of pranic energy of differing qualities, or pranic energies of different kinds. These physiological chakras, which are actually connected with the pranic circulations and ganglia of the auric egg, and therefore function in the physical body through the intermediary of the *linga-sarira* or astral model-body, are located in different parts of the physical frame, reaching from the parts about the top of the skull to the parts about the pubis. It would be highly improper, having at heart the best interests of humanity, to give the occult or esoteric teaching concerning the exact location, functions, and means of controlling the physiological chakras of the human body; for it is a foregone conclusion that were this mystical knowledge broadcast, it would be sadly misused, leading not only in many cases to death or insanity, but to the violation of every moral instinct. Alone the high initiates, who as a matter of fact have risen above the need of employing the physiological chakras, can use them at will, and for holy purposes -- which in fact is something that they rarely, if indeed they ever do.

Chaos (Greek) A word usually thought to mean a sort of helter-skelter treasury of original principles and seeds of beings. Well, so it verily is, in one profound sense; but it is most decidedly and emphatically not helter-skelter. It is properly the kosmic storehouse of all the latent or resting seeds of beings and things from former *manvantaras*. Of course it is this, simply because it contains everything. It means space, not the highest mystical or actual space, not the *parabrahma-mulaprakriti*, the Boundless -- not that. But the space of any particular hierarchy descending into manifestation, what space for it is at that particular period of its beginning of development. The directive principles in chaos are the gods when they awaken from their *pralayaic* sleep. Chaos in one sense may very truly be called the condition of the space of a solar system or even of a planetary chain during its [pralaya](#). When awakening to planetary action begins, chaos *pari passu* ceases.

Chela (*Cela*) An old Indian term. In archaic times more frequently spelled and pronounced *cheta* or *cheda*. The meaning is "servant," a personal disciple attached to the service of a teacher from whom he receives instruction. The idea is closely similar to the Anglo-Saxon term *leorning-cneht*, meaning "learning servant," a name given in Anglo-Saxon translations of the Christian New Testament to the disciples of Jesus, his "chelas." It is, therefore, a word used in old mystical scriptures for a disciple, a pupil, a learner or hearer. The relationship of teacher and disciple is infinitely more sacred even than that of parent and child; because, while the parents give the body to the incoming soul, the teacher brings forth that soul itself and teaches it to be and therefore to see, teaches it to know and to *become* what it is in its inmost being -- that is, a divine thing. The chela life or chela path is a beautiful one, full of joy to its very end, but also it calls forth and needs everything noble and high in the learner or disciple; for the powers or faculties of the higher self must be brought into activity in order to attain and to hold those summits of intellectual and spiritual grandeur where the Masters themselves live. For that, masterhood, is the end of discipleship -- not, however, that this ideal should be set before us merely as an end to attain to as something of benefit for one's own self, because that very thought is a selfish one and therefore a stumbling in the path. It is for the individual's benefit, of course; yet the true idea is that everything and every faculty that is in the soul shall be brought out in the service of all

humanity, for this is the royal road, the great royal thoroughfare, of self-conquest. The more mystical meanings attached to this term chela can be given only to those who have irrevocably pledged themselves to the esoteric life.

Chhaya (*Chaya*, Sanskrit) Literally a "shade," "simulacrum," or "copy." In the esoteric philosophy, the word signifies the astral image of a person, and with this idea are bound up some of the most intricate and recondite teachings of human evolution. *The Secret Doctrine* of H. P. Blavatsky contains many invaluable hints as to the part played by the chhayas of the pitris in human development. It is a word also which is applied with similar meaning to kosmical matters, for the esoteric student should never forget the ancient maxim of Hermes: "What is above is the same as what is below; what is below is the same as what is above." Briefly, then, and so far as human evolution is concerned, the chhaya may be called the [astral body](#) or image.

Christos (Greek) Christos or "Christ" is a word literally signifying one who has been "anointed." This is a direct reference, a direct allusion, to what happened during the celebration of the ancient Mysteries. Unction or anointing was one of the acts performed during the working of the rites of those ancient Mysteries in the countries surrounding the Mediterranean Sea. The Hebrew word for an anointed one is *mashiah* -- "messiah" is a common way of misspelling the Hebrew word -- meaning exactly the same thing as the Greek word Christos. Each human being is an incarnation, an embodiment, of a ray of his own inner god -- the divinity living in the core of the core of each one. The modern Christians of a mystical bent of mind call it the Christ Immanent, the immanent Christos, and they are right as far as they go, but they do not carry the thought far enough. Mystically speaking, the Christos is the deathless individuality; and when the striving personal ego becomes united permanently with this stainless individuality, the resultant union is the higher ego, "the living Christ" -- a Christ among men, or as the Buddhists would say, a human or manushya-buddha.

Circulations of the Kosmos Also Circulations of the Universe. This is a term used in the ancient wisdom or esoteric philosophy to signify the network, marvelously intricate and builded of the channels or canals or paths or roads followed by peregrinating or migrating entities as these latter pass from sphere to sphere or from realm to realm or from plane to plane. The pilgrim monads, however far advanced or however little advanced in their evolution, inevitably and ineluctably follow these circulations. They can do nothing else, for they are simply the spiritual, psychomagnetic, astral, and physical pathways along which the forces of the universe flow; and consequently, all entities whatsoever being indeed embodiments of forces must of necessity follow the same routes or pathways that the abstract forces themselves use. These circulations of the kosmos are a veritable network between planet and planet, and planet and sun, and between sun and sun, and between sun and universe, and between universe and universe. Furthermore, the circulations of the kosmos are not restricted to the material or astral spheres, but are of the very fabric and structure of the entire universal kosmos, inner as well as outer. It is one of the most mystical and suggestive doctrines of theosophy.

Clairaudience In its largest sense the word means simply "clear-hearing." True clairaudience is a spiritual faculty, the faculty of the inner spiritual ear, of which the psychical clairaudience is but a distorted and therefore deceptive reflection; neither is it hearing with the physical ear, so imperfect and undeveloped a sensory organ as the latter is. The power to hear with the inner ear enables you to hear anything you will, and at whatever distance, whether on Mars, or on the Sun, or on the Moon, or on Jupiter, or perhaps even on some distant star, or easily anywhere on Earth. Having this spiritual clairaudience, you can hear the grass grow, and that hearing will be to you like a symphonic musical poem. You can hear the celestial orbs singing their songs as they

advance along their orbits through space, because everything that is, is in movement, producing sound, simple or composite as the case may be. Thus in very truth every tiny atom sings its own note, and every composite entity, therefore, is an imbodyed musical poem, a musical symphony. (*See also* [Music of the Spheres](#))

Clairvoyance In its largest sense the word simply means "clear-seeing," insight behind the veils, inner visioning. Genuine clairvoyance is a spiritual faculty and is the ability to see and to see aright; and in seeing to know that your seeing is truth. This is no psychical faculty. The clairvoyance commonly called the psychical clairvoyance is very deceptive, because it is a mere moonlight reflection so to speak, and this moonlight reflection is uncertain, deceiving, and illusory. Genuine spiritual clairvoyance, of which the psychical clairvoyance so called is but a feeble ray, will enable one to see what passes at immense distances. You can sit in your armchair and see, with eyes closed, all that you care to see, however far away. This can be done not only in this exterior world, but one can penetrate into the interior and invisible worlds with this spiritual vision, and thus know what is going on in the worlds spiritual and ethereal. This vision is not physical vision, nor that which, on the astral plane, manifests itself as psychical clairvoyance; but true vision is spiritual clairvoyance -- seeing through the inner spiritual eye.

Consciousness In all its forms and protean manifestations, consciousness is spirit-matter -- force and matter, or spirit and substance, are one -- hence consciousness is the finest and loftiest form of energy, is the root of all things, and is coextensive with kosmic space. It is, therefore, the foundation and the essence of gods, of monads, and of atoms -- the three generalized degrees, kosmically speaking, of the universe. A natural corollary from this is that the universe therefore is imbodyed consciousness, or much more correctly we should call it a quasi-infinite aggregate of imbodyed consciousnesses.

Cosmos Whenever a theosophist speaks of the cosmos or the universe, he by no means refers only to the physical sphere or world or cross section of the boundless All in which we humans live, but more particularly to the invisible worlds and planes and spheres inhabited by their countless hosts of vitalized or animate beings. In order to avoid redundancy of words and often confusing repetitions in the midst of an explanation dealing with other matters, since H. P. Blavatsky's time it has been customary among careful theosophical writers to draw a distinction of fact between cosmos and kosmos. The solar universe or solar system is frequently referred to as cosmos or solar cosmos; and the galactic universe or our own home-universe it has been customary to refer to as the kosmos. This distinction, however, does not always hold, because sometimes in dealing with abstract questions where the application of the thought can be indifferently made either to the galactic or to the solar universe, the two forms of spelling may be used interchangeably. (*See also* [Kosmos](#), [Kosmic Life](#))

Cycles or Law of Cycles An exceedingly interesting branch of theosophical study, and one dealing with a fact which is so obviously manifest in the worlds surrounding us that its existence can hardly be denied, except by the willfully blind, is what may be called the law of cycles, or nature's repetitive operations. We find nature repeating herself everywhere, although such repetition of course is not merely a running in the same old ruts on each recurrence of the cyclic activity; for each recurrence is of course the expression of a modification, more or less great, of what has preceded. Day succeeds night, winter succeeds summer, the planets circulate around the suns in regular and periodical courses; and these are but familiar examples of cyclical activity. Cycles in nature show the time periods of periodic recurrence along and in which any evolving entity or thing expresses the energies and powers which are itself, so that cycles and evolution are like the two sides of a coin: the one shows the time periods or cycles, and the other

side manifests the energetic or substantial qualities appearing in manifestation according to these cyclical time-periods; but back of this apparently double but actually single process always lie profound karmic causes.

Daiviprakriti (Sanskrit) A compound signifying "divine" or "original evolver," or "original source," of the universe or of any self-contained or hierarchical portion of such universe, such as a solar system. Briefly, therefore, daiviprakriti may be called "divine matter," matter here being used in its original sense of "divine *mother-evolver*" or "divine *original substance*." Now, as original substance manifests itself in the kosmic spaces as primordial kosmic light -- light in occult esoteric theosophical philosophy being a form of original matter or substance -- many mystics have referred to daiviprakriti under the phrase "the Light of the Logos." Daiviprakriti is, in fact, the first veil or sheath or ethereal body surrounding the Logos, as pradhana or prakriti surrounds Purusha or Brahman in the Sankhya philosophy, and as, on a scale incomparably more vast, mulaprakriti surrounds parabrahman. As daiviprakriti, therefore, is elemental matter, or matter in its sixth and seventh stages counting from physical matter upwards or, what comes to the same thing, matter in its first and second stages of its evolution from above, we may accurately enough speak of those filmy ethereal wisps of light seen in the midnight skies as a physical manifestation of daiviprakriti, because when they are not actually resolvable nebulae, they are worlds, or rather systems of worlds, in the making. When daiviprakriti has reached a certain state or condition of evolutionary manifestation, we may properly speak of it under the term fohat. Fohat, in H. P. Blavatsky's words, is "The essence of cosmic electricity. An occult Tibetan term for *Daivi-prakriti*, primordial light: and in the universe of manifestation the ever-present electrical energy and ceaseless destructive and formative power. Esoterically, it is the same, Fohat being the universal propelling Vital Force, at once the propeller and the resultant." -- *Theosophical Glossary*, p. 121 All this is extremely well put, but it must be remembered that although fohat is the energizing power working in and upon manifested daiviprakriti, or primordial substance, as the rider rides the steed, it is the kosmic intelligence, or kosmic monad as Pythagoras would say, working through both daiviprakriti and its differentiated energy called fohat, which is the guiding and controlling principle, not only in the kosmos but in every one of the subordinate elements and beings of the hosts of multitudes of them infilling the kosmos. The heart or essence of the sun is daiviprakriti working as itself, and also in its manifestation called fohat, but through the daiviprakriti and the fohatic aspect of it runs the all-permeant and directive intelligence of the solar divinity. The student should never make the mistake, however, of divorcing this guiding solar intelligence from its veils or vehicles, one of the highest of which is daiviprakriti-fohat.

Death Death occurs when a general break-up of the constitution of man takes place; nor is this break-up a matter of sudden occurrence, with the exceptions of course of such cases as mortal accidents or suicides. Death is always preceded, varying in each individual case, by a certain time spent in the withdrawal of the monadic individuality from an incarnation, and this withdrawal of course takes place coincidentally with a decay of the seven-principle being which man is in physical incarnation. This decay precedes physical dissolution, and is a preparation of and by the consciousness-center for the forthcoming existence in the invisible realms. This withdrawal actually is a preparation for the life to come in invisible realms, and as the septenary entity on this earth so decays, it may truly be said to be approaching rebirth in the next sphere. Death occurs, physically speaking, with the cessation of activity of the pulsating heart. There is the last beat, and this is followed by immediate, instantaneous unconsciousness, for nature is very merciful in these things. But death is not yet complete, for the brain is the last organ of the physical body really to die, and for some time after the heart has ceased beating, the brain and its memory still remain active and, although unconsciously so, the human ego for this short length

of time, passes in review every event of the preceding life. This great or small panoramic picture of the past is purely automatic, so to say; yet the soul-consciousness of the reincarnating ego watches this wonderful review incident by incident, a review which includes the entire course of thought and action of the life just closed. The entity is, for the time being, entirely unconscious of everything else except this. Temporarily it lives in the past, and memory dislodges from the akasic record, so to speak, event after event, to the smallest detail: passes them all in review, and in regular order from the beginning to the end, and thus sees all its past life as an all-inclusive panorama of picture succeeding picture. There are very definite ethical and psychological reasons inhering in this process, for this process forms a reconstruction of both the good and the evil done in the past life, and imprints this strongly as a record on the fabric of the spiritual memory of the passing being. Then the mortal and material portions sink into oblivion, while the reincarnating ego carries the best and noblest parts of these memories into the devachan or heaven-world of postmortem rest and recuperation. Thus comes the end called death; and unconsciousness, complete and undisturbed, succeeds, until there occurs what the ancients called the second death. The lower triad (prana, linga-sarira, sthula-sarira) is now definitely cast off, and the remaining quaternary is free. The physical body of the lower triad follows the course of natural decay, and its various hosts of life-atoms proceed whither their natural attractions draw them. The linga-sarira or model-body remains in the astral realms, and finally fades out. The life-atoms of the prana, or electrical field, fly instantly back at the moment of physical dissolution to the natural pranic reservoirs of the planet. This leaves man, therefore, no longer a heptad or septenary entity, but a quaternary consisting of the upper duad (atma-buddhi) and the intermediate duad (manas-kama). The second death then takes place. *Death* and the adjective *dead* are mere words by which the human mind seeks to express thoughts which it gathers from a more or less consistent observation of the phenomena of the material world. Death is dissolution of a component entity or thing. The dead, therefore, are merely dissolving bodies -- entities which have reached their term on this our physical plane. Dissolution is common to all things, because all physical things are composite: they are not absolute things. They are born; they grow; they reach maturity; they enjoy, as the expression runs, a certain term of life in the full bloom of their powers; then they "die." That is the ordinary way of expressing what men call death; and the corresponding adjective is *dead*, when we say that such things or entities are dead. Do you find death per se anywhere? No. You find nothing but action; you find nothing but movement; you find nothing but change. Nothing stands still or is annihilated. What is called death itself shouts forth to us the fact of movement and change. Absolute inertia is unknown in nature or in the human mind; it does not exist.

Devachan [Tibetan, *bde-ba-can*, pronounced *de-wa-chen*] A translation of the Sanskrit *sukhavati*, the "happy place" or god-land. It is the state between earth-lives into which the human entity, the human monad, enters and there rests in bliss and repose. When the second death after that of the physical body takes place -- and there are many deaths, that is to say many changes of the vehicles of the ego -- the higher part of the human entity withdraws into itself all that aspires towards it, and takes that "all" with it into the devachan; and the atman, with the buddhi and with the higher part of the manas, become thereupon the spiritual monad of man. Devachan as a state applies not to the highest or heavenly or divine monad, but only to the middle principles of man, to the personal ego or the personal soul in man, overshadowed by atma-buddhi. There are many degrees in devachan: the highest, the intermediate, and the lowest. Yet devachan is not a locality, it is a state, a state of the beings in that spiritual condition. Devachan is the fulfilling of all the unfulfilled spiritual hopes of the past incarnation, and an efflorescence of all the spiritual and intellectual yearnings of the past incarnation which in that past incarnation have not had an opportunity for fulfillment. It is a period of unspeakable bliss and peace for the human soul, until it has finished its rest time and stage of recuperation of its own energies. In the devachanic state,

the reincarnating ego remains in the bosom of the monad (or of the monadic essence) in a state of the most perfect and utter bliss and peace, reviewing and constantly reviewing, and improving upon in its own blissful imagination, all the unfulfilled spiritual and intellectual possibilities of the life just closed that its naturally creative faculties automatically suggest to the devachanic entity. Man here is no longer a quaternary of substance-principles (for the second death has taken place), but is now reduced to the monad with the reincarnating ego sleeping in its bosom, and is therefore a spiritual triad. (*See also* Death, Reincarnating Ego)

Deva (s) (Sanskrit) A word meaning celestial being, of which there are various classes. This has been a great puzzle for most of our Occidental Orientalists. They cannot understand the distinctions that the wonderful old philosophers of the Orient make as regards the various classes of the devas. They say, in substance: "What funny contradictions there are in these teachings, which in many respects are profound and seem wonderful. Some of these devas or divine beings are said to be *less* than man; some of these writings even say that a good man is nobler than any god. And yet other parts of these teachings declare that there are gods higher even than the devas, and yet are called devas. What does this mean?" The devas or celestial beings, one class of them, are the unself-conscious sparks of divinity, cycling down into matter in order to bring out *from within themselves* and to unfold or evolve *self-consciousness*, the svabhava of divinity within. They then begin their reascent always on the luminous arc, which never ends, in a sense; and they are gods, *self-conscious gods*, *henceforth* taking a definite and divine part in the "great work," as the mystics have said, of being builders, evolvers, leaders of hierarchies. In other words, they are monads *which have become their own innermost selves*, which have passed the ring-pass-not separating the spiritual from the divine.

Dharana (Sanskrit) A state in the practice of yoga as taught in Hindustan when the mind or percipient intelligence is held with inflexible firmness, with fortitude of soul, and with indomitable resolution upon the object of investigation to be attained through this form of yoga practice. (*See also* Samadhi)

Dharma (Sanskrit) A noun derived from the verbal root *dhri*. The meaning is right religion, right philosophy, right science, and the right union of these three; hence the Law per se. It also means equity, justice, conduct, duty, and similar things. It has also a secondary meaning of an essential or characteristic quality or peculiarity; and here its significance approaches closely to that of svabhava. The duty of a man, for instance, is his dharma, that which is set or prescribed or natural to him to do.

Dharmakaya (Sanskrit) This is a compound of two words meaning the "continuance body," sometimes translated equally well (or ill) the "body of the Law" -- both very inadequate expressions, for the difficulty in translating these extremely mystical terms is very great. A mere correct dictionary-translation often misses the esoteric meaning entirely, and just here is where Occidental scholars make such ludicrous errors at times. The first word comes from the root *dhri*, meaning "to support," "to sustain," "to carry," "to bear," hence "to continue"; also human laws are the agencies supposed to carry, support, sustain, civilization; the second element, *kaya*, means "body." The noun thus formed may be rendered the "body of the Law," but this phrase does not give the idea at all. It is that spiritual body or state of a high spiritual being in which the restricted sense of soulship and egoity has vanished into a universal (hierarchical) sense, and remains only in the seed, latent -- if even so much. It is pure consciousness, pure bliss, pure intelligence, freed from all personalizing thought. In the Buddhism of Central Asia, the dharmakaya is the third and highest of the *trikaya*. The *trikaya* consists of (1) nirmanakaya, (2) sambhogakaya, and (3) dharmakaya. We may look upon these three states, all of them lofty and

sublime, as being three vestures in which the consciousness of the entity clothes itself. In the dharmakaya vesture the initiate is already on the threshold of nirvana, if not indeed already in the nirvanic state. (*See also* Nirmanakaya, Sambhogakaya)

Dhyana (Sanskrit) A term signifying profound spiritualintellectual contemplation with utter detachment from all objects of a sensuous and lower mental character. In Buddhism it is one of the six paramitas of perfection. One who is adept or expert in the practice of dhyana, which by the way is a wonderful spiritual exercise if the proper idea of it be grasped, is carried in thought entirely out of all relations with the material and merely psychological spheres of being and of consciousness, and into lofty spiritual planes. Instead of dhyana being a subtraction from the elements of consciousness, it is rather a throwing off or casting aside of the crippling sheaths of ethereal matter which surround the consciousness, thus allowing the dhyantin, or practicer of this form of true yoga, to enter into the highest parts of his own constitution and temporarily to become at one with and, therefore, to commune with the gods. It is a temporary becoming at one with the upper triad of man considered as a septenary, in other words, with his monadic essence. Man's consciousness in this state or condition becomes purely buddhi, or rather buddhic, with the highest parts of the manas acting as upadhi or vehicle for the retention of what the consciousness therein experiences. From this term is drawn the phrase dhyani-chohans or dhyani-buddhas -- words so frequently used in theosophical literature and so frequently misconceived as to their real meaning. (*See also* Samadhi)

Dhyan(i)-Chohan(s) A compound word meaning "lords of meditation" -- kosmic spirits or planetary spirits. There are three classes of dhyan-chohans, each of which is divided into seven subclasses. The dhyan-chohans collectively are one division of that wondrous host of spiritual beings who are the full-blown flowers of former world periods or manvantaras. This wondrous host are the men made perfect of those former world periods; and they guide the evolution of this planet in its present manvantara. They are our own spiritual lords, leaders, and saviors. They supervise us now in our evolution here, and in our own present cyclic pilgrimage we follow the path of the general evolution outlined by them. Man in his higher nature is an embryo dhyan-chohan, an embryo lord of meditation. It is his destiny, if he run the race successfully, to blossom forth at the end of the seventh round as a lord of meditation -- a planetary spirit -- when this planetary manvantaric kalpa is ended, this Day of Brahma, which is the seven rounds, each round in seven stages. In one most important sense the dhyan-chohans are actually our own selves. We were born from them. We are the monads, we are the atoms, the souls, projected, sent forth, emanated, by the dhyanis.

Divine Soul In occultism the divine soul is the garment of the divine ego, as the divine ego is the garment or child of the divine monad. The divine monad we may call the inner god, and this would mean that the divine ego, its offspring, is the inner Buddha, or the inner Christ; and hence the divine soul is the expression of the inner Buddha or of the inner Christ in manifestation on earth as the manushya-buddha or christ-man. It should be stated here that of the several monads which in their combination form the entire septenary constitution of man each such monad has its own ego-child, and this latter has its own soul. It is this combination, mystic, wonderful, mysterious, which makes of man the complex entity he is, and which entitles him to the term which the occultism of the archaic ages has always given to him: the microcosm, a reflection or copy in the small of the macrocosm or kosmic entity.

Dweller on the Threshold A literary invention of the English mystic and novelist Sir Bulwer Lytton, found in his romance *Zanoni*. The term has obtained wide currency and usage in theosophical circles. In occultism the word "dweller," or some exactly equivalent phrase or

expression, has been known and used during long ages past. It refers to several things, but more particularly has an application to what H. P. Blavatsky calls "certain maleficent astral Doubles of defunct persons." This is exact. But there is another meaning of this phrase still more mystical and still more difficult to explain which refers to the imbodyed karmic consequences or results of the man's past, haunting the thresholds which the initiate or initiate must pass before he can advance or progress into a higher degree of initiation. These dwellers, in the significance of the word just last referred to are, as it were, the imbodyed quasi-human astral haunting parts of the constitution thrown off in past incarnations by the man who now has to face them and overcome them -- very real and living beings, parts of the "new" man's haunting past. The initiate must face these old "selves" of himself and conquer or -- fail, which failure may mean either insanity or death. They are verily ghosts of the dead men that the present man formerly was, now arising to dog his footsteps, and hence are very truly called Dwellers on the Threshold. In a specific sense they may be truly called the kama-rupas of the man's past incarnations arising out of the records in the astral light left there by the "old" man of the "new" man who now is.

Ego (Latin) A word meaning "I." In theosophical writings the ego is that which says "I am I" -- indirect or reflected consciousness, consciousness reflected back upon itself as it were, and thus recognizing its own mayavi existence as a "separate" entity. On this fact is based the one genuine "heresy" that occultism recognizes: the heresy of separateness. The seat of the human ego is the intermediate duad -- manas-kama: part aspiring upwards, which is the reincarnating ego; and part attracted below, which is the ordinary or astral human ego. The consciousness is immortal in the reincarnating ego, and temporary or mortal in the lower or astral human ego. Consider the hierarchy of the human being's constitution to grow from the immanent Self: this last is the seed of egoity on the seven (or perhaps better, six) planes of matter or manifestation. On each one of these seven planes (or six), the immanent Self or paramatman develops or evolves a sheath or garment, the upper ones spun of spirit, and the lower ones spun of "shadow" or matter. Now each such sheath or garment is a "soul"; and between the self and such a soul -- any soul -- is the ego. Thus atman is the divine monad, giving birth to the divine ego, which latter evolves forth the monadic envelope or divine soul; jivatman, the spiritual monad, has its child which is the spiritual ego, which in turn evolves forth the spiritual soul or individual; and the combination of these three considered as a unit is buddhi; bhutatman, the human ego -- the higher human soul, including the lower buddhi and higher manas; pranatman, the personal ego -- the lower human soul, or man. It includes manas, kama, and prana; and finally the beast ego -- the vital-astral soul: kama and prana.

Eidolon (Greek; plural *eidola*) A word meaning "image" of the man that was. After death there remains in the astral world -- which is on the other side of the threshold of physical life, the etheric world -- the "shadow" of the man that was. The ancients called these human shadows, shades; modern children and nursemaids call them ghosts and spooks; and each such shade is but an eidolon, or astral image or pale copy of the physical man that was. This eidolon coheres for a while in the astral realms or in the superphysical ether, and its particles are magnetically held more or less coherent as long as the physical corpse is not fully dissolved into its component elements; but these eidola in a comparatively short time fade out, for they decay in a manner closely resembling the disintegration of the physical body.

Eighth Sphere or Planet of Death A term used in the more esoteric or inner part of the teachings about which little can be said, for over this part of the doctrine there has always been drawn a thick veil of secrecy and silence. Frequently the term is confused with avichi, but this is incorrect, because the two, while closely connected, are nevertheless quite distinct. While avichi is a state where very evil human beings "*die and are reborn without interruption,*" yet not

without hope of final redemption -- something which can actually take place even on our physical plane in the cases of very evil or soulless men -- the Eighth Sphere represents a degree of psychomental degeneration still more advanced. As just hinted, even in avichi there is a possibility of reinsoulment by the ray of the spiritual monad; whereas in the Eighth Sphere or Planet of Death such possibility finally vanishes, and the entity which has sunk to the Planet of Death is what is technically called in the esoteric philosophy a "lost soul." In the Eighth Sphere the lost souls are ground over and over in nature's laboratory, and are finally dissipated into their component psycho-astral elements or life-atoms. The Eighth Sphere or Planet of Death is an actual globe. It is also of course a state or condition of being; whereas the avichi is almost exclusively a state or condition in which an entity may find itself, although obviously this entity must have position or place and therefore locality in space -- on our earth or elsewhere.

Ekagrata or Ekagratva (Sanskrit) A term signifying "onepointedness" or "absolute intentness" in the mental contemplation of an object of meditation. The perfect concentration of the percipient mind on a single point of thought, and the holding of it there.

Elemental(s) Nature-spirits or sprites. The theosophical usage, however, means beings who are beginning a course of evolutionary growth, and who thus are in the *elemental* states of their growth. It is a generalizing term for purposes of convenient expression for all beings evolutionally below the minerals. Nevertheless, the minerals themselves are expressions of one family or host or hierarchy of elemental beings of a more evolved type. The vegetable kingdom likewise manifests merely one family or host of elemental beings happening to be in the vegetable phase of their evolution on this earth. Just so likewise is it as regards the beasts. The beasts are highly evolved elemental beings, relatively speaking. Men in far distant aeons of the kosmic past were elemental beings also. We have evolved from that elemental stage into becoming men, expressing with more or less ease, mostly very feebly, the innate divine powers and faculties locked up in the core of the core of each one of us. An elemental is a being who has entered our universe on the lowest plane or in the lowest world, degree, or step on the rising stairway of life; and this stairway of life begins in any universe at its lowest stage, and ends for that universe in its highest stage -- the universal kosmic spirit. Thus the elemental passes from the elemental stage through all the realms of being as it rises along the stairway of life, passing through the human stage, becoming superhuman, quasi-divine -- a quasi-god -- then becoming a god. Thus did we humans first enter this present universe. Every race of men on earth has believed in these hosts of elemental entities -- some visible, like men, like the beasts, like the animate plants; and others invisible. The invisible entities have been called by various names: fairies, sprites, hobgoblins, elves, brownies, pixies, nixies, leprechauns, trolls, kobolds, goblins, banshees, fawns, devs, jinn, satyrs, and so forth. The medieval mystics taught that these elemental beings were of four general kinds: those arising in and frequenting the element of fire -- salamanders; those arising in and frequenting the element air -- sylphs; those arising in and frequenting the element water -- undines; those arising in and frequenting the element earth -- gnomes.

Elementaries "Properly, the disembodied *souls* of the depraved; these souls having at some time prior to death separated from themselves their divine spirits, and so lost their chance for immortality" (*Theosophical Glossary*, H. P. Blavatsky). Strictly speaking, the word "elementaries" should be used as H. P. Blavatsky defines it in this quotation from her. But in modern theosophical literature the word has come to signify more particularly the phantoms or eidola of disembodied persons, these phantoms or eidola really being the kama-rupic shades, with especial application to the cases of grossly materialistic ex-humans whose evil impulses and appetites still inhering in the kama-rupic phantom draw these phantoms to physical spheres

congenial to them. They are a real danger to psychical health and sanity, and literally haunt living human beings possessing tendencies akin to their own. They are soulless shells, but still filled with energies of a depraved and ignoble type. Their destiny of course is like that of all other pretas or bhutas -- ultimate disintegration; for the gross astral atoms composing them slowly dissolve through the years after the manner of a dissolving column of smoke or a wisp of dark cloud on a mountainside.

Esoteric Doctrine The body of mystical and sacred teachings reserved for students of high and worthy character. This body of teachings has been known and studied by highly evolved individuals in all ages. The esoteric doctrine is the common property of mankind, and it has always been thus. In all the various great religions and philosophies of the world, the student will find fundamental principles in each which, when placed side by side and critically examined, are easily discovered to be identic. Every one of such fundamental principles is in every great world religion or world philosophy; hence the aggregate of these world religions or world philosophies contains the entirety of the esoteric doctrine, but usually expressed in exoteric form. However, no one of these world religions or world philosophies gives in clear and explicit shape or form the entirety of the body of teachings which are at its heart; some religions emphasize one or more of such fundamental principles; another religion or philosophy will emphasize others of these principles; in either case others again of the principles remaining in the background. This readily accounts for the fact that the various world religions and world philosophies vary among themselves and often, to the unreflecting mind, superficially seem to have little in common, and perhaps even to be contradictory. The cause of this is the varying manner in which each such religion or philosophy has been given to the world, the form that each took having been best for the period in which it was promulgated. Each such religion or philosophy, having its own racial sphere and period of time, represents the various human minds who have developed it or who, so to say, have translated it to the world in this or in that particular promulgation. These manners or mannerisms of exoteric thinking we may discard if we wish; but it is the fundamental principles behind every great religion or great philosophy which in their aggregate are the universal esoteric doctrine. In this universal esoteric doctrine lies the mystery-field of each great religion or philosophy -- this mystery-teaching being always reserved for the initiates. The esoteric philosophy or doctrine has been held from time immemorial in the guardianship of great men, exalted seers and sages, who from time to time promulgate it, or rather portions of it, to the world when the spiritual and intellectual need for so doing arises. The origins of the esoteric doctrine are found in the mystery-teachings of beings from other and spiritual spheres, who incarnated in the early humanity of the third root-race of this fourth round of our globe, and taught the then intellectually nascent mankind the necessary certain fundamental principles or truths regarding the universe and the nature of the world surrounding us.

Ethics The theosophical teachings are essentially and wholly ethical. It is impossible to understand the sublime wisdom of the gods, the archaic wisdom-religion of the ancients, without the keenest realization of the fact that ethics run like golden threads throughout the entire system or fabric of doctrine and thought of the esoteric philosophy. Genuine occultism, divorced from ethics, is simply unthinkable because impossible. There is no genuine occultism which does not include the loftiest ethics that the moral sense of mankind can comprehend, and one cannot weigh with too strong an emphasis upon this great fact.

Ethics in the theosophical philosophy are not merely the products of human thought existing as a formulation of conventional rules proper for human conduct. They are founded on the very structure and character of the universe itself. The heart of the universe is wisdom-love, and these are intrinsically ethical, for there can be no wisdom without ethics, nor can love be without

ethics, nor can there be ethics deprived of either love or wisdom. The philosophic reason why the ancients set so much store by what was commonly known as *virtus* among the Latins, from which we have our modern word "virtue," is because by means of the teaching originating in the great Mystery schools, they knew that virtues, ethics, were the offspring of the moral instinct in human beings, who derived them in their turn from the heart of the universe -- from the kosmic harmony. It is high time that the Occidental world should cast forever into the limbo of exploded superstitions the idea that ethics is merely conventional morality, a convenience invented by man to smooth the asperities and dangers of human intercourse. Of course every scholar knows that the words morals and ethics come from the Latin and Greek respectively, as signifying the customs or habits which it is proper to follow in civilized communities. But this fact itself, which is unquestionable, is in a sense disgraceful, for it would almost seem that we had not yet brought forth a word adequately describing the instinct for right and truth and troth and justice and honor and wisdom and love which we today so feebly express by the words ethics or morals. "Theosophist is who Theosophy does," wrote H. P. Blavatsky, and wiser and nobler words she never wrote. No one can be a theosophist who does not feel ethic-ally and think ethically and live ethically in the real sense that is hereinbefore described. (*See also* Morals)

Evolution As the word is used in theosophy it means the "unwrapping," "unfolding," "rolling out" of latent powers and faculties native to and inherent in the entity itself, its own essential characteristics, or more generally speaking, the powers and faculties of its own character: the Sanskrit word for this last conception is *svabhava*. Evolution, therefore, does not mean merely that brick is added to brick, or experience merely topped by another experience, or that variation is superadded on other variations -- not at all; for this would make of man and of other entities mere aggregates of incoherent and unwelded parts, without an essential unity or indeed any unifying principle. In theosophy evolution means that man has in him (as indeed have all other evolving entities) everything that the cosmos has because he is an inseparable part of it. He is its child; one cannot separate man from the universe. Everything that is in the universe is in him, latent or active, and evolution is the bringing forth of what is within; and, furthermore, what we call the surrounding milieu, circumstances -- nature, to use the popular word -- is merely the field of action on and in which these inherent qualities function, upon which they act and from which they receive the corresponding reaction, which action and reaction invariably become a stimulus or spur to further manifestations of energy on the part of the evolving entity. There are no limits in any direction where evolution can be said to begin, or where we can conceive of it as ending; for evolution in the theosophical conception is but the process followed by the centers of consciousness or monads as they pass from eternity to eternity, so to say, in a beginningless and endless course of unceasing growth. *Growth* is the key to the real meaning of the theosophical teaching of evolution, for growth is but the expression in detail of the general process of the unfolding of faculty and organ, which the usual word evolution includes. The only difference between evolution and growth is that the former is a general term, and the latter is a specific and particular phase of this procedure of nature. Evolution is one of the oldest concepts and teachings of the archaic wisdom, although in ancient days the concept was usually expressed by the word emanation. There is indeed a distinction, and an important one, to be drawn between these two words, but it is a distinction arising rather in viewpoint than in any actual fundamental difference. Emanation is a distinctly more accurate and descriptive word for theosophists to use than evolution is, but unfortunately emanation is so ill-understood in the Occident, that perforce the accepted term is used to describe the process of interior growth expanding into and manifesting itself in the varying phases of the developing entity. Theosophists, therefore, are, strictly speaking, rather *emanationists* than *evolutionists*; and from this remark it becomes immediately obvious that the theosophist is not a Darwinist, although admitting that in certain secondary or tertiary senses and details there is a modicum of truth in Charles Darwin's theory

adopted and adapted from the Frenchman Lamarck. The key to the meaning of evolution, therefore, in theosophy is the following: the core of every organic entity is a divine monad or spirit, expressing its faculties and powers through the ages in various vehicles which change by improving as the ages pass. These vehicles are not physical bodies alone, but also the interior sheaths of consciousness which together form man's entire constitution extending from the divine monad through the intermediate ranges of consciousness to the physical body. The evolving entity can become or show itself to be only what it already essentially is in itself -- therefore evolution is a bringing out or unfolding of what already preexists, active or latent, within. (*See also Involution*)

Exoteric This word, when applied particularly to the great philosophical and religious systems of belief, does not mean false. The word merely means teachings of which the keys have not been openly given. The word seems to have originated in the Peripatetic School of Greece, and to have been born in the mind of Aristotle. Its contrast is "esoteric." Exotericism -- that is to say, the outward and popular formulation of religious and philosophic doctrines -- *reveils* the truth; the self-assurance of ignorance, alas, always *reviles* the truth; whereas esotericism *reveals* the truth.

Fohat An extremely mystical term used in the occultism of Tibet for what in Sanskrit is called *daiviprakriti*, which means "divine nature" or "primordial nature," and which also can be called "primordial light." In one sense of the word fohat may be considered as almost identical with the old mystical Greek *eros*, but fohat as a technical term contains within itself a far wider range of ideas than does the Greek term. Fohat may be considered as the essence of cosmic electricity, provided, however, that in this definition we endow the term electricity with the attribute of consciousness; or, to put it more accurately, provided that we understand that the essence of electricity is indeed consciousness. It is ever-present and active from the primordial beginnings of a *manvantara* to its last end, nor does it then actually pass out of existence, but becomes quiescent or latent as it were, sleeping or dormant during the cosmic *pralaya*. In one sense of the word it may be called cosmic will, for the analogy with the conscious will in human beings is exceedingly close. It is the incessantly active, ever-moving, impelling or urging force in nature, from the beginning of the evolution of a universe or of a solar system to its end. H. P. Blavatsky, quoting one of the ancient mystically occult works, says in substance: "Fohat is the steed and thought is the rider." If, however, we liken fohat to what the conscious will is in the human being, we must then think only of the lower or substantial parts -- the pranic activities -- of the human will, for behind the substantial parts stands always the directing and guiding consciousness. Fohat being incessantly active is therefore both formative and destructive, because it is through the ceaseless working of fohat that unending change continues -- the passing of one phase of manifested existence to another phase, whether this manifested existence be a solar system or a planetary chain or a globe or human being or, indeed, any entity. Fohat is as active among the electrons of an atom and among the atoms themselves as it is among the suns. In one sense it may be called the vital force of the universe, corresponding from this viewpoint to the pranic activity on all the seven planes of the human constitution.

Gayatri or Savitri (Sanskrit) A verse of the *Rig-Veda* (iii.62.10) which from immemorial time in India has been surrounded with the attributes of quasi-divinity. The Sanskrit words of this verse are: *Tat savitur varenyam bhargo devasya dhimahi, dhiyo yo nah prachodayat*. Every orthodox Brahmana is supposed to repeat this archaic hymn, at least mentally, at both his morning and evening religious exercises or devotions. A translation in explanatory paraphrase, giving the essential esoteric meaning of the Gayatri or Savitri, is the following: "Oh thou golden sun of most excellent splendor, illumine our hearts and fill our minds, so that we, recognizing

our oneness with the Divinity which is the heart of the universe, may see the pathway before our feet, and tread it to those distant goals of perfection, stimulated by thine own radiant light."

Globe Every one of the physical globes that we see scattered over the fields of space is accompanied by six -- really eleven -- invisible and superior globes, forming what in theosophy is called a chain. This is the case with every sun or star, with every planet, and with every moon of every planet. It is likewise the case with the nebulae and the comets: all are septiform entities in manifestation; all have a sevenfold -- indeed twelvefold -- constitution, even as man has, who is a copy in the little of what the universe is in the great. The seven manifested globes for purposes of convenience are enumerated as A, B, C, D, E, F, and G; but reference is sometimes made more mystically to the globes from "A to Z," here hinting at but not specifying all the twelve globes of the chain. The life-waves circle around these globes in seven great cycles which are called rounds. Each life-wave first enters globe A, runs through its life cycle there, and then passes on to globe B. Finishing its cycle on globe B, it passes on to globe C, and then to globe D, the lowest of the manifested seven. In our own planetary chain, globe D is our earth. Three globes precede it on the downward arc, and three globes follow it on the ascending arc of evolution -- referring here to the manifested seven. The passing through or traversing of any one of these seven globes by the life-wave is a globe round; and during any one globe round on a globe, seven root-races are born, attain their efflorescence, and then pass away. (*See also Round*)

God The core of the core of a human being or of any other organic entity whatsoever is a kosmic spirit, a spark so to say of the kosmic flame of life. (*See also Inner God*)

Gods The old pantheons were builded upon an ancient and esoteric wisdom which taught, under the guise of a public mythology, profound secrets of the structure and operations of the universe which surrounds us. The entire human race has believed in gods, has believed in beings superior to men; the ancients all said that men are the "children" of these gods, and that from these superior beings, existent in the azure spaces, men draw all that in them is; and, furthermore, that men themselves, as children of the gods, are in their inmost essence divine beings linked forever with the boundless universe of which each human being, just as is the case with every other entity everywhere, is an inseparable part. This is a truly sublime conception. One should not think of human forms when the theosophist speaks of the gods; we mean the arupa -- the "formless" -- entities, beings of pure intelligence and understanding, relatively pure essences, relatively pure spirits, formless as we physical humans conceive form. The gods are the higher inhabitants of nature. They are intrinsic portions of nature itself, for they are its informing principles. They are as much subject to the *wills* and *energies* of still higher beings -- call these wills and energies the "laws" of higher beings, if you will -- as we are, and as are the kingdoms of nature below us. The ancients put realities, *living beings*, in the place of laws which, as Occidentals use the term, are only abstractions -- an expression for the *action of entities in nature*; the ancients did not cheat themselves so easily with words. They called them gods, spiritual entities. Not one single great thinker of the ancients, until the Christian era, ever talked about laws of nature, as if these laws were living entities, as if these abstractions were actual entities which did things. Did the *laws* of navigation ever navigate a ship? Does the *law* of gravity pull the planets together? Does it unite or pull the atoms together? This word laws is simply a mental abstraction signifying unerring action of conscious and semi-conscious energies in nature.

Gunās or Trigunās (Sanskrit) Differentiated matter is considered to possess or to have in occult philosophy three essential qualities or characteristics inherent in it, and their Sanskrit names are

Guru (Sanskrit) Sometimes *gurudeva*, "master divine." The word used in the old Sanskrit scriptures for teacher, preceptor. According to the beautiful teachings of the ancient wisdom, the guru acts as the midwife bringing to birth, helping to bring into the active life of the chela, the spiritual and intellectual parts of the disciple -- the soul of the man. Thus the relationship between teacher and disciple is an extremely sacred one, because it is a tie which binds closely heart to heart, mind to mind. The idea is, again, that the latent spiritual potencies in the mind and heart of the learner shall receive such assistance in their development as the teacher can karmically give; but it does not mean that the teacher shall do the work that the disciple himself or herself must do. The learner or disciple must tread his own path, and the teacher cannot tread it for him. The teacher points the way, guides and aids, and the disciple follows the path.

Guru-parampara (Sanskrit) This is a compound formed of *guru*, meaning "teacher," and a subordinate compound *param-para*, the latter compound meaning "a row or uninterrupted series or succession." Hence *guru-parampara* signifies an uninterrupted series or succession of teachers. Every Mystery school or esoteric college of ancient times had its regular and uninterrupted series or succession of teacher succeeding teacher, each one passing on to his successor the mystical authority and headship he himself had received from his predecessor. Like everything else of an esoteric character in the ancient world, the guru-parampara or succession of teachers faithfully copied what actually exists or takes place in nature herself, where a hierarchy with its summit or head is immediately linked on to a superior hierarchy as well as to an inferior one; and it is in this manner that the mystical circulations of the kosmos, and the transmission of life or vital currents throughout the fabric or web of being is assured. From this ancient fact and teaching of the Mystery schools came the greatly distorted Apostolic Succession of the Christian Church, a pale and feeble reflection in merely ecclesiastical government of a fundamental spiritual and mystical reality. The great Brotherhood of the sages and seers of the world, which in fact is the association of the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion headed by the Maha-chohan, is the purest and most absolute form or example of the guru-parampara existing on our earth today. (*See also Hermetic Chain*)

Heaven and Hell Every ancient exoteric religion taught that the so-called heavens are divided into steps or grades of ascending bliss and purity; and the so-called hells into steps or grades of increasing purgation or suffering. Now the esoteric doctrine or occultism teaches that the one is not a punishment, nor is the other strictly speaking a reward. The teaching is, simply, that each entity after physical death is drawn to the appropriate sphere to which the karmic destiny of the entity and the entity's own character and impulses magnetically attract it. As a man works, as a man sows, in his life, that and that only shall he reap after death. Good seed produces good fruit; bad seed, tares -- and perhaps even nothing of value or of spiritual use follows a negative and colorless life. After the second death, the human monad "goes" to devachan -- often called in theosophical literature the heaven-world. There are many degrees in devachan: the highest, the intermediate, and the lowest. What becomes of the entity, on the other hand, the lower human soul, that is so befouled and weighted with earth thought and the lower instincts that it cannot rise? There may be enough in it of the spirit nature to hold it together as an entity and enable it to become a reincarnating being, but it is foul, it is heavy; its tendency is consequently downwards. Can it therefore rise into a heavenly felicity? Can it go even into the lower realms of devachan and there enjoy its modicum of the beatitude, bliss, of everything that is noble and beautiful? No. There is an appropriate sphere for every degree of development of the ego-soul, and it gravitates to that sphere and remains there until it is thoroughly purged, until the sin has been washed out, so to say. These are the so-called hells, beneath even the lowest ranges of devachan; whereas the arupa heavens are the highest parts of the devachan. Nirvana is a very different thing from the heavens. (*See also Kama-Loka, Avichi, Devachan, Nirvana*)

Hermetic chain Among the ancient Greeks there existed a mystical tradition of a chain of living beings, one end of which included the divinities in their various grades or stages of divine authority and activities, and the other end of which ran downwards through inferior gods and heroes and sages to ordinary men, and to the beings below man. Each link of this living chain of beings inspired and instructed the chain below itself, thus transmitting and communicating from link to link to the end of the marvelous living chain, love and wisdom and knowledge concerning the secrets of the universe, eventuating in mankind as the arts and the sciences necessary for human life and civilization. This was mystically called the Hermetic Chain or the Golden Chain. In the ancient Mysteries the teaching of the existence and nature of the Hermetic Chain was fully explained; it is a true teaching because it represents distinctly and clearly and faithfully true and actual operations of nature. More or less faint and distorted copies of the teaching of this Hermetic Chain or Golden Chain or succession of teachers were taken over by various later formal and exoteric sects, such as the Christian Church, wherein the doctrine was called the Apostolic Succession. In all the great Mystery schools of antiquity there was this succession of teacher following teacher, each one passing on the light to his successor as he himself had received it from his predecessor; and as long as this transmission of light was a reality, it worked enormous spiritual benefit among men. Therefore all such movements lived, flourished, and did great good in the world. These teachers were the messengers to men from the Great Lodge of the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion. (*See also* Guru-parampara)

Hierarchy The word hierarchy merely means that a scheme or system or state of delegated directive power and authority exists in a self-contained body, directed, guided, and taught by one having supreme authority, called the hierarch. The name is used by theosophists, by extension of meaning, as signifying the innumerable degrees, grades, and steps of evolving entities in the kosmos, and as applying to all parts of the universe; and rightly so, because every different part of the universe -- and their number is simply countless -- is under the vital governance of a divine being, of a god, of a spiritual essence; and all material manifestations are simply the appearances on our plane of the workings and actions of these spiritual beings behind it. The series of hierarchies extends infinitely in both directions. If he so choose for purposes of thought, man may consider himself at the middle point, from which extends above him an unending series of steps upon steps of higher beings of all grades -- growing constantly less material and more spiritual, and greater in all senses -- towards an ineffable point. And there the imagination stops, not because the series itself stops, but because our thought can reach no farther out nor in. And similar to *this* series, an infinitely great series of beings and states of beings descends downwards (to use human terms) -- downwards and downwards, until there again the imagination stops, merely because our thought can go no farther. The summit, the acme, the flower, the highest point (or the hyparxis) of any series of animate and "inanimate" beings, whether we enumerate the stages or degrees of the series as seven or ten or twelve (according to whichever system we follow), is the divine unity for that series or hierarchy, and this hyparxis or highest being is again in its turn the lowest being of the hierarchy above it, and so extending onwards forever -- each hierarchy manifesting one facet of the divine kosmic life, each hierarchy showing forth one thought, as it were, of the divine thinkers. Various names were given to these hierarchies considered as series of beings. The generalized Greek hierarchy as shown by writers in periods preceding the rise of Christianity may be collected and enumerated as follows: (1) Divine; (2) Gods, or the divine-spiritual; (3) Demigods, sometimes called divine heroes, involving a very mystical doctrine; (4) Heroes proper; (5) Men; (6) Beasts or animals; (7) Vegetable world; (8) Mineral world; (9) Elemental world, or what was called the realm of Hades. The Divinity (or aggregate divine lives) itself is the hyparxis of this series of hierarchies, because each of these nine stages is itself a subordinate hierarchy. This (or any other) hierarchy of nine, hangs like a pendant jewel from the lowest hierarchy above it, which makes the tenth counting upwards,

which tenth we can call the superdivine, the hyperheavenly, this tenth being the lowest stage (or the ninth, counting downwards) of still another hierarchy extending upwards; and so on, indefinitely. One of the noblest of the theosophical teachings, and one of the most far-reaching in its import, is that of the hierarchical constitution of universal nature. This hierarchical structure of nature is so fundamental, so basic, that it may be truly called the structural framework of being. (*See also Planes*)

Higher Triad The imperishable spiritual ego considered as a unity. It is the reincarnating part of man's constitution which clothes itself in each earth-life in a new personality or lower quaternary. The higher triad, speaking in the simplest fashion, is the unity of atman, buddhi, and the higher manas; and the lower quaternary consists of the lower manas or kama-manas, the prana or vitality, the linga-sarira or astral model-body, and the physical vehicle. Another manner of considering the human constitution in its spiritual aspects is that viewed from the standpoint of consciousness, and in this latter manner the higher triad consists of the divine monad, the spiritual monad, and the higher human monad. The higher triad is often spoken of in a collective sense, and ignoring details of division, as simply the reincarnating monad, or more commonly the reincarnating ego, because this latter is rooted in the higher triad. Many theosophists experience quite unnecessary difficulty in understanding why the human constitution should be at one time divided in one way and at another time divided in another way. The difficulty lies in considering these divisions as being absolute instead of relative, in other words, as representing watertight compartments instead of merely indefinite and convenient divisions. The simplest psychological division is probably that which divides the septenary constitution of man in three parts: an uppermost duad which is immortal, an intermediate duad which is conditionally immortal, and a lower triad which is unconditionally mortal. (*See Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, 1st ed., pp. 167, 525; 2nd rev. ed., pp. 199, 601).

Human Ego The human ego is seated in that part of the human constitution which theosophists call the intermediate duad, manas-kama. The part which is attracted below and is mortal is the lower human ego. The part which aspires upwards towards the buddhi and ultimately joins it is the higher human ego or reincarnating ego. The dregs of the human ego after the death of the human being and after the second death in the kama-loka, remain in the astral spheres as the disintegrating kama-rupa or spook.

Human Monad In theosophical terminology the human monad is that part of man's constitution which is the root of the human ego. After death it allies itself with the upper duad, atma-buddhi, and its inclusion within the bosom of the upper duad produces the source whence issues the Reincarnating Ego at its next rebirth. The monad per se is an upper duad alone, but the attributive adjective "human" is given to it on account of the reincarnating ego which it contains within itself after death. This last usage is rather popular and convenient than strictly accurate.

Human Soul The human soul, speaking generally, is the intermediate nature of man's constitution, and being an imperfect thing it is drawn back into incarnation on earth where it learns needed lessons in this sphere of the universal life. Another term for the human soul is the ego -- a usage more popular than accurate, because the human ego is the soul of the human soul so to speak, the human soul being its vehicle. The ego is that which says in each one of us, "I am I, not you!" It is the child of the immanent Self; and through its imprisonment in matter as a ray of the overruling immanent Self, it learns to reflect its consciousness back upon itself, thus obtaining cognition of itself as self-conscious and hetero-conscious, i.e., knowing itself, and knowing "non-self" or other selves. Just as our higher and highest nature work through this human soul or intermediate nature of us, so does this last in its turn work and function through

bodies or vehicles or sheaths of more or less etherealized matters which surround and enclose it, which are of course still lower than itself, and which therefore give it the means of contacting our own lower and lowest planes of matter; and these lower planes provide us with the vital-astral-physical parts of us. This human soul or intermediate nature manifests therefore as best it can through and by the astral-physical vehicle, the latter our body of human flesh. In the theosophical classification, the human soul is divided into the higher human soul, composed of the lower buddhi and the higher manas -- and the self corresponding to it is the bhutatman, meaning the "self of that which has been" or the reincarnating ego -- and the lower human soul, the lower manas and kama, and the self corresponding to it is pranatman or astral personal ego, which is mortal.

Hypnotism Derived from a Greek word *hypnos*, which means "sleep," and strictly speaking the word hypnotism should be used only for those psychological-physiological phenomena in which the subject manifesting them is in a condition closely resembling sleep. The trouble is that in any attempt to study these various psychological powers of the human constitution it is found that they are many and of divers kinds; but the public, and even the technical experimenters, usually group all these psychological phenomena under the one word hypnotism, and therefore it is a misnomer. One of such powers, for instance, which is well known, is called fascination. Another shows a more or less complete suspension of the individual will and of the individual activities of him who is the sufferer from such psychological power, although in other respects he may show no signs of physical sleep. Another again -- and this perhaps is the most important of all so far as actual dangers lie -- passes under the name of suggestion, an exceedingly good name, because it describes the field of action of perhaps the most subtle and dangerous side-branch of the exercise of the general power or force emanating from the mind of the operator. The whole foundation upon which this power rests lies in the human psychological constitution; and it can be easily and neatly expressed in a few words. It is the power emanating from one mind, which can affect another mind and direct or misdirect the latter's course of action. This is in nine hundred and ninety-nine times out of a thousand a wrong thing to do; and this fact would readily be understood by everybody did men know, as they should, the difference between the higher and the lower nature of man, the difference between his incorruptible, death-defying individuality, his spiritual nature, on the one hand; and, on the other hand, the brain-mind and all its train of weak and fugitive thoughts. Anyone who has seen men and women in the state of hypnosis must realize not only how dangerous, how baleful and wrong it is, but also that it exemplifies the trance state perfectly. The reason is that the intermediate nature, or the psychomental apparatus, of the human being in this state has been displaced from its seat, in other words, is disjoined or dislocated; and there remains but the vitalized human body, with its more or less imperfect functioning of the brain cells and nervous apparatus. H. P. Blavatsky in her *Theosophical Glossary* writes: "It is the most dangerous of practices, morally and physically, as it interferes with the nerve-fluid and the nerves controlling the circulation in the capillary blood-vessels." (*See also Mesmerism*)

Immortality A term signifying continuous existence or being; but this understanding of the term is profoundly illogical and contrary to nature, for there is nothing throughout nature's endless and multifarious realms of being and existence which remains for two consecutive instants of time exactly the same. Consequently, immortality is a mere figment of the imagination, an illusory phantom of reality. When the student of the esoteric wisdom once realizes that continuous progress, i.e., continuous change in advancement, is nature's fundamental procedure, he recognizes instantly that continuous remaining in an unchanging or immutable state of consciousness or being is not only impossible, but in the last analysis is the last thing that is either desirable or comforting. Fancy continuing immortal in a state of imperfection such as we

human beings exemplify -- which is exactly what the usual acceptance of this term immortality means. The highest god in highest heaven, although seemingly immortal to us imperfect human beings, is nevertheless an evolving, growing, progressing entity in its own sublime realms or spheres, and therefore as the ages pass leaves one condition or state to assume a succeeding condition or state of a nobler and higher type; precisely as the preceding condition or state had been the successor of another state before it. Continuous or unending immutability of any condition or state of an evolving entity is obviously an impossibility in nature; and when once pondered over it becomes clear that the ordinary acceptance of immortality involves an impossibility. All nature is an unending series of changes, which means all the hosts or multitudes of beings composing nature, for every individual unit of these hosts is growing, evolving, i.e., continuously changing, therefore never immortal. Immortality and evolution are contradictions in terms. An evolving entity means a changing entity, signifying a continuous progress towards better things; and evolution therefore is a succession of state of consciousness and being after another state of consciousness and being, and thus throughout duration. The Occidental idea of static immortality or even mutable immortality is thus seen to be both repellent and impossible. This doctrine is so difficult for the average Occidental easily to understand that it may be advisable once and for all to point out without mincing of words that just as complete death, that is to say, entire annihilation of consciousness, is an impossibility in nature, just so is continuous and unchanging consciousness in any one stage or phase of evolution likewise an impossibility, because progress or movement or growth is continuous throughout eternity. There are, however, periods more or less long of continuance in any stage or phase of consciousness that may be attained by an evolving entity; and the higher the being is in evolution, the more its spiritual and intellectual faculties have been evolved or evoked, the longer do these periods of continuous individual, or perhaps personal, quasi-immortality continue. There is, therefore, what may be called relative immortality, although this phrase is confessedly a misnomer. Master KH in *The Mahatma Letters*, on pages 128-30, uses the phrase "panaeonic immortality" to signify this same thing that I have just called relative immortality, an immortality -- falsely so called, however -- which lasts in the cases of certain highly evolved monadic egos for the entire period of a manvantara, but which of necessity ends with the succeeding pralaya of the solar system. Such a period of time of continuous self-consciousness of so highly evolved a monadic entity is to us humans actually a relative immortality; but strictly and logically speaking it is no more immortality than is the ephemeral existence of a butterfly. When the solar manvantara comes to an end and the solar pralaya begins, even such highly evolved monadic entities, full-blown gods, are swept out of manifested self-conscious existence like the sere and dried leaves at the end of the autumn; and the divine entities thus passing out enter into still higher realms of superdivine activity, to reappear at the end of the pralaya and at the dawn of the next or succeeding solar manvantara. The entire matter is, therefore, a highly relative one. What seems immortal to us humans would seem to be but as a wink of the eye to the vision of super-kosmic entities; while, on the other hand, the span of the average human life would seem to be immortal to a self-conscious entity inhabiting one of the electrons of an atom of the human physical body. The thing to remember in this series of observations is the wondrous fact that consciousness from eternity to eternity is uninterrupted, although by the very nature of things undergoing continuous and unceasing change of phases in realization throughout endless duration. What men call unconsciousness is merely a form of consciousness which is too subtle for our gross brain-minds to perceive or to sense or to grasp; and, secondly, strictly speaking, what men call death, whether of a universe or of their own physical bodies, is but the breaking up of worn-out vehicles and the transference of consciousness to a higher plane. It is important to seize the spirit of this marvelous teaching, and not allow the imperfect brain-mind to quibble over words, or to pause or hesitate at difficult terms.

Individuality Theosophists draw a sharp and comprehensive distinction between individuality and personality. The individuality is the spiritual-intellectual and immortal part of us; deathless, at least for the duration of the kosmic manvantara -- the root, the very essence of us, the spiritual sun within, our inner god. The personality is the veil, the mask, composed of various sheaths of consciousness through which the individuality acts. The word individuality means that which cannot be divided, that which is simple and pure in the philosophical sense, indivisible, uncompounded, original. It is not heterogeneous; it is not composite; it is not builded up of other elements; it is the *thing in itself*. Whereas, on the contrary, the intermediate nature and the lower nature are composite, and therefore mortal, being builded up of elements other than themselves. Strictly speaking, individuality and monad are identical, but the two words are convenient because of the distinctions of usage contained in them; just as consciousness and self-consciousness are fundamentally identical, but convenient as words on account of the distinctions contained in them. (*See also* Monad)

Infinite A term meaning that which is not finite. The expression is used sometimes with almost absurd inaccuracy, and is one which in all probability representing as it does imperfect understanding could never be found in any of the great religious or philosophical systems of the ancients. Occidental writers of the past and present often use the word infinite as applying to beings or entities, such as in the expression "an infinite personal deity" -- a ludicrous joining of contradictory and disparate words. The ancients rejected the phantom idea that this term involves, and used instead expressions such as the Boundless, or the Frontierless, or the Endless, whether speaking of abstract space or abstract time -- the latter more properly called unending duration. (*See also* Absolute)

Initiates Those who have passed at least one initiation and therefore those who understand the mystery-teachings and who are ready to receive them at some future time in even larger measure. Please note the distinction between initiate and initiation. An initiate is one who is beginning or preparing for an initiation. An initiation is one who has successfully passed at least one initiation. It is obvious therefore that an initiate is always an initiation when he prepares for a still higher initiation. The mystery-teachings were held as the most sacred treasure or possession that men could transmit to their descendants who were worthy postulants. The revelation of these mystery-doctrines under the seal of initiation, and under proper conditions to worthy depositaries, worked marvelous changes in the lives of those who underwent successfully the initiatory trials. It made men different from what they were before they received this spiritual and intellectual revelation. The facts are found in all the old religions and philosophies, if these are studied honestly. Initiation was always spoken of under the metaphor or figure of speech of "a new birth," a "birth into truth," for it was a spiritual and intellectual rebirth of the powers of the human spirit-soul, and could be called in all truth a birth of the soul into a loftier and nobler self-consciousness. When this happened, such men were called "initiates" or the reborn. In India, such reborn men were anciently called *dvija*, a Sanskrit word meaning "twice-born." In Egypt such initiates or reborn men were called "Sons of the Sun." In other countries they were called by other names.

Initiation In olden times there were seven -- and even ten -- degrees of initiation. Of these seven degrees, three consisted of teachings alone, which formed the preparation, the discipline, spiritual and mental and psychic and physical -- what the Greeks called the *katharsis* or "cleansing." When the disciple was considered sufficiently cleansed, purified, disciplined, quiet mentally, tranquil spiritually, then he was taken into the fourth degree, which likewise consisted partly of teaching, but also in part of direct personal introduction by the old mystical processes into the structure and operations of the universe, by which means truth was gained by first-hand

personal experience. In other words, to speak in plain terms, his spirit-soul, his individual consciousness, was assisted to pass into other planes and realms of being, and to know and to understand by the sheer process of *becoming them*. A man, a mind, an understanding, can grasp and see, and thereby know, only those things which *the individual entity itself is*. After the fourth degree, there followed the fifth and the sixth and the seventh initiations, each in turn, and these consisted of teachings also; but more and more as the disciple progressed -- and he was helped in this development more and more largely as he advanced farther -- there was evolved forth in him the power and faculties still farther and more deeply to penetrate beyond the veils of maya or illusion; until, having passed the seventh or last initiation of all of the manifest initiations, if we may call them that, he became one of those individuals whom theosophists call the mahatmas.

Inner God Mystics of all the ages have united in teaching this fact of the existence and ever-present power of an individual inner god in each human being, as the first principle or primordial energy governing the progress of man out of material life into the spiritual. Indeed, the doctrine is so perfectly universal, and is so consistent with everything that man knows when he reflects over the matter of his own spiritual and intellectual nature, that it is small wonder that this doctrine should have acquired foremost place in human religious and philosophical consciousness. Indeed, it may be called the very foundation-stone on which were builded the great systems of religious and philosophical thinking of the past; and rightly so, because this doctrine is founded on nature herself. The inner god in man, man's own inner, essential divinity, is the root of him, whence flow forth in inspiring streams into the psychological apparatus of his constitution all the inspirations of genius, all the urgings to betterment. All powers, all faculties, all characteristics of individuality, which blossom through evolution into individual manifestation, are the fruitage of the working in man's constitution of those life-giving and inspiring streams of spiritual energy. The radiant light which streams forth from that immortal center or core of our inmost being, which is our inner god, lightens the pathway of each one of us; and it is from this light that we obtain ideal conceptions. It is by this radiant light in our hearts that we can guide our feet towards an ever larger fulfilling in daily life of the beautiful conceptions which we as mere human beings dimly or clearly perceive, as the case may be. The divine fire which moves through universal Nature is the source of the individualized divine fire coming from man's inner god. The modern Christians of a mystical bent of mind call the inner god the Christ Immanent, the immanent Christos; in Buddhism it is called the living Buddha within; in Brahmanism it is spoken of as the Brahma in his Brahmapura or Brahma-city, which is the inner constitution. Hence, call it by what name you please, the reflective and mystical mind intuitively realizes that there works through him a divine flame, a divine life, a divine light, and that this by whatever name we may call it, is himself, his essential SELF. (*See also* God)

Intermediate Nature To speak of man as a trichotomy, or as having a division into three parts -- as in the Christian New Testament: a "natural" body, a psychical body, and a spiritual body -- is a convenient expression, but it by no means sets forth in detail the entire economy of man's inner being. Following then this trichotomy, there is first the divinespiritual element in the human constitution which is man's own individual inner god; second, the soul or human monad, which is his human egoic self, his intermediate or psychical or second nature; third, all the composite lower part of him which although comprising several sheaths may be conveniently grouped under the one term vehicle or body. Gods, monads, and atoms collectively in nature are copied in the essential trichotomy of man, as spirit, soul, and body, and hence the latter is another way of saying man's divine-spiritual, intermediate soul, and astral-physical parts. It is the intermediate nature, offspring of the divine spark, which enshrines the ray from the divine spark, its spiritual sun so to say, and steps it down into the ordinary mentality of man. It is this intermediate nature which reincarnates. The divine-spiritual part of man does not reincarnate, for this part of man has

no need of learning the lessons that physical life can give: it is far above them all. But it is the intermediate part functioning through the various garments or sheaths of the inner man -- these garments may be called astral or ethereal -- which in this manner can reach down to and touch our earthly plane; and the physical body is the garment of flesh in touch with the physical world. The intermediate nature is commonly called the human soul. It is an imperfect thing, and is that which comes back into incarnation, because it is drawn to this earth by attraction. It learns much needed lessons here, in this sphere of the universal life. (*See also Principles of Man*)

Invisible Worlds The ancient wisdom teaches that the universe is not only a living organism, but that physical human beings live in intimate connection, in intimate contact, with invisible spheres, with invisible and intangible realms, unknown to man because the physical senses are so imperfectly evolved that we neither see these invisible realms nor feel nor hear nor smell nor taste them, nor cognize them except by that much more highly evolved and subtle sensorium which men call the mind. These inner realms interpenetrate our physical sphere, permeate it, so that in our daily affairs as we go about our duties we actually pass through the dwellings, through the mountains, through the lakes, through the very beings, mayhap, of the entities of and dwelling in these invisible realms. These invisible realms are built of matter just as this our physical world is, but of a more ethereal matter than ours is; but we cognize them not at all with our physical senses. The explanation is that it is all a matter of differing rates of vibration of substances. The reader must be careful not to confuse this theosophical teaching of inner worlds and spheres with what the modern Spiritism of the Occident has to say on the matter. The "Summerland" of the Spiritists in no wise resembles the actuality which the theosophical philosophy teaches of, the doctrine concerning the structure and operations of the visible and invisible kosmos. The warning seems necessary lest an unwary reader may imagine that the invisible worlds and spheres of the theosophical teachings are identic with the Summerland of the Spiritists, for it is not so. Our senses tell us absolutely nothing of the far-flung planes and spheres which belong to the ranges and functionings of the invisible substances and energies of the universe; yet those inner and invisible planes and spheres are actually inexpressibly more important than what our physical senses tell us of the physical world, because these invisible planes are the *causal realms*, of which our physical world or universe, however far extended in space, is but the effectual or phenomenal or resultant production. But while these inner and invisible worlds or planes or spheres are the fountainhead, ultimately, of all the energies and matters of the whole physical world, yet to an entity inhabiting these inner and invisible worlds or planes, these latter are as substantial and "real" -- using the popular word -- to that entity as our gross physical world is to us. Just as we know in our physical world various grades or conditions of energy and matter, from the physically grossest to the most ethereal, precisely after the same general plan do the inhabitants of these invisible and inner and to us superior worlds know and cognize their own grossest and also most ethereal substances and energies. Man as well as all the other entities of the universe is inseparably connected with these worlds invisible.

Involution The reverse process or procedure of evolution. As evolution means the unfolding, the unwrapping, the rolling forth, of what already exists and is latent, so involution means the inwrapping, the infolding, the ingoing of what previously exists or has been unfolded, etc. Involution and evolution never in any circumstances can be even conceived of properly as operative the one apart from the other: every act of evolution is an act of involution, and vice versa. To illustrate, as spirit and matter are fundamentally one and yet eternally coactive and interactive, so involution and evolution are two names for two phases of the same procedure of growth, and are eternally coactive and interactive. As an example, the so-called descent of the monads into matter means an involution or involving or infolding of spiritual potencies into material vehicles which coincidentally and contemporaneously, through the compelling urge of the

infolding energies, unfold their own latent capacities, unwrap them, roll them forth; and this is the evolution of matter. Thus what is the involution of spirit is contemporaneously and *pari passu* the evolution of matter. Contrariwise, on the ascending or luminous arc when the involved monadic essences begin to rise towards their primordial spiritual source they begin to unfold or unwrap themselves as previously on the descending arc they had infolded or inwrapped themselves. But this process of unfolding or evolution of the monadic essences is contemporaneous with and *pari passu* with the infolding and inwrapping, the involution, of the material energies and powers. Human birth and death are outstanding illustrations or examples of the same thing. The child is born, and as it grows to its full efflorescence of power it evolves or rolls forth certain inherent characteristics or energies or faculties, all derived from the human being's svabhava or ego. Contrariwise, when the decline of human life begins, there is a slow infolding or inwrapping of these same facilities which thus seem gradually to diminish. These facilities and energies thus evolved forth in earth-life are the working of the innate spiritual and intellectual and psychical characteristics impelling and compelling the vehicular or body sides of the human constitution to express themselves as organs becoming more and more perfect as the child grows to maturity. After death the process is exactly the reverse. The material or vehicular side of the being grows less and less strong and powerful, more and more involved, and becoming with every step in the process more dormant. But contemporaneously and coincidentally the distinctly spiritual and intellectual powers and faculties themselves become released from the vehicles and begin to expand into ever larger efflorescence, attaining their maximum in the devachan. It is only the usual carelessness in accurate thinking that induces the idea that evolution is one distinct process acting alone, and that involution -- about which by the way very little is heard -- is another process acting alone. The two, as said above, are the two phases of activity of the evolving monads, and these phases exist contemporaneously at any moment, each of the two phases continually acting and interacting with the other phase. They are inseparable. Just so with spirit and matter. Spirit is not something radically distinct from and utterly separate from matter. The two are fundamentally one, and the two are eternally coactive and interactive. There are several terms in Sanskrit which correspond to what the theosophist means by evolution, but perhaps the best general term is *pravritti*, meaning to "revolve" or to "roll forwards," to unroll or to unwrap. Again, the reverse procedure or involution can probably best be expressed in Sanskrit by the term *nivritti*, meaning "rolling backwards" or "inwrapping" or "infolding." A term which is frequently interchangeable with evolution is emanation. (*See also Evolution*)

Isvara (Sanskrit) Isvara means "lord," and is a term which is frequently applied in Hindu mythology not only to kosmic divinities, but to the expression of the cosmic spirit in the human being. Consequently, when reference is had to the individual human being, Isvara is the divine individualized spirit in man -- man's own personal god. It may be otherwise described as the divine ego, the child of the divine monad in a man, and in view of this fact also could be used with reference to the dhyani-buddha or to the immanent Christ in a man. In India it is a title frequently given to Siva and other gods of the Hindu pantheon.

Jagrat (Sanskrit) The state of consciousness when awake, as opposed to *svapna*, the dreaming-sleeping state of consciousness, and different again from *sushupti* when the human consciousness is plunged into profound self-oblivion. The highest of all the states into which the consciousness may cast itself, or be cast, is the *turiya* ("fourth"), which is the highest state of *samadhi*, and is almost a nirvanic condition. All these states or conditions of the consciousness are affections or phases of the constitution of man, and of beings constructed similarly to man. The waking state, or jagrat, is the state or condition of consciousness normal to the imbodyed human being when not asleep. Svapna is the state of consciousness more or less freed from the

sheath of the body and partially awake in the astral realms, higher or lower as the case may be. Sushupti is the state of self-oblivion into which the human being is plunged when the percipient consciousness enters into the purely manasic condition, which is self-oblivion for the relatively impotent brain-mind; whereas the turiya state, which is a practical annihilation of the ordinary human consciousness, is an attainment of union with atma-buddhi overshadowing or working through the higher manas. Actually, therefore, it is becoming at one with the monadic essence.

Jiva (Sanskrit) This is a word meaning essentially a *living* being per se, apart from any attributes or qualities that such living being may have or possess. It therefore is the exactly proper equivalent of the theosophical term monad. In one sense, therefore, jiva could be also used for a life-atom, provided that the emphasis be laid on the word *life*, or rather life-entity -- not an "atom of life," but a being whose essence is pure living individuality. Monad in its divine-spiritual essence, and life-atom in its pranic-astral-physical being -- such is a jiva; and between these two extremes are the numerous planes or sheaths on and in which the individualized consciousness works.

Jivanmukta (Sanskrit) A highly mystical and philosophical word which means "a freed jiva," signifying a human being, or an entity equivalent in evolutionary development to a human being, who has attained freedom or release as an individualized monad from the enthralling chains and attractions of the material spheres. A jivanmukta is not necessarily without body; and, as a matter of fact, the term is very frequently employed to signify the loftiest class of initiates or Adepts who through evolution have risen above the binding attractions or magnetism of the material spheres. The term is frequently used for a mahatma, whether imbodyed or disimbodyed, and also occasionally as a descriptive term for a nirvani -- one who has reached nirvana during life. Were the nirvani "without body," the mystical and technical meaning of jivanmukta would hardly apply. Consequently, jivanmukta may briefly be said to be a human being who lives in the highest portions of his constitution in full consciousness and power even during earth-life.

Jivatman (Sanskrit) An expressive word having much the same significance as jiva, but with emphasis laid upon the last element of the compound, atman, "self." Jivatman is perhaps a better term for monad even than jiva is, because it carries the clear idea of the monad in which the individual self is predominant over all other monadic attributes. One may perhaps describe it by a paraphrase as "the essential *self* or individuality of the monad." Jivatman is also a term sometimes used for the universal life; but this definition, while correct in a way, is rather confusing because suggesting similarity if not identity with paramatman. Paramatman is the Brahman or universal spirit of a solar system, for instance; and paramatman is therefore the converging point of a cosmic consciousness in which all the hosts of jivatmans unite as in their hierarchical head. The jivatmans of any hierarchy are like the rays from the paramatman, their divine-spiritual sun. The jivatman, therefore, in the case of the human being, or indeed of any other evolving entity, is the spiritual monad, or better perhaps the spiritual ego of that monad.

Kalpa (Sanskrit) This word comes from a verb-root *klrip*, meaning "to be in order"; hence a "period of time," or a "cycle of time." Sometimes a kalpa is called the period of a mahamanvantara -- or "great manvantara" -- after which the globes of a planetary chain no longer go into obscurity or repose, as they periodically do, but die utterly. A kalpa is also called a Day of Brahma, and its length is 4,320,000,000 years. Seven rounds form a Day of Brahma, or a planetary manvantara. (*See also* Brahma, Manvantara) Seven planetary manvantaras (or planetary cycles, each cycle consisting of seven rounds) form one solar kalpa (or solar manvantara), or seven Days of Brahma -- a week of Brahma. The difficulty that many Western students have had in understanding this word lies in the fact that it is unavoidably a

"blind," because it does not apply with exclusive meaning to the length of one time period alone. Like the English word age, or the English phrase time period, the word kalpa may be used for several different cycles. There is likewise the maha-kalpa or "great kalpa," which frequently is the name given to the vast time period contained in a complete solar manvantara or complete solar pralaya.

Kama (Sanskrit) "Desire"; the fourth substance-principle of which man's constitution is composed. Kama is the driving or impelling force in the human constitution; per se it is colorless, neither good nor bad, and is only such as the mind and soul direct its use. It is the seat of the living electric impulses, desires, aspirations, considered in their energetic aspect. Usually however, although there is a divine kama as well as an infernal one, this word is restricted, and wrongly so, to evil desire almost exclusively.

Kama-Loka (Sanskrit) A compound which can be translated as "desire world," which is accurate enough, but only slightly descriptive. It is a semi-material plane or rather world or realm, subjective and invisible to human beings as a rule, which surrounds and also encloses our physical globe. It is the habitat or dwelling-place of the astral forms of dead men and other dead beings -- the realm of the kama-rupas or desire-bodies of defunct humans. "It is the Hades," as H. P. Blavatsky says, "of the ancient Greeks, and the Amenti of the Egyptians, the land of Silent Shadows." It is in the kama-loka that the second death takes place, after which the freed upper duad of the human being that was enters the devachan. The highest regions of the kama-loka blend insensibly into the lowest regions or realms of the devachan; and, conversely, the grossest and lowest regions of the kama-loka blend insensibly into the highest regions of the avichi. When the physical body breaks up at death, the astral elements of the incarnate entity remain in the kama-loka or "shadow world," with the same vital centers as in physical life clinging within them, still vitalizing them; and here certain processes take place. The lower human soul that is befouled with earth-thought and the lower instincts cannot easily rise out of the kama-loka, because it is foul, it is heavy; and its tendency is consequently downwards. It is in the kama-loka that the processes of separation of the monad from the kama-rupic spook or phantom take place; and when this separation is complete, which is the second death above spoken of, then the monad receives the reincarnating ego within its bosom, wherein it enjoys its long rest of bliss and recuperation. If, contrariwise, the entity in the kama-loka is so heavy with evil and is so strongly attracted to earth spheres that the influence of the monad cannot withdraw the reincarnating ego from the kama-rupa, then the latter with its befouled soul sinks lower and lower and may even enter the avichi. If the influence of the monad succeeds, as it usually does, in bringing about the second death, then the kama-rupa becomes a mere phantom or kama-rupic spook, and begins instantly to decay and finally vanishes away, its component life-atoms pursuing each one the road whither its attractions draw it.

Kama-Rupa (Sanskrit) A compound word signifying "desire body." It is that part of man's inner constitution in which dwell or inhere the various desires, affections, hates, loves -- in short, the various mental and psychical energies. After death it becomes the vehicle in the astral worlds of the higher principles of the man that was. But these higher principles are nevertheless scarcely conscious of the fact, because the rupture of the golden cord of life at the moment of the physical death plunges the cognizing *personal* entity into a merciful stupor of unconsciousness, in which stupor it remains a longer or shorter period depending upon its qualities of spirituality or materiality. The more spiritual the man was the longer the period of merciful unconsciousness lasts, and vice versa. After death, as has been frequently stated elsewhere, there occurs what is called the second death, which is the separation of the immortal part of the second or intermediate duad from the lower portions of this duad, which lower portions remain as the

kama-rupa in the etheric or higher astral spheres which are intermediate between the devachanic and the earthly spheres. In time this kama-rupa gradually fades out in its turn, its life-atoms at such dissolution passing on to their various and unceasing peregrinations. It is this kama-rupa which legend and story in the various ancient world religions or philosophies speak of as the shade, and which it has been customary in the Occident to call the spook or ghost. It is, in short, all the mortal elements of the human soul that was. The kama-rupa is an exact astral duplicate, in appearance and mannerism, of the man who died; it is his eidolon or "image." (*See also* Second Death)

Karana-Sarira (Sanskrit) A compound signifying "cause body" or "causal body," the instrument or principle or causal element in man's constitution, and inferentially in the constitution of any other re embodying entity, which brings about not merely the reproduction in im bodied form of such entity, but likewise its evolution during a manvantara through an unending series of re imbodiments. (*See also* Karanopadhi)

Karanopadhi (Sanskrit) A compound meaning the "causal instrument" or "instrumental cause" in the long series of re imbodiments to which human and other re embodying entities are subject. *Upadhi*, the second element of this compound, is often translated as "vehicle"; but while this definition is accurate enough for popular purposes, it fails to set forth the essential meaning of the word which is rather "disguise," or certain natural properties or constitutional characteristics supposed to be the disguises or clothings or masks in and through which the spiritual monad of man works, bringing about the repetitive manifestations upon earth of certain functions and powers of this monad, and, indeed, upon the other globes of the planetary chain; and, furthermore, intimately connected with the peregrinations of the monad through the various spheres and realms of the solar kosmos. In one sense of the word, therefore, karanopadhi is almost interchangeable with the thoughts set forth under the term *maya*, or the illusory disguises through which spirit works, or rather through which spiritual monadic entities work and manifest themselves. Karanopadhi, as briefly explained under the term "causal body," is dual in meaning. The first and more easily understood meaning of this term shows that the cause bringing about re imbodiment is *avidya*, nescience rather than ignorance; because when a re embodying entity through repeated re imbodiments in the spheres of matter has freed itself from the entangling chains of the latter, and has risen into self-conscious recognition of its own divine powers, it thereby shakes off the chains or disguises of *maya* and becomes what is called a *jivanmukta*. It is only imperfect souls, or rather monadic souls, speaking in a general way, which are obliged by nature's cyclic operations and laws to undergo the repetitive re imbodiments on earth and elsewhere in order that the lessons of self-conquest and mastery over all the planes of nature may be achieved. As the entity advances in wisdom and knowledge, and in the acquiring of self-conscious sympathy for all that is, in other words, as it grows more and more like unto its divine-spiritual counterpart, the less is it subject to *avidya*. It is, in a sense, the seeds of kama-manas left in the fabric or being of the reincarnating entity, which act as the *karana* or reproducing cause, or instrumental cause, of such entity's reincarnations on earth. The higher karanopadhi, however, although in operation similar to the lower karanopadhi, or *karana-sarira* just described, nevertheless belongs to the spiritual-intellectual part of man's constitution, and is the reproductive energy inherent in the spiritual monad bringing about its re-emergence after the solar *pralaya* into the new activities and new series of im bodiments which open with the dawn of the solar manvantara following upon the solar *pralaya* just ended. This latter karanopadhi or *karana-sarira*, therefore, is directly related to the element-principle in man's constitution called *buddhi* -- a veil, as it were, drawn over the face or around the being of the monadic essence, much as *prakriti* surrounds *Purusha*, or *pradhana* surrounds *Brahman*, or *mulaprakriti* surrounds and is the veil or disguise or *sakti* of *parabrahman*. Hence, in the case of man, this karanopadhi

or causal disguise or vehicle corresponds in a general way to the buddhi-manas, or spiritual soul, in which the spiritual monad works and manifests itself. It should be said in passing that the doctrine concerning the functions and operations of buddhi in the human constitution is extremely recondite, because in buddhi lie the causal impulses or urges bringing about the building of the constitution of man, and which, when the latter is completed, and when forming man as a septenary entity, express themselves as the various strata or qualities of the auric egg. Finally, the karana-sarira, the karanopadhi or causal body, is the vehicular instrumental form or instrumental body-form, produced by the working of what is perhaps the most mysterious principle or element, mystically speaking, in the constitution not only of man, but of the universe -- the very mysterious spiritual bija. The karanopadhi, the karana-sarira or causal body, is explained with minor differences of meaning in various works of Hindu philosophy; but all such works must be studied with the light thrown upon them by the great wisdom-teaching of the archaic ages, esoteric theosophy. The student otherwise runs every risk of being led astray. I might add that the sushupti state or condition, which is that of deep dreamless sleep, involving entire insensibility of the human consciousness to all exterior impressions, is a phase of consciousness through which the adept must pass, although consciously pass in his case, before reaching the highest state of samadhi, which is the turiya state. According to the Vedanta philosophy, the turiya (meaning "fourth") is the fourth state of consciousness into which the full adept can self-consciously enter and wherein he becomes one with the kosmic Brahman. The Vedantists likewise speak of the anandamaya-kosa, which they describe as being the innermost disguise or frame or vehicle surrounding the atmic consciousness. Thus we see that the anandamaya-kosa and the karana-sarira, or karanopadhi, and the buddhi in conjunction with the manasic ego, are virtually identical. The author has been at some pains to set forth and briefly to develop the various phases of occult and esoteric theosophical thought given in this article, because of the many and various misunderstandings and misconceptions concerning the nature, characteristics, and functions of the karana-sarira or causal body.

Karma (*Karman*, Sanskrit) This is a noun-form coming from the root *kri* meaning "to do," "to make." Literally *karma* means "doing," "making," action. But when used in a philosophical sense, it has a technical meaning, and this technical meaning can best be translated into English by the word consequence. The idea is this: When an entity acts, he acts from within; he acts through an expenditure in greater or less degree of his own native energy. This expenditure of energy, this outflowing of energy, as it impacts upon the surrounding milieu, the nature around us, brings forth from the latter perhaps an instantaneous or perhaps a delayed reaction or rebound. Nature, in other words, reacts against the impact; and the combination of these two -- of energy acting upon nature and nature reacting against the impact of that energy -- is what is called karma, being a combination of the two factors. Karma is, in other words, essentially a chain of causation, stretching back into the infinity of the past and therefore necessarily destined to stretch into the infinity of the future. It is unescapable, because it is in universal nature, which is infinite and therefore everywhere and timeless; and sooner or later the reaction will inevitably be felt by the entity which aroused it. It is a very old doctrine, known to all religions and philosophies, and since the renaissance of scientific study in the Occident has become one of the fundamental postulates of modern coordinated knowledge. If you toss a pebble into a pool, it causes ripples in the water, and these ripples spread and finally impact upon the bank surrounding the pool; and, so modern science tells us, the ripples are translated into vibrations, which are carried outward into infinity. But at every step of this natural process there is a corresponding reaction from every one and from all of the myriads of atomic particles affected by the spreading energy. Karma is in no sense of the word fatalism on the one hand, nor what is popularly known as chance, on the other hand. It is essentially a doctrine of free will, for naturally the entity which initiates a movement or action -- spiritual, mental, psychological,

physical, or other -- is responsible thereafter in the shape of consequences and effects that flow therefrom, and sooner or later recoil upon the actor or prime mover. Since everything is interlocked and interlinked and interblended with everything else, and no thing and no being can live unto itself alone, other entities are of necessity, in smaller or larger degree, affected by the causes or motions initiated by any individual entity; but such effects or consequences on entities, other than the prime mover, are only indirectly a morally compelling power, in the true sense of the word moral. An example of this is seen in what the theosophist means when he speaks of family karma as contrasted with one's own individual karma; or national karma, the series of consequences pertaining to the nation of which he is an individual; or again, the racial karma pertaining to the race of which the individual is an integral member. Karma cannot be said either to punish or to reward in the ordinary meaning of these terms. Its action is unerringly just, for being a part of nature's own operations, all karmic action ultimately can be traced back to the kosmic heart of harmony which is the same thing as saying pure consciousness-spirit. The doctrine is extremely comforting to human minds, inasmuch as man may carve his own destiny and indeed must do so. He can form it or deform it, shape it or misshape it, as he wills; and by acting with nature's own great and underlying energies, he puts himself in unison or harmony therewith and therefore becomes a co-worker with nature as the gods are.

Khe-Chara (*Khecara*, Sanskrit) "Ether-goer" or sometimes rendered as "sky-walker." The name used in the mystical and philosophical literature of Hindustan to signify one of the *siddhis* or psychospiritual powers that belong to yogis of advanced grade, or to initiates. It is, in fact, nothing more than what in Tibet is called hpho-wa, the projection of the mayavi-rupa to any part of the earth's surface or, indeed, farther than that, and the doing of this at will.

Kosmic Life All the great religions and philosophies of past times, all the ancient sciences likewise, taught the fact of the existence of inner, invisible, intangible, but causal realms, as the foundation and background of these various systems. According to them all, our physical world is but the outer shell or garment or veil of other worlds which are inner, vital, alive, and causal, which in their aggregate embody the kosmic life. This kosmic life is not a person, not an individualized entity. It is far, far different from any such merely human conception, because it is infinite, boundless, beginningless, endless, coextensive with infinity, coextensive with eternity. The kosmic life is in very truth the ultimate reality behind and within all that is. All the energies and matters in our world are really only various and innumerable manifestations of the kosmic life existing in truly infinitely large variety. The kosmic life, therefore, is, as said, the reality behind all the infinitely varied hosts of entities and things. But this reality is no personal or individualized Deity. It is precisely what theosophy calls it: the boundless and, in its totality, incomprehensible life-substance-consciousness.

Kosmos (Greek) A word meaning "arrangement"; that which was arranged and kept along the lines and rules of harmony, the arrangement of the universe. Kosmos, therefore, is virtually interchangeable with universe. It must be distinctly understood that kosmos and universe, when employed in the esoteric philosophy, signify above everything else the indwelling boundless life expressing itself in its multimyriad entities and forms producing the amazing variety, and unity in diversity, that we see around us. (*See also* Cosmos)

Kshatriya (Sanskrit) The warrior, the administrator, the king, the prince, in short, the world of officialdom, etc.; the second of the four grades or classes, social and political, of the early civilizations of Hindustan in the Vedic Period. (*See also* Brahmana, Vaisya, Sudra)

Kumbhaka (Sanskrit) An extremely dangerous practice belonging to the hatha yoga system. It consists in retaining the breath by shutting the mouth and holding the nostrils closed with the fingers of the right hand. All these breathing exercises of whatever kind are attended with the utmost physiological danger to those who attempt to practice them, unless under the skilled guidance of a genuine Adept; and their practice is virtually forbidden, at least in the first few degrees, to all chelas of genuinely occult or esoteric schools. Indeed, except in rare instances, and for extraordinary reasons, the chela of a true Master of Wisdom will have no need to practice these hatha yoga exercises, for the whole purpose of esoteric training is to evolve forth the faculties and powers of the inner divinity, and not to gain minor and often misleading powers of small range which are occasionally acquired by following the hatha yoga physiologic and physical practices.

Kundalini or Kundalini-Sakti (Sanskrit) A term whose essential meaning is "circular" or "winding" or "spiral" or "coiling" action, or rather energy, and signifies a recondite power in the human constitution. Kundalini-sakti is derivative of one of the elemental forces of nature. It works in and through, in the case of man, his auric egg, and expresses itself in continuous action in many of the most familiar phenomena of existence even when man himself is unconscious of it. In its higher aspect Kundalini is a power or force following winding or circular pathways carrying or conveying thought and force originating in the higher triad. Abstractly, in the case of man it is of course one of the fundamental energies or qualities of the pranas. Unskilled or unwise attempts to interfere with its normal working in the human body may readily result in insanity or malignant or enfeebling disease.

Ladder of Life A term frequently found in theosophical literature, briefly and neatly expressing the ascending grades or stages of manifested existences in the universe. In one sense the term ladder of life is interchangeable with the other terms, the Hermetic Chain or the Golden Chain. The universe is imbodyed consciousnesses; and these imbodyed consciousnesses exist in a practically infinite gradation of varying degrees of perfection -- a real ladder of life, or stair of life, stretching endlessly in either direction, for our imagination can conceive of no limits except a hierarchical one; and such hierarchical limitation is but spacial and not actual, qualitative and formal. This ladder of life is marked at certain intervals by landing places, so to say, which are what theosophists call the different planes of being -- the different spheres of consciousness, to put the thought in another manner.

Lanoo A word used in old Asiatic mystical training-schools for "disciple." (*See also* Chela)

Laya-Center A "point of disappearance" -- which is the Sanskrit meaning. *Laya* is from the Sanskrit root *li*, meaning "to dissolve," "to disintegrate," or "to vanish away." A laya-center is the mystical *point* where a thing disappears from one plane and passes onwards to reappear on another plane. It is that point or spot -- any point or spot -- in space, which, owing to karmic law, suddenly becomes the center of active life, first on a higher plane and later descending into manifestation through and by the laya-centers of the lower planes. In one sense a laya-center may be conceived of as a canal, a channel, through which the vitality of the superior spheres pours down into, and inspires, inbreathes into, the lower planes or states of matter, or rather of substance. But behind all this vitality there is a directive and driving force. There are mechanics in the universe, mechanics of many degrees of consciousness and power. But behind the pure mechanic stands the spiritual-intellectual mechanic. Finally, a laya-center is the point where substance rebecomes homogeneous. Any laya-center, therefore, of necessity exists in and on the critical line or stage dividing one plane from another. Any hierarchy, therefore, contains within itself a number of laya-centers. (*See also* Hierarchy)

Life-Atom A learning, evolving entity, each one a unit in one or other of the numberless hosts or hierarchies of them which exist. A life-atom is a vital individualized vehicle or body of a spiritual monad, which latter is the consciousness-center, the ultimate, noblest, highest, finest part of us. The heart of every life-atom is a spiritual monad. Life-atoms are young gods, embryo gods, and are, therefore, in a continuous process of self-expressing themselves on the planes of matter. A life-atom may be briefly said to be the ensouling power in every primary or ultimate particle. An atom of physical matter is ensouled by such a life-atom, which is its pranic-astral-vital primary, the life-atom of it. The life-atom is not the physical atom, which latter is but its garment or vehicle and is compounded of physical matter only, which breaks up when its term of life has run, and which will return again in order to re embody itself anew through the instrumentality and by the innate force or energy latent in its ensouling primary, the life-atom. In other words, the life-atom has a house of life, and this house of life is its body or physical atom; and the life-atom itself is the lowest expression of the monadic light within that atomic house.

Life-Atoms The physical body is composed essentially of energy, of energies rather, in the forms that are spoken of in modern physical science as electrons and protons. These are in constant movement; they are incessantly active, and are what theosophists call the imbodiments or manifestations of *life-atoms*. These life-atoms are inbuilt into man's body during the physical life which he leads on earth, although they are not derivative from outside, but spring forth from within himself -- at least a great majority of them are such. This is equivalent to saying that they compose both his physical as well as his intermediate nature, which latter is obviously higher than the physical. When the man dies -- that is to say, when the physical body dies -- its elements pass, each and all, into their respective and appropriate spheres: some into the soil, to which those that go there are drawn by magnetic affinity, an affinity impressed upon their life-energies by the man when alive, whose overshadowing will and desires, whose overlordship and power, gave them that direction. Others pass into the vegetation from the same reason that the former are impelled to the mineral kingdom; others pass into the various beasts with which they have, at the man's death, magnetic affinity, psychic affinity more accurately, an affinity which the man has impressed upon them by his desires and various impulses; and those which take this path go to form the interior or intermediate apparatus of the beasts into which they pass. So much for the course pursued by the life-atoms of the man's lowest principles. But there are other life-atoms belonging to him. There are life-atoms, in fact, belonging to the sphere of each one of the seven principles of man's constitution. This means that there are life-atoms belonging to his intermediate nature and to his spiritual nature and to all grades intermediate between these two higher parts of him. And in all cases, as the monad "ascends" or "rises" through the spheres, as he goes step by step higher on his wonderful postmortem journey, on each such step he discards or casts off the life-atoms belonging to each one of these steps or stages of the journey. With each step, he leaves behind the more material of these life-atoms until, when he has reached the culmination of his wonderful postmortem peregrination, he is, as Paul of the Christians said, living in "a spiritual body" -- that is to say, he has become a spiritual energy, a monad. Nature permits no absolute standing still for anything, anywhere. All things are full of life, full of energy, full of movement; they are both energy and matter, both spirit and substance; and these two are fundamentally one -- phases of the underlying reality, of which we see but the maya or illusory forms. The life-atoms are actually the offspring or the off-throwings of the interior principles of man's constitution. It is obvious that the life-atoms which ensoul the physical atoms in man's body are as numerous as the atoms which they ensoul; and there are almost countless hosts of them, decillions upon decillions of them, in practically incomputable numbers. Each one of these life-atoms is a being which is living, moving, growing, never standing still -- evolving towards a sublime destiny which ultimately becomes divinity.

Life-Wave This is a term which means the collective hosts of monads, of which hosts there are seven or ten, according to the classification adopted. The monad is a *spiritual ego*, a consciousness-center, being in the spiritual realms of the universal life what the life-atoms are in the lower planes of form. These monads and life-atoms collectively are the seven (or ten) life-waves -- these monads with the life-atoms in and through which they work; these life-atoms having remained, when the former planetary chain went into pralaya, in space as cosmic dust on the physical plane, and as corresponding life-atoms or life-specks of differentiated matter on the intermediate planes above the physical. Out of the working of the monads as they come down into matter -- or rather through and by the monadic rays permeating the lower planes of matter -- are the globes builded. The seven (or ten) life-waves or hosts of monads consist of monads in seven (or ten) degrees of advancement for each host. When the hosts of beings forming the life-wave -- the life-wave being composed of the entities derived from a former but now dead planet, in our case the moon -- find that the time has arrived for them to enter upon their own particular evolutionary course, they cycle downwards as a life-wave along the planetary chain that has been prepared for them by the three hosts of elementary beings, of the three primordial elementary worlds, the forerunners of the life-wave, yet integral parts of it. This life-wave passes seven times in all around the seven spheres of our planetary chain, at first cycling down the shadowy arc through all the seven elements of the kosmos, gathering experience in each one of them; each particular entity of the life-wave, no matter what its grade or kind -- spiritual, psychic, astral, mental, divine -- advancing, until at the bottom of the arc, when the middle of the fourth round is attained, they feel the end of the downward impulse. Then begins the upward impulse, the reascent along the luminous arc upwards, towards the source from which the life-wave originally came.

Linga-Sarira (Sanskrit) *Linga* is a word which means "characteristic mark," hence "model," "pattern." *Sarira*, "form," from a verb-root *sri*, meaning "to molder" or "to waste away," the word thus signifying "impermanence." The sixth substance-principle, counting downwards, of which man's constitution is composed. The model-body, popularly called astral body, because it is but slightly more ethereal than the physical body, and is in fact the model or framework around which the physical body is builded, and from which, in a sense, the physical body flows or develops as growth proceeds. At death the linga-sarira or model-body remains in the astral realms and finally fades out, dissolving *pari passu*, atom by atom, with the atoms of the physical corpse. These astral realms are not one single plane, but a series of planes growing gradually more ethereal or spiritual as they approach the inward spheres of nature's constitution or structure. The linga-sarira is formed before the body is formed, and thus serves as a model or pattern around which the physical body is molded and grows to maturity; it is as mortal as is the physical body, and disappears with the physical body.

Lipika(s) (Sanskrit) This word comes from the verb-root *lip*, meaning "to write"; hence the word lipikas means the "scribes." Mystically, they are the celestial recorders, and are intimately connected with the working of karma, of which they are the agents. They are the karmic "Recorders or Annalists, who impress on the (to us) invisible tablets of the Astral Light, 'the great picture-gallery of eternity,' a faithful record of every act, and even thought, of man [and indeed of all other entities and things], of all that was, is, or ever will be, in the phenomenal Universe" (*The Secret Doctrine* 1:104). Their action although governed strictly by kosmic consciousness is nevertheless rigidly automatic, for their work is as automatic as is the action of karma itself. They are entities as a matter of fact, but entities which work and act with the rigid automatism of the kosmic machinery, rather than like the engineer who supervises and changes the running of his engines. In one sense they may perhaps better be called kosmic energies -- a most difficult matter to describe.

Logos (Greek) In old Greek philosophy the word *logos* was used in many ways, of which the Christians often sadly misunderstood the profoundly mystical meaning. Logos is a word having several applications in the esoteric philosophy, for there are different kinds or grades of logoi, some of them of divine, some of them of a spiritual character; some of them having a cosmic range, and others ranges much more restricted. In fact, every individual entity, no matter what its evolutionary grade on the ladder of life, has its own individual logos. The divine-spiritual entity behind the sun is the solar logos of our solar system. Small or great as every solar system may be, each has its own logos, the source or fountainhead of almost innumerable logoi of less degree in that system. Every man has his own spiritual logos; every atom has its own logos; every atom likewise has its own paramatman and mulaprakriti, for every entity everywhere has its own highest. These things and the words which express them are obviously relative. One meaning of the Greek *logos* is "word" -- a phrase or symbol taken from the ancient Mysteries meaning the "lost word," the "lost" logos of man's heart and brain. The logos of our own planetary chain, so far as this fourth round is concerned, is the Wondrous Being or Silent Watcher. The term, therefore, is a relative and not an absolute one, and has many applications.

Loka (Sanskrit) A word meaning "place" or "locality" or, as much more frequently used in theosophy, a "world" or "sphere" or "plane." The lokas are divided into rupa-lokas and arupa-lokas -- "material worlds" and "spiritual spheres." There is a wide range of teaching connected with the lokas and talas which belongs to the deeper reaches of the esoteric philosophy. (*See also* Arupa, Rupa, Tala)

Lunar Pitri(s) *Lunar* of course means "belonging to the moon," while *pitri* is a Sanskrit word meaning "father." It is a term used in theosophy to signify the seven or ten grades of evolving entities which at the end of the lunar manvantara pass into a nirvanic state, to leave it aeons later as the seven or tenfold hierarchy of beings which inform the planetary chain of earth. In a general sense lunar pitris means all entities which originally came from the moon-chain to the earth-chain; but in a more particular and restricted sense it refers to those elements of the human constitution beneath the evolutionary standing of the agnishvattas. Another term for lunar pitris is lunar ancestors or barhishads. These lunar ancestors are usually given as of seven classes, three being arupa, incorporeal, and four being rupa or corporeal. There is a vast body of teaching connected with the lunar pitris, of which the best modern exposition thus far given is to be found in H. P. Blavatsky's *The Secret Doctrine*. Briefly, the earth-chain including our own globe Terra was populated from the moon-chain, because all entities now on earth, whatever their grade in evolution, came from the chain of the moon. (*See also* Pitris, Agnishvattas)

Macrocosm The anglicized form of a Greek compound meaning "great arrangement," or more simply the great ordered system of the celestial bodies of all kinds and their various inhabitants, including the all-important idea that this arrangement is the result of interior orderly processes, the effects of indwelling consciousnesses. In other and more modern phrasing the macrocosm is the vast universe, without definable limits, which surrounds us, and with particular emphasis laid on the interior, invisible, and ethereal planes. In the visioning or view of the ancients the macrocosm was an animate kosmic entity, an "animal" in the Latin sense of this word, as an organism possessing a directing and guiding soul. But this was only the outward or exoteric view. In the Mystery schools of the archaic ages, the macrocosm was considered to be not only what is hereinbefore just stated, but also to consist more definitely and specifically of seven, ten, and even twelve planes or degrees of consciousness-substance ranging from the superdivine through all the intermediate stages to the physical, and even to degrees below the physical, these comprised in one kosmic organic unit, or what moderns would call a universe. In this sense of the word macrocosm is but another name for kosmic hierarchy, and it must be remembered in

this connection that these hierarchies are simply countless in number and not only fill but actually compose and *are* indeed the spaces of frontierless SPACE. The macrocosm was considered to be filled full not only with gods, but with innumerable multitudes or armies of evolving entities, from the fully self-conscious to the quasi-self-conscious downwards through the merely conscious to the "unconscious." Note well that in strict usage the term macrocosm was never applied to the Boundless, to boundless, frontierless infinitude, what the Qabbalists called Eyn-soph. In the archaic wisdom, the macrocosm, belonging in the astral world, considered in its causal aspect, was virtually interchangeable with what modern theosophists call the Absolute.

Mahat (Sanskrit) This word means "great." Mahat is a technical term in the Brahmanic system, and is the "father-mother" of manas; it is the "mother" of the manasaputras or sons of mind, or that element from which they spring, that element which they breathe and of which they are the children. In the Sankhya philosophy -- one of the six *darsanas* or "visions," i.e., systems of philosophical visioning of ancient India -- mahat is a term that corresponds to kosmic buddhi, but more accurately perhaps to maha-buddhi.

Mahatma (*Mahatman*, Sanskrit) "Great soul" or "great self" is the meaning of this compound word (*maha*, "great"; *atman*, "self"). The mahatmas are perfected men, relatively speaking, known in theosophical literature as teachers, elder brothers, masters, sages, seers, and by other names. They are indeed the "elder brothers" of mankind. They are men, not spirits -- men who have evolved through self-devised efforts in individual evolution, always advancing forwards and upwards until they have now attained the lofty spiritual and intellectual human supremacy that now they hold. They were not so created by any extra-cosmic Deity, but they are men who have become what they are by means of inward spiritual striving, by spiritual and intellectual yearning, by aspiration to be greater and better, nobler and higher, just as every good man in his own way so aspires. They are farther advanced along the path of evolution than the majority of men are. They possess knowledge of nature's secret processes, and of hid mysteries, which to the average man may seem to be little short of the marvelous -- yet, after all, this mere fact is of relatively small importance in comparison with the far greater and more profoundly moving aspects of their nature and lifework. Especially are they called teachers because they are occupied in the noble duty of instructing mankind, in inspiring elevating thoughts, and in instilling impulses of forgetfulness of self into the hearts of men. Also are they sometimes called the guardians, because they are, in very truth, the guardians of the race and of the records -- natural, racial, national -- of past ages, portions of which they give out from time to time as fragments of a now long-forgotten wisdom, when the world is ready to listen to them; and they do this in order to advance the cause of truth and of genuine civilization founded on wisdom and brotherhood. Never -- such is the teaching -- since the human race first attained self-consciousness has this order or association or society or brotherhood of exalted men been without its representatives on our earth. It was the mahatmas who founded the modern Theosophical Society through their envoy or messenger, H. P. Blavatsky, in New York in 1875.

Man Man is in his essence a spark of the central kosmic spiritual fire. Man being an inseparable part of the universe of which he is the child -- the organism of graded consciousness and substance which the human constitution contains or rather is -- is a copy of the graded organism of consciousnesses and substances of the universe in its various planes of being, inner and outer, especially inner as being by far the more important and larger, because causal. Human beings are one class of "young gods" incarnated in bodies of flesh at the present stage of their own particular evolutionary journey. The human stage of evolution is about halfway between the undeveloped life-atom and the fully developed kosmic spirit or god. From another point of view,

man is a sheaf or bundle of forces or energies. Force and matter, or spirit and substance being fundamentally one, hence, man is de facto a sheaf or bundle of matters of various and differing grades of ethereality, or of substantiality; and so are all other entities and things everywhere. Man's nature, and the nature of the universe likewise, of which man is a reflection or microcosm or "little world," is composite of seven stages or grades or degrees of ethereality or of substantiality; or, kosmically speaking, of three generally inclusive degrees: gods, monads, and atoms. And so far as man is concerned, we may take the New Testament division of the Christians, which gives the same triform conception of man, that he is composed of spirit, soul, body -- remembering, however, that all these three words are generalizing terms. Man stands at the midway point of the evolutionary ladder of life: below him are the hosts of beings less than he is; above him are other hosts greater than he is only because older in experience, riper in wisdom, stronger in spiritual and in intellectual fiber and power. And these beings are such as they are because of the evolutionary unfoldment of the inherent faculties and powers immanent in the individuality of the inner god -- the ever-living, inner, individualized spirit. Man, then, like everything else -- entity or what is called "thing" -- is, to use the modern terminology of philosophical scientists, an "event," that is to say, the expression of a central consciousness-center or monad passing through one or another particular phase of its long, long pilgrimage over and through infinity, and through eternity. This, therefore, is the reason why the theosophist often speaks of the monadic consciousness-center as the pilgrim of eternity. Man can be considered as a being composed of three essential upadhis or bases: first, the monadic or divine-spiritual; second, that which is supplied by the Lords of Light, the so-called manasa-dhyanis, meaning the intellectual and intuitive side of man, the element-principle that makes man *Man*; and the third upadhi we may call the vital-astral-physical. These three bases spring from three different lines of evolution, from three different and separate hierarchies of being. This is the reason why man is composite. He is not one sole and unmixed entity; he is a composite entity, a "thing" built up of various elements, and hence his principles are to a certain extent separable. Any one of these three bases can be temporarily separated from the two others without bringing about the death of the man physically. But the elements that go to form any one of these bases cannot be separated without bringing about physical dissolution or inner dissolution. These three lines of evolution, these three aspects or qualities of man, come from three different hierarchies or states, often spoken of as three different planes of being. The lowest comes from the vital-astral-physical earth, ultimately from the moon, our cosmogonic mother. The middle, the manasic or intellectual-intuitional, from the sun. The monadic from the monad of monads, the supreme flower or acme, or rather the supreme seed of the universal hierarchy which forms our kosmical universe or universal kosmos.

Manas (Sanskrit) The root of this word means "to think," "to cogitate," "to reflect" -- mental activity, in short. The center of the ego-consciousness in man and in any other quasi-self-conscious entity. The third substance-principle, counting downwards, of which man's constitution is composed. Manas springs forth from buddhi (the second principle) as the fruit from the flower; but manas itself is mortal, goes to pieces at death -- insofar as its lower parts are concerned. All of it that lives after death is only what is spiritual in it and that can be squeezed out of it, so to say -- the "aroma" of the manas; somewhat as the chemist takes from the rose the attar or essence of roses. The monad or atma-buddhi thereupon takes that "all" with it into the devachan, after the second death has taken place. Atman, with buddhi and with the higher part of manas, becomes thereupon the spiritual monad of man. Strictly speaking, this is the divine monad within its vehicle -- atman and buddhi -- combined with the human ego in its higher manasic element; but they are joined into one after death, and are hence spoken of as the spiritual monad. The three principles forming the upper triad exist each on its own plane in consciousness and power; and as human beings we continuously feel their influence despite the enshrouding

veils of a psychical and astral-physical character. We know of each principle only what we have so far evolved forth of it. All we know, for instance, of the third principle (counting from the top), the manas, is what we have so far assimilated of it in this fourth round. The manas will not be fully developed in us until the end of the next round. What we now call our manas is a generalizing term for the reincarnating ego, the higher manas.

Manasaputra(s) (Sanskrit) This is a compound word: *manas*, "mind," *putra*, "son" -- "sons of mind." The teaching is that there exists a Hierarchy of Compassion, which H. P. Blavatsky sometimes called the Hierarchy of Mercy or of Pity. This is the light side of nature as contrasted with its matter side or shadow side, its night side. It is from this Hierarchy of Compassion that came those semi-divine entities at about the middle period of the third root-race of this round, who incarnated in the semi-conscious, quasi-senseless men of that period. These advanced entities are otherwise known as the solar lhas as the Tibetans call them, the solar spirits, who were the men of a former kalpa, and who during the third root-race thus sacrificed themselves in order to give us intellectual light -- incarnating in those senseless psychophysical shells in order to awaken the divine flame of egoity and *self*-consciousness in the sleeping egos which we then were. They are ourselves because belonging to the same spiritrays that we do; yet we, more strictly speaking, were those half-unconscious, half-awakened egos whom they touched with the divine fire of their own being. This, our "awakening," was called by H. P. Blavatsky, the incarnation of the manasaputras, or the sons of mind or light. Had that incarnation not taken place, we indeed should have continued our evolution by merely "natural" causes, but it would have been slow almost beyond comprehension, almost interminable; but that act of self-sacrifice, through their immense pity, their immense love, though, indeed, acting under karmic impulse, awakened the divine fire in our own selves, gave us light and comprehension and understanding. From that time we ourselves became "sons of the gods," the faculty of self-consciousness in us was awakened, our eyes were opened, responsibility became ours; and our feet were set then definitely upon the path, that inner path, quiet, wonderful, leading us inwards back to our spiritual home. The manasaputras are our higher natures and, paradoxical as it is, are more largely evolved beings than we are. They were the spiritual entities who "quickened" our personal egos, which were thus evolved into self-consciousness, relatively small though that yet be. One, and yet many! As you can light an infinite number of candles from one lighted candle, so from a spark of consciousness can you quicken and enliven innumerable other consciousnesses, lying, so to speak, in sleep or latent in the life-atoms. These manasaputras, children of mahat, are said to have quickened and enlightened in us the manas-manas of our manas septenary, because they themselves are typically manasic in their essential characteristic or svabhava. Their own essential or manasic vibrations, so to say, could cause that essence of manas in ourselves to vibrate in sympathy, much as the sounding of a musical note will cause sympathetic response in something like it, a similar note in other things. (*See also* Agnishvattas)

Manifestation A generalizing term signifying not only the beginning but the continuance of organized kosmic activity, the latter including the various minor activities within itself. First there is of course always the Boundless in all its infinite planes and worlds or spheres, aggregatively symbolized by the circle; then parabrahman, or the kosmic life-consciousness activity, and mulaprakriti its other pole, signifying root-nature especially in its substantial aspects. Then the next stage lower, Brahman and its veil pradhana; then Brahma-prakriti or Purusha-prakriti (prakriti being also maya); the manifested universe appearing through and by this last, Brahma-prakriti, "father-mother." In other words, the second Logos or father-mother is the producing cause of manifestation through their son which, in a planetary chain, is the primordial or the originating manu, called Svayambhuva. When manifestation opens, prakriti becomes or rather is maya; and Brahma, the father, is the spirit of the consciousness, or the

individuality. These two, Brahma and prakriti, are really one, yet they are also the two aspects of the one life-ray acting and reacting upon itself, much as a man himself can say, "I am I." He has the faculty of self-analysis or self-division. All of us know it, we can feel it in ourselves -- one side of us, in our thoughts, can be called the prakriti or the material element, or the mayavi element, or the element of illusion; and the other is the spirit, the individuality, the god within. The student should note carefully that *manifestation* is but a generalizing term, comprehensive therefore of a vast number of different and differing kinds of evolving planes or realms. For instance, there is manifestation on the divine plane; there is manifestation also on the spiritual plane; and similarly so on all the descending stages of the ladder or stair of life. There are universes whose "physical" plane is utterly invisible to us, so high is it; and there are other universes in the contrary direction, so far beneath our present physical plane that their ethereal ranges of manifestation are likewise invisible to us.

Manu Manu in the esoteric system is the entities collectively which appear first at the beginning of manifestation, and from which, like a cosmic tree, everything is derived or born. Manu actually is the spiritual tree of life of any planetary chain of manifested being. Manu is thus in one sense the third Logos; as the second is the father-mother, the Brahma and prakriti; and the first is what we call the unmanifest Logos, or Brahman (neuter) and its cosmic veil pradhana. In other words, the second Logos, father-mother, is the producing cause of manifestation through their son, which in a planetary chain is Manu, the first of the manus being called in the archaic Hindu system Svayambhuva. During a Day of Brahma or period of seven rounds, fourteen subordinate or inferior manus appear as patrons and guardians of the race cycles or life-waves (*See also* H. P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine, passim*; also Manvantara). Manu is likewise the name of a great ancient Indian legislator, the alleged author of the *Laws of Manu* (*Manava-dharma-sastra*).

Manvantara (Sanskrit) This word is a compound, and means nothing more than "between two manus"; more literally, "manu-within or -between." A manu, as said, is the entities collectively which appear first at the beginning of manifestation; the spiritual tree of life of any planetary chain of manifested being. The second verbal element of "manvantara," or *antara*, is a prepositional suffix signifying "within" or "between"; hence the compound paraphrased means "within a manu," or "between manus." A manvantara is the period of activity between any two manus, on any plane, since in any such period there is a root-manu at the beginning of evolution, and a seed-manu at its close, preceding a pralaya. There are many kinds of manvantaras: *prakritika* manvantara -- universal manvantara; *saurya* manvantara -- the manvantara of the solar system; *bhaumika* manvantara -- the terrestrial manvantara, or manvantara of earth; *paurusha* manvantara -- the manvantara, or period of activity, of man. A round-manvantara is the time required for one round: that is, the cycle from globe A to the last globe of the seven, and starting from the root-manu or collective "humanity" of globe A and ending with the seed-manu or collective "humanity" of Globe G. A planetary manvantara -- also called a maha-manvantara or a kalpa -- is the period of the lifetime of a planet during its seven rounds. It is also called a Day of Brahma, and its length is 4,320,000,000 years.

Master(s) A master is one who has his higher principles awakened and lives in them; and ordinary men do not. From the scientific standpoint, that is all there is to it; from the philosophic standpoint, we may say that a master has become, as far as he can be, more at one with the universal life; and from the religious standpoint or the spiritual standpoint, we may say that a master has developed an individual consciousness or recognition of his oneness with the Boundless. (*See also* Mahatmas)

Matter What men call matter or substance is the existent but illusory aggregate of veils surrounding the fundamental essence of the universe which is consciousness-life-substance. From another point of view, matter or substance is in one sense the most evolved form of expression of *manifested* spirit in any particular hierarchy. This is but another way of saying that matter is but inherent energies or powers or faculties of kosmical beings, unfolded, rolled out, and self-expressed. It is the nether and lowest pole of what the original and originating spirit is; for spirit is the primal or original pole of the evolutionary activity which brought forth through its own inherent energies the appearance or manifestation in the kosmic spaces of the vast aggregate of hierarchies. Between the originant or spirit and the resultant or matter, there is all the vast range of hierarchical stages or steps, thus forming the ladder of life or the ladder of being of any one such hierarchy. When theosophists speak of spirit and substance, of which latter, matter and energy or force are the physicalized expressions, we must remember that all these terms are abstractions -- generalized expressions for hosts of entities manifesting aggregatively. The whole process of evolution is the raising of units of essential matter, life-atoms, into becoming at one with their spiritual and inmost essence. As the kosmic aeons slowly drop one after the other into the ocean of the past, matter *pari passu* is resolved back into the brilliant realms of spirit from which it originally came forth. All the sheaths of consciousness, all the blinding veils around it, arise from the matter side or dark side or night side of nature, which is matter -- the nether pole of spirit.

Maya (Sanskrit) The word comes from the root *ma*, meaning "to measure," and by a figure of speech it also comes to mean "to effect," "to form," and hence "to limit." There is an English word *mete*, meaning "to measure out," from the same IndoEuropean root. It is found in the Anglo-Saxon as the root *met*, in the Greek as *med*, and it is found in the Latin also in the same form. Ages ago in the wonderful Brahmanical philosophy maya was understood very differently from what it is now usually understood to be. As a technical term, maya has come to mean the fabrication by man's mind of ideas derived from interior and exterior impressions, hence the *illusory* aspect of man's thoughts as he considers and tries to interpret and understand life and his surroundings; and thence was derived the sense which it technically bears, "illusion." It does *not* mean that the exterior world is nonexistent; if it were, it obviously could not be illusory. It *exists*, but *is not*. It is "measured out" or is "limited," or it stands out to the human spirit as a mirage. In other words, we do not see clearly and plainly and *in their reality* the vision and the visions which our mind and senses present to the inner life and eye. The familiar illustrations of maya in the Vedanta, which is the highest form that the Brahmanical teachings have taken and which is so near to our own teaching in many respects, were such as follows: A man at eventide sees a coiled rope on the ground, and springs aside, thinking it a serpent. The rope is there, but no serpent. The second illustration is what is called the "horns of the hare." The animal called the hare has no horns, but when it also is seen at eventide, its long ears seem to project from its head in such fashion that it appears even to the seeing eye as being a creature with horns. The hare has no horns, but there is then in the mind an illusory belief that an animal with horns exists there. That is what maya means: not that a thing seen does not exist, but that we are blinded and our mind perverted by our own thoughts and our own imperfections, and do not as yet arrive at the *real* interpretation and meaning of the world or of the universe around us. By ascending inwardly, by rising up, by inner aspiration, by an elevation of soul, we can reach upwards or rather *inwards* towards that plane where truth abides in fullness. H. P. Blavatsky says on page 631 of the first volume of *The Secret Doctrine: Esoteric philosophy, teaching an objective Idealism* -- though it regards the objective Universe and all in it as *Maya*, temporary illusion -- draws a practical distinction between collective illusion, *Mahamaya*, from the purely metaphysical standpoint, and the objective relations in it between various conscious *Egos* so long as this illusion lasts. The teaching is that maya is thus called from the action of mulaprakriti or

root-nature, the coordinate principle of that other line of coactive consciousness which we call parabrahman. From the moment when manifestation begins, it acts dualistically, that is to say that everything in nature from that point onwards is crossed by pairs of opposites, such as long and short, high and low, night and day, good and evil, consciousness and nonconsciousness, etc., and that all these things are essentially mayic or illusory -- real while they last, but the lasting is not eternal. It is through and by these pairs of opposites that the self-conscious soul learns truth. It might be said, in conclusion, that another and very convenient way of considering maya is to understand it to mean "limitation," "restriction," and therefore imperfect cognition and recognition of reality. The imperfect mind does not see perfect truth. It labors under an illusion corresponding with its own imperfections, under a maya, a limitation. Magical practices are frequently called maya in the ancient Hindu books.

Mayavi-Rupa (Sanskrit) This is a compound of two words: *mayavi*, the adjectival form of the word *maya*, hence "illusory"; *rupa*, "form"; the mayavi-rupa or thought-body, or illusory-body, a higher astral-mental form. The mayavi can assume all forms or any form, at the will of an Adept. A synonymous philosophical term is protean soul. In Germany medieval mystics called it the *doppelganger*. There is a very mystical fact connected with the mayavi-rupa: the Adept is enabled to project his consciousness in the mayavi-rupa to what would seem to the uninitiated incredible distances, while the physical body is left, as it were, intranced. In Tibet this power of projecting the mayavi-rupa is called hpho-wa.

Medium A word of curiously ill-defined significance, and used mostly if not exclusively by modern Spiritists. The general sense of the word would seem to be a person of unstable psychical temperament, or constitution rather, who is supposed to act as a canal or channel of transmission, hence "medium," between human beings and the so-called spirits. A medium actually in the theosophical teaching is one whose inner constitution is in unstable balance, or perhaps even dislocated, so that at different times the sheaths of the inner parts of the medium's constitution function irregularly and in magnetic sympathy with currents and entities in the astral light, more particularly in kama-loka. It is an exceedingly unfortunate and dangerous condition to be in, despite what the Spiritists claim for it. Very different indeed from the medium is the *mediator*, a human being of relatively highly evolved spiritual and intellectual and psychical nature who serves as an intermediary or mediator between the members of the Great Brotherhood, the mahatmas, and ordinary humanity. There are also mediators of a still more lofty type who serve as channels of transmission for the passing down of divine and spiritual and highly intellectual powers to this sphere. Actually, every mahatma is such a mediator of this higher type, and so in even larger degree are the buddhas and the avatars. A mediator is one of highly evolved constitution, every portion of which is under the instant and direct control of the spiritual dominating will and the loftiest intelligence which the mediator is capable of exercising. Every human being should strive to be a mediator of this kind between his own inner god and his mere brain-mind. The more he succeeds, the grander he is as a man. Mediator, therefore, and medium are the polar antitheses of each other. The medium is irregular, negative, often irresponsible or quasi-irresponsible, and uncertain, and is not infrequently the victim or plaything of evil and degenerate entities whom theosophists call elementaries, having their habitat in the astral light of the earth; whereas the mediator is one more or less fully insouled or inspirited with divine, spiritual, and intellectual powers and their corresponding faculties and organs.

Mesmerism An ill-understood branch of human knowledge, developed within fairly recent times, connected with the existence of the psychomagnetic fluid in man which can be employed by the will for purposes either good or evil. It has been called animal magnetism, but more often in former times than at present. The first European who rediscovered and openly proclaimed the

existence of this subtle psychomagnetic fluid in man was Dr. Friedrich Anton Mesmer, born in Germany in 1733, who died in 1815. His honesty and his theories have been more or less vindicated in modern times by later students of the subject. There are distinct differences as among mesmerism, hypnotism, psychologization, and suggestion, etc. (*See also* Hypnotism)

Messenger In the theosophical sense, an individual who comes with a mandate from the Lodge of the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion to do a certain work in the world. Only real genius -- indeed something more than merely human genius -- only extraordinary spiritual and intellectual capacity, native to the constitution of some lofty human being, could explain the reason for the choice of such messengers. But, indeed, this is not saying enough; because in addition to genius and to merely native spiritual and intellectual capacity such a messenger must possess through initiatory training the capacity of throwing at will the intermediate or psychological nature into a state of perfect quiescence or receptivity for the stream of divine-spiritual inspiration flowing forth from the messenger's own inner divinity or monadic essence. It is obvious, therefore, that such a combination of rare and unusual qualities is not often found in human beings; and, when found, such a one is fit for the work to be done by such a messenger of the Association of great ones. The Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace send their envoys continuously into the world of men, one after the other, and in consequence these envoys are working in the world among men all the time. Happy are they whose hearts recognize the footfalls of those crossing the mountaintops of the Mystic East. The messengers do not always do public work before the world, but frequently work in the silences and unknown of men, or relatively unknown. At certain times, however, they are commissioned and empowered and directed to do their work publicly and to make public announcement of their mission. Such, for instance, was the case of H. P. Blavatsky.

Metempsychosis (Greek) A compound vocable which may be rendered briefly by "insouling after insouling," or "changing soul after soul." Metempsychosis contains the specific meaning that the soul of an entity, human or other, moves not merely from condition to condition, migrates not merely from state to state or from body to body; but also that it is an indivisible entity in its inmost essence, which is pursuing a course along its own particular evolutionary path as an individual monad, taking upon itself soul after soul; and it is the adventures which befall the soul, in assuming soul after soul, which in their aggregate are grouped together under this word metempsychosis. In ordinary language metempsychosis is supposed to be a synonym for transmigration, reincarnation, preexistence, and palingenesis, etc., but all these words in the esoteric philosophy have specific meanings of their own, and should not be confused. It is of course evident that these words have strict relations with each other, as, for instance, every soul in its metempsychosis also transmigrates in its own particular sense; and inversely every transmigrating entity also has its metempsychosis or soul-changings in its own particular sense. But these connections or interminglings of meanings must not be confused with the specific significance attached to each one of these words. The essential meaning of metempsychosis can perhaps be briefly described by saying that a monad during the course of its evolutionary peregrinations throws forth from itself periodically a new soul-garment or soul-sheath, and this changing of souls or soul-sheaths as the ages pass is called metempsychosis. (*See also* Transmigration, Reincarnation, Preexistence, Palingenesis)

Metensomatosis (Greek) A compound word of which the significance may perhaps be briefly rendered thus: "changing body after body." The reference is to a re embodying entity which does not necessarily use human bodies of flesh only, in which respect this word differs from reincarnation, but bodies of appropriate yet different physical material concordant with the evolutionary stage which the human race may have reached at any time, and with the plane or

sphere of nature on which the reimpodiment takes place. This word, because of the intricate ideas involved, is very difficult to explain properly or even to hint at in a few words, but perhaps it may be made more clear by the following observation: In far past ages the human race had bodies, but not bodies of flesh; and in far distant ages of the future, the human race will likewise have bodies, but not necessarily bodies of flesh. Actually, our teaching in this respect is that in those far-distant periods of the future, human bodies of that time will be compact of ether or, what comes to much the same thing, of luminous matter which may very properly be called concreted light.

Microcosm (Greek) A compound meaning "little arrangement," "little world," a term applied by ancient and modern mystics to man when considering the seven, ten, and even twelve aspects or phases or organic parts of his constitution, from the superdivine down to and even below the physical body. Just as throughout the macrocosm there runs one law, one fundamental consciousness, one essential orderly arrangement and habitude to which everything contained within the encompassing macrocosm of necessity conforms, just so does every such contained entity or thing, because it is an inseparable part of the macrocosm, contain in itself, evolved or unevolved, implicit or explicit, active or latent, everything that the macrocosm contains -- whether energy, power, substance, matter, faculty, or what not. The microcosm, therefore, considered as man or indeed any other organic entity, is correctly viewed as a reflection or copy in miniature of the great macrocosm, the former being contained, with hosts of others like it, within the encircling frontiers of the macrocosm. Thus it was stated by the ancient mystics that the destiny of man, the microcosm, is coeval with the universe or macrocosm. Their origin is the same, their energies and substances are the same, and their future is the same, of course *mutatis mutandis*. It was no vain figment of imagination and no idle figure of speech which brought the ancient mystics to declare man to be a son of the Boundless. The teaching is one of the most suggestive and beautiful in the entire range of the esoteric philosophy, and the deductions that the intuitive student will immediately draw from this teaching themselves become keys opening even larger portals of understanding. The universe, the macrocosm, is thus seen to be the home of the microcosm or man, in the former of which the latter is at home everywhere.

Milky Way, The The Milky Way or galaxy is held to be our own especial home-universe. The nebulae are in many cases taken to be what are called island-universes, that is to say, vast aggregations of stars, many numbers of them with their respective planets around them, and all gathered together in these individual world-clusters. Of course there are nebulae of other kinds, but to these reference is not here made. Of the island-universes, there are doubtless hundreds of thousands of them; but as none of these has as yet [1933] been discovered to be as large in diameter, or as thick through, as is our own Milky Way system -- which system has somewhat the shape of a lens or of a thin watch -- the astronomers call our Milky Way by the popular name of continent-universe; and such other nebular star-clusters which we see and which are in many cases really vast masses of millions or billions of suns, are called island-universes. Our own Milky Way, could it be seen from some vast kosmic distance, would doubtless appear as a nebula or large star-cluster; and to certain percipient watchers our galaxy might even probably appear to be a spiral nebula, or perhaps an annular nebula. Our own sun is one of the stars in the cluster of the Milky Way, and is said by astronomers to be situated some distance, kosmically speaking, from the central portion of our Milky Way system, and a trifle to the north of the plane passing through the figure-center of the galaxy. The Milky Way is not only a vast star-cluster of suns in all-various degrees of evolutionary growth, but it is also the storehouse of celestial bodies-to-be. In this last respect, it is, as it were, the kosmic nursery from which seeds of future suns go forth to begin their manvantaric evolutionary courses. There are vast and fascinating mysteries connected with the Milky Way even in matters that concern the destiny of us human

beings, as well as of all other entities of our solar system. The profound teachings which theosophy hints at under the topics of circulations of the kosmos and peregrinations of the monads are directly connected with the doctrines just referred to. The whole matter, however, is of so recondite a character that it is impossible here to do more than point suggestively to it.

Moksha (Sanskrit) This word comes from *moksh*, meaning "to release," "to set free," and is probably a desiderative of the root *much*, from which the word *mukti* also comes. The meaning of this word is that when a spirit, a monad, or a *spiritual radical*, has so grown in evolution that it has first become a man, and is set free interiorly, inwardly, and from a man has become a planetary spirit or dhyān-chohan or lord of meditation, and has gone still higher, to become *interiorly* a Brahman, and from a Brahman the Parabrahman for its hierarchy, then it is absolutely perfected, relatively speaking, *free, released* -- perfected for that great period of time which to us seems almost an eternity so long is it, virtually incomputable by the human intellect. Now this also is the real meaning of the much abused word Absolute (q.v.), limited in comparison with things still more immense, still more sublime; but so far as we can think of it, released or freed from the chains or bonds of material existence. One who is thus released or freed is called a jivanmukta. (*See also Nirvana*)

Monad A spiritual entity which to us humans is indivisible; it is a divine-spiritual life-atom, but indivisible because its essential characteristic, *as we humans conceive it*, is homogeneity; while that of the physical atom, above which our consciousness soars, is divisible, is a composite heterogeneous particle. Monads are eternal, unitary, individual life-centers, consciousness-centers, deathless during any solar manvantara, therefore ageless, unborn, undying. Consequently, each one such -- and their number is infinite -- is the center of the All, for the divine or the All is THAT which has its center everywhere, and its circumference or limiting boundary nowhere. Monads are spiritual-substantial entities, self-motivated, self-impelled, self-conscious, in infinitely varying degrees, the ultimate elements of the universe. These monads engender other monads as one seed will produce multitudes of other seeds; so up from each such monad springs a host of living entities in the course of illimitable time, each such monad being the fountainhead or parent, in which all others are involved, and from which they spring. Every monad is a seed, wherein the sum total of powers appertaining to its divine origin are latent, that is to say unmanifested; and evolution consists in the growth and development of all these seeds or children monads, whereby the universal life expresses itself in innumerable beings. As the monad descends into matter, or rather as its ray -- one of other innumerable rays proceeding from it -- is propelled into matter, it secretes from itself and then excretes on each one of the seven planes through which it passes, its various vehicles, all overshadowed by the self, the same self in you and in me, in plants and in animals, in fact in all that is and belongs to that hierarchy. This is the one self, the supreme self or paramatman of the hierarchy. It illumines and follows each individual monad and all the latter's hosts of rays -- or children monads. Each such monad is a spiritual seed from the previous manvantara, which manifests as a monad in this manvantara; and this monad through its rays throws out from itself by secretion and then excretion all its vehicles. These vehicles are, first, the spiritual ego, the reflection or copy in miniature of the monad itself, but *individualized* through the manvantaric evolution, "bearing" or "carrying" as a vehicle the monadic ray. The latter cannot directly contact the lower planes, because it is of the monadic essence itself, the latter *a still higher ray* of the infinite Boundless composed of infinite multiplicity in unity. (*See also Individuality*)

Morals, Morality What is the basis of morals? This is the most important question that can be asked of any system of thought. Is morality based on the dicta of man? Is morality based on the conviction in most men's hearts that for human safety it is necessary to have certain abstract rules

which it is merely *convenient* to follow? Are we mere opportunists? Or is morality, ethics, based on truth, which it is not merely expedient for man to follow, but necessary? Surely upon the latter! Morals is right conduct based upon right views, right thinking. In the third fundamental postulate of *The Secret Doctrine* [1:17] we find the very elements, the very fundamentals, of a system of morality greater than which, profounder than which, more persuasive than which, perhaps, it would be impossible to imagine anything. On what, then, is morality based? And by morality is not meant merely the opinion which some pseudo-philosophers have, that morality is more or less that which is "good for the community," based on the mere meaning of the Latin word *mores*, "good customs," as opposed to bad. No! Morality is that instinctive hunger of the human heart to do righteousness, to do good to every man because it is good and satisfying and ennobling to do so. When man realizes that he is one with all that is, inwards and outwards, high and low; that he is one with all, not merely as members of a community are one, not merely as individuals of an army are one, but like the molecules of our own flesh, like the atoms of the molecule, like the electrons of the atom, composing one unity -- not a mere union but a spiritual *unity* -- then he sees truth. (*See also Ethics*)

Mudra (Sanskrit) A general name for certain intertwinings or positions of the fingers of the two hands, used alone or together, in devotional yoga or exoteric religious worship, and these mudras or digital positions are held by many Oriental mystics to have particular esoteric significance. They are found both in the Buddhist statues of northern Asia, especially those belonging to the Yogachara school, and also in India where they are perhaps particularly affected by the Hindu tantrikas. There is doubtless a good deal of hid efficacy in holding the fingers in proper position during meditation, but to the genuine occult student the *symbolic* meaning of such mudras or digital positions is by far more useful and interesting. The subject is too intricate, and of importance too small, to call for much detail of explanation here, or even to attempt a full exposition of the subject.

Mulaprakriti (Sanskrit) A compound containing *mula*, "root," *prakriti*, "nature," root-matter or root-nature. Corresponding to it as the other or active pole is parabrahman, from which Brahman (neuter), the first or unmanifest Logos, proceeds. Mulaprakriti, therefore, as the kosmic veil of parabrahman, may be called homogeneous or undifferentiated primordial substance. It is the fountain or root of akasa. (*See also Prakriti*)

Music of the Spheres Every sphere that runs its course in the abysmal depths of space sings a song as it passes along. Every little atom is attuned to a musical note. It is in constant movement, in constant vibration at speeds which are incomprehensible to the ordinary brain-mind of man; and each such speed has its own numerical quantity, in other words its own numerical note, and therefore sings that note. This is called the music of the spheres, and if man had the power of spiritual clairaudience, the life surrounding him would be one grand sweet song: his very body would be as it were a symphonic orchestra, singing some magnificent, incomprehensible, musical symphonic composition. The growth of a flower, for instance, would be like a changing melody running along from day to day; he could hear the grass grow, and understand why it grows; he could hear the atoms sing and see their movements, and hear the unison of the songs of all individual atoms, and the melodies that any physical body produces; and he would know what the stars in their courses are constantly singing.

Mysteries The Mysteries were divided into two general parts, the Less Mysteries and the Greater. The Less Mysteries were very largely composed of dramatic rites or ceremonies, with some teaching; the Greater Mysteries were composed of, or conducted almost entirely on the ground of, study; and the doctrines taught in them later were proved by personal experience in

initiation. In the Greater Mysteries was explained, among other things, the secret meaning of the mythologies of the old religions, as, for instance, the Greek. The active and nimble mind of the Greeks produced a mythology which for grace and beauty is perhaps without equal, but it nevertheless is very difficult to explain; the Mysteries of Samothrace and of Eleusis -- the greater ones -- explained among other things what these myths meant. These myths formed the basis of the *exoteric* religions; but note well that exotericism does not mean that the thing which is taught exoterically is in itself false, but merely that it is a teaching given without the key to it. Such teaching is symbolic, illusory, touching on the truth -- the truth is there, but without the key to it, which is the esoteric meaning, it yields no proper sense. We have the testimony of the Greek and Roman initiates and thinkers that the ancient Mysteries of Greece taught men, above everything else, to live rightly and to have a noble hope for the life after death. The Romans derived their Mysteries from those of Greece. The mythological aspect comprises only a portion -- and a relatively small portion -- of what was taught in the Mystery schools in Greece, principally at Samothrace and at Eleusis. At Samothrace was taught the same mystery-teaching that was current elsewhere in Greece, but here it was more developed and recondite, and the foundation of these mystery-teachings was morals. The noblest and greatest men of ancient times in Greece were initiates in the Mysteries of these two seats of esoteric knowledge. In other countries farther to the east, there were other Mystery schools or "colleges," and this word college by no means necessarily meant a mere temple or building; it meant association, as in our modern word *colleague*, "associate." The Teutonic tribes of northern Europe, the Germanic tribes, which included Scandinavia, had their Mystery colleges also; and teacher and neophytes stood on the bosom of Mother Earth, under Father Ether, the boundless sky, or in subterranean receptacles, and taught and learned. The core, the heart, the center, of the teaching of the ancient Mysteries was the abstruse problems dealing with death. (*See also* Guru-parampara)

Mysticism A word originally derived from the Greek and having a wide range of meaning in modern Occidental religious and philosophical literature. A mystic may be said to be one who has intuitions or intimations of the existence of inner and superior worlds, and who attempts to ally himself or to come into self-conscious communion with them and the beings inhabiting these inner and invisible worlds. The word mysticism, of course, has various shades of significance, and a large number of definitions could easily be written following the views of different mystical writers on this theme. From the theosophical or occult point of view, however, a mystic is one who has inner convictions often based on inner vision and knowledge of the existence of spiritual and ethereal universes of which our outer physical universe is but the shell; and who has some inner knowledge that these universes or worlds or planes or spheres, with their hosts of inhabitants, are intimately connected with the origin, destiny, and even present nature of the world which surrounds us. Genuine mysticism is an ennobling study. The average mystic, however, is one who lacks the direct guidance derived from personal teaching received from a master or spiritual superior.

Nature The consciousness side of nature is composed of vast hierarchies of gods, developed cosmical spirits, spiritual entities, cosmic graduates in the university of life. The material side of nature is the heterogeneous matter, the material world in its many various planes, in all stages of imperfection -- but all these stages filled with armies of entities evolving and growing. The proper term for nature in modern theosophical usage is prakriti or still more accurately mulaprakriti -- the ever-living kosmic producer, the eternally fecund mother, of the universe. When a theosophist speaks of nature, unless he limits the term to the physical world, he never means the physical world alone, but the vast reaches of universal kosmos and more particularly the inner realms, the causal factors of the boundless All. Hence, a growing understanding of

nature in this sense -- which is another way of saying an understanding of reality -- obviously provides the only basis of a religion founded on the changeless realities.

Nirmanakaya (Sanskrit) A compound of two words: *nirmana*, a participle meaning "forming," "creating"; *kaya*, a word meaning "body," "robe," "vehicle"; thus, *nirmanakaya* means "formed-body." A nirmanakaya, however, is really a *state* assumed by or entered into by a bodhisattva -- an individual man made semi-divine who, to use popular language, instead of choosing his reward in the nirvana of a less degree, remains on earth out of pity and compassion for inferior beings, clothing himself in a nirmanakayic vesture. When that state is ended the nirmanakaya ends. A nirmanakaya is a complete man possessing all the principles of his constitution except the *linga-sarira* and its accompanying physical body. He is one who lives on the plane of being next superior to the physical plane, and his purpose in so doing is to save men from themselves by being with them, and by continuously instilling thoughts of self-sacrifice, of self-forgetfulness, of spiritual and moral beauty, of mutual help, of compassion, and of pity. Nirmanakaya is the third or lowest, exoterically speaking, of what is called in Sanskrit *trikaya* or "three bodies." The highest is the *dharmakaya*, in which state are the nirvanis and full pratyeka buddhas, etc.; the second state is the *sambhogakaya*, intermediate between the former and, thirdly, the *nirmanakaya*. The nirmanakaya vesture or condition enables one entering it to live in touch and sympathy with the world of men. The sambhogakaya enables one in that state to be conscious indeed to a certain extent of the world of men and its griefs and sorrows, but with little power or impulse to render aid. The dharmakaya vesture is so pure and holy, and indeed so high, that the one possessing the dharmakaya or who is in it, is virtually out of all touch with anything inferior to himself. It is, therefore, in the nirmanakaya vesture if not in physical form that live and work the Buddhas of Compassion, the greatest sages and seers, and all the superholy men who through striving through ages of evolution bring forth into manifestation and power and function the divinity within. The doctrine of the nirmanakayas is one of the most suggestive, profound, and beautiful teachings of the esoteric philosophy. (*See also* Dharmakaya, Sambhogakaya)

Nirvana (Sanskrit) This is a compound: *nir*, "out," and *vana*, the past participle passive of the root *va*, "to blow," literally meaning "blown out." So badly has the significance of the ancient Indian thought (and even its language, the Sanskrit) been understood, that for many years erudite European scholars were discussing whether being "blown out" meant actual entitative annihilation or not. But the being blown out refers only to the lower principles in man. Nirvana is a very different thing from the "heavens." Nirvana is a state of utter bliss and complete, untrammelled consciousness, a state of absorption in pure kosmic Being, and is the wondrous destiny of those who have reached superhuman knowledge and purity and spiritual illumination. It really is *personal-individual* absorption into or rather identification with the Self -- the highest SELF. It is also the state of the monadic entities in the period that intervenes between minor manvantaras or rounds of a planetary chain; and more fully so between each seven-round period or Day of Brahma, and the succeeding day or new kalpa of a planetary chain. At these last times, starting forth from the seventh sphere in the seventh round, the monadic entities will have progressed far beyond even the highest state of devachan. Too pure and too far advanced even for such a condition as the devachanic felicity, they go to their appropriate sphere and condition, which latter is the nirvana following the end of the seventh round. Devachan and nirvana are not localities. They are states, states of the beings in those respective spiritual conditions. Devachan is the intermediate state; nirvana is the superspiritual state; and avichi, popularly called the lowest of the hells, is the nether pole of the spiritual condition. These three are states of beings having habitat in the lokas or talas, in the worlds of the kosmic egg. So far as the individual human being is concerned, the nirvanic state or condition may be attained to by great spiritual

seers and sages, such as Gautama the Buddha, and even by men less progressed than he; because in these cases of the attaining of the nirvana even during a man's life on earth, the meaning is that one so attaining has through evolution progressed so far along the path that all the lower personal part of him is become thoroughly impersonalized, the personal has put on the garment of impersonality, and such a man thereafter lives in the nirvanic condition of the spiritual monad. As a concluding thought, it must be pointed out that nirvana, while the *ultima thule* of the perfection to be attained by any human being, nevertheless stands less high in the estimate of mystics than the condition of the bodhisattva. For the bodhisattva, although standing on the threshold of nirvana and seeing and understanding its ineffable glory and peace and rest, nevertheless retains his consciousness in the worlds of men, in order to consecrate his vast faculties and powers to the service of all that is. The buddhas in their higher parts enter the nirvana, in other words, assume the dharmakaya state or vesture, whereas the bodhisattva assumes the nirmanakaya vesture, thereafter to become an ever-active and compassionate and beneficent influence in the world. The buddha indeed may be said to act indirectly and by long distance control, thus indeed helping the world diffusively or by diffusion; but the bodhisattva acts directly and positively and with a directing will in works of compassion, both for the world and for individuals.

Noetic (Greek) The adjective belonging to *nous* (q.v.).

Nous (Greek) This is a term frequently used by Plato for what in modern theosophical literature is usually called the higher manas or higher mind or spiritual soul, the union and characteristics of the buddhi-manas in man overshadowed by the atman. The distinction to be drawn between the nous on the one hand, and the animal soul or *psyche* and its workings on the other hand, is very sharp, and the two must not be confused. In occultism the cosmic nous is the third Logos, and in the case of man's own constitution, or in human pneumatology, the nous is the buddhi-manas or higher manas or spiritual monad.

Obscuration This is a word coined by A. P. Sinnett, one of the pioneers in theosophical propaganda. A far better word than obscuration would have been *dormancy* or *sleep*, because this word obscuration actually rather obscures the sense. A man is not "obscured" when he sleeps. The inner faculties may be so, in a sense; but it is better actually to state in more appropriate words just what the real condition is. It is that of sleep, or latency -- of dormancy, rather. Thus when one of the seven kingdoms has passed through its seven periods of progress, of evolution, it goes into dormancy or obscuration. Likewise when the seven kingdoms -- from the first elemental kingdom upwards to the human -- have finished their evolution on globe A (for instance) during the first round, globe A then goes into obscuration, that is, into dormancy; it goes to sleep. Everything left on it is now dormant, is sleeping, awaiting the incoming, when round two begins, of the life-waves which have just left it. Again, when the life-waves have run their full sevenfold course, or their seven stock-races or root-races on globe B, then globe B in its turn goes into dormancy or obscuration, which is not pralaya; and the distinction between pralaya and obscuration is an extremely important one. It may be possible in popular usage at times to call the state of dormancy by the name of pralaya in a very limited and particular sense; but pralaya really means disintegration and disappearance, like that of death. But obscuration is sleep -- dormancy. Thus is it with each one of the seven globes of the planetary chain, one after the other, each one going into obscuration when a life-wave has left it, *so far as that particular life-wave is concerned*. When the final or rather the last representatives of the last root-race of the last life-wave leave it, each globe then goes to sleep or into dormancy. During a planetary obscuration or planetary rest period, at the end of a round, the entities leave the last globe, the seventh, and enter into a (lower) nirvanic period of manvantaric repose, answering to the

devachanic or between-life state of the human entity between one life on earth and the next life on earth. There is one very important point of the teachings to be noted here: a globe when a life-wave leaves it does not remain in obscurity or continuously dormant until the same life-wave returns to it in the next round. The life-waves succeed each other in regular file, and each life-wave as it enters a globe has its period of beginning, its efflorescence, and its decay, and then leaves the globe in obscurity so far as that particular life-wave is concerned. But the globe within a relatively short time receives a succeeding life-wave, which runs through its courses and leaves the globe again in obscurity so far as this last life-wave is concerned, etc. It is obvious, therefore, that a period of obscurity on any globe of the planetary chain is much shorter than the term of a full planetary round.

Occultism This word meant originally only the *science of things hid*; even in the Middle Ages of Europe those philosophers who were the forerunners of the modern scientists, those who then studied physical nature, called their science occultism, and their studies occult, meaning the things that were hid or not known to the common run of mankind. Such a medieval philosopher was Albertus Magnus, a German; and so also was Roger Bacon, an Englishman -- both of the thirteenth century of the Christian era.

Occultism as theosophists use the term, and as it should be used, means the study of the hid things of Being, the science of life or universal nature. In one sense this word can be used to mean the study of unusual "phenomena," which meaning it usually has today among people who do not think of the vastly larger field of *causes* which occultism, properly speaking, investigates. Doubtless mere physical phenomena have their place in study, but they are on the frontier, on the outskirts -- the superficialities -- of occultism. The study of true occultism means penetrating deep into the *causal* mysteries of Being. Occultism is a generalizing term for the entire body of the occult sciences -- the sciences of the secrets of universal nature; as H. P. Blavatsky phrases it, "physical and psychic, mental and spiritual; called Hermetic and Esoteric Sciences." Occultism may be considered also to be a word virtually interchangeable with the phrase esoteric philosophy, with, however, somewhat more emphasis laid on the occult or secret or hid portions of the esoteric philosophy. Genuine occultism embraces not merely the physical, physiological, psychological, and spiritual portions of man's being, but has an equal and indeed a perhaps wider range in the studies dealing with the structure and operations as well as the origin and destiny of the kosmos.

Ojas (Sanskrit) A word meaning "energy," "vigor," "power." It is often used for the principle of vital heat permeating the human constitution. From this fact, it sometimes is employed to signify virility or the generative faculty. Its use is extremely uncommon in modern occult literature.

Om A word considered very holy in the Brahmanical literature. It is a syllable of invocation, as well as of benediction and of affirmation, and its general usage (as elucidated in the literature treating of it, which is rather voluminous, for this word Om has attained almost divine reverence on the part of vast numbers of Hindus) is that it should never be uttered aloud, or in the presence of an outsider, a foreigner, or a non-initiate, and it should be uttered in the silence of one's mind, in peace of heart, and in the intimacy of one's "inner closet." There is strong reason to believe, however, that this syllable of invocation was uttered, and uttered aloud in a monotone, by the disciples in the presence of their teacher. This word is always placed at the beginning of any scripture or prayer that is considered of unusual sanctity. It is said that by prolonging the uttering of this word, both of the *o* and the *m*, with the mouth closed, the sound re-echoes in and arouses vibration in the skull, and affects, *if the aspirations be pure*, the different nervous centers of the

body for good. The Brahmanas say that it is an unholy thing to utter this word in any place which is unholy. It is sometimes written *Aum*.

Palingenesis (Greek) A compound which means "coming again into being," or "becoming again." The meaning attached to this word is quite specific, although having a wide and general application. The idea included in it may be illustrated, as is found in the philosophical literature of the ancients who lived around the Mediterranean Sea, by the example of the oak which produces its seed, the acorn, the acorn in its turn producing a new oak containing the same life that was passed on to it from the mother oak -- or the father oak. This transmission of an identical life in cyclical recurring phases is the specific meaning of the word palingenesis. Thus the thought is different from the respective ideas contained in the other words connected with the doctrine of reembodiment. Perhaps another way of stating the specific meaning would be by stating that palingenesis signifies the continuous transmission of an identical life producing at each transformation a new manifestation or result, these several results being in each case a palingenesis or "new becoming" of the same life-stream. Its specific meaning is quite different from that embodied in the word transmigration.

Parabrahman (Sanskrit) *Para* is a word meaning "beyond." *Brahman* (neuter) is sometimes used as the universal self or spirit; also called paramatman. Beyond Brahman is the para-Brahman. Note the deep philosophical meaning of this -- there is no attempt here to limit the illimitable, the ineffable, by adjectives. In the Sanskrit Vedas and in the works deriving therefrom and belonging to the Vedic literary cycle, this "beyond" is called *tat*, "THAT," as this world of manifestations is called *idam*, "This." Parabrahman is intimately connected with mulaprakriti. Their interaction and intermingling cause the first nebulous thrilling, if the words will pass, of the universal life when spiritual desire first arose in it in the beginnings of things. Parabrahman, therefore, literally means "beyond Brahman"; and strictly speaking it is Brahman to which the Occidental term Absolute should be applied. Parabrahman is no entity, is no individual or individualized being. It is a convenient technical word with conveniently vague philosophical significance, implying whatever is beyond the Absolute or Brahman of any hierarchy. Just as Brahman is the summit of a cosmic hierarchy, so, following the same line of thought, the parabrahman is "whatever is beyond Brahman."

Paramatman (Sanskrit) The "primordial self" or the "self beyond," the permanent SELF, the Brahman or universal spirit-soul. A compound term meaning the highest or universal atman. *Parama*, "primordial," "supreme," etc.; the root of *atman* is hardly known -- its origin is uncertain, but the general meaning is that of "self." Paramatman consequently means the "supreme self," or the summit or flower of a hierarchy, the root-base or source of that cosmic self. Selflessness is the attribute of the paramatman, the universal self, where all personality vanishes. The universal self is the heart of the universe, for these two phrases are but two manners of expressing the same thing; it is the source of our being; it is also the goal whither we are all marching, we and the hierarchies above us as well as the hierarchies and the entities which compose them inferior to us. All come from the same ineffable source, the heart of Being, the universal self, pass at one period of their evolutionary journey through the stage of humanity, gaining thereby self-consciousness or the ego-self, the "I am I," and they find it, as they advance along this evolutionary path, expanding gradually into universal consciousness -- an expansion which never has an end, because the universal consciousness is endless, limitless, boundless. The paramatman is spiritually practically identical with what the theosophist has in mind when he speaks of the Absolute; and consequently paramatman, though possessing a wide range of meanings, is virtually identical with Brahman. Of course when the human mind or consciousness ascends in meditation up the rungs of the endless ladder of life and realizes that the paramatman

of one hierarchy or kosmos is but one of a multitude of other paramatmans of other kosmic hierarchies, the realization comes that even the vague term parabrahman may at certain moments of philosophical introspection be found to be the frontierless paramatman of boundless space; but in this last usage of paramatman the word obviously becomes a sheer generalizing expression for boundless life, boundless consciousness, boundless substance. This last use of the word, while correct enough, is hardly to be recommended because apt to introduce confusion, especially in Occidental minds with our extraordinary tendency to take generalizations for concrete realities.

Path, The Universal nature, our great parent, exists inseparably in each one of us, in each entity everywhere, and no separation of the part from the whole, of the individual from the kosmos, is possible in any other than a purely illusory sense. This points out to us with unerring definiteness and also directs us to the sublime path to utter reality. It is the path inwards, ever onwards within, which is endless and which leads into vast inner realms of wisdom and knowledge; for, as all the great world philosophies tell us so truly, if you *know yourself* you then know the universe, because each one of you is an inseparable part of it and it is all in you, its child. It is obvious from this last reflection that the sole essential difference between any two grades of the evolving entities which infill and compose the kosmos is a difference of consciousness, of understanding; and this consciousness and understanding come to the evolving entity in only one way -- by unwrapping or unfolding the intrinsic faculties or powers of that entity's own inner being. *This* is the path, as the mystics of all ages have put it. The pathway is within yourself. There is no other pathway for you individually than the pathway leading ever inwards towards your own inner god. The pathway of another is the same pathway for that other; but it is not your pathway, because your pathway is your Self, as it is for that other one his Self -- and yet, wonder of wonders, mystery of mysteries, the Self is the same in all. All tread the same pathway, but each man must tread it himself, and no one can tread it for another; and this pathway leads to unutterable splendor, to unutterable expansion of consciousness, to unthinkable bliss, to perfect peace.

Personality Theosophists draw a clear and sharp distinction, not of essence but of quality, between personality and individuality. Personality comes from the Latin word *persona*, which means a mask, through which the actor, the spiritual individuality, speaks. The personality is all the lower man: all the psychical and astral and physical impulses and thoughts and tendencies, and what not. It is the reflection in matter of the individuality; but being a material thing it can lead us downwards, although it is in essence a reflection of the highest. Freeing ourselves from the domination of the person, the mask, the veil, through which the individuality acts, then we show forth all the spiritual and so-called superhuman qualities; and this will happen in the future, in the far distant aeons of the future, when every human being shall have become a buddha, a christ. Such is the destiny of the human race. In occultism the distinction between the personality and the immortal individuality is that drawn between the lower quaternary or four lower principles of the human constitution and the three higher principles of the constitution or higher triad. The higher triad is the individuality; the personality is the lower quaternary. The combination of these two into a unity during a lifetime on earth produces what we now call the human being. The personality comprises within its range all the characteristics and memories and impulses and karmic attributes of one physical life; whereas the individuality is the aeonic ego, imperishable and deathless for the period of a solar manvantara. It is the individuality through its ray or human astral-vital monad which reincarnates time after time and thus clothes itself in one personality after another personality.

Philosophy An operation of the human spirit-mind in its endeavor to understand not merely the *how* of things, but the *why* of things -- why and how things are as they are. Philosophy is one

phase of a triform method of understanding the nature of nature, of universal nature, and of its multiform and multifold workings, and philosophy cannot be separated from the other two phases (science and religion), if we wish to gain a true and complete picture of things *as they are in themselves*. It is a capital mistake of Western thought to suppose that science, religion, and philosophy are three separate and unrelated operations of thought. The idea when pondered upon is immediately seen to be ludicrously false, because all these three are but phases of operations of human consciousness. Not one of these three -- philosophy, religion, or science -- can be divorced from the other two, and if the attempt be made so to divorce them, the result is spiritual and intellectual dissatisfaction, and the mind senses an incompleteness. Consequently any philosophy which is unscientific and irreligious, or any religion which is unscientific and unphilosophical, and any science which is unphilosophical and unreligious, is de facto erroneous because incomplete. These three are simply three aspects or phases of a fundamental reality which is consciousness. Philosophy is that aspect of the human consciousness which is correlative, and which seeks the bonds of union among things and exposes them, when found, as existing in the manifold and diverse forms of natural processes and the so-called laws which demonstrate their existence. (*See also Religion, Science*)

Pitri(s) (Sanskrit) A word meaning "father." There are seven (or ten) classes of pitris. They are called "fathers" because they are more particularly the actual progenitors of our lower principles; whereas the dhyani-chohans are actually, in one most important sense, our own *selves*. We were born from them; we were the monads, we were the atoms, the souls, projected, sent forth, emanated, by the dhyanis. The pitris, for easy understanding, may be divided into two great groups, the solar and lunar. The lunar pitris or barhishads, as the name implies, came from the moon-chain; while the solar pitris whom we may group under the expressive name agnishvatta-pitris are those dhyani-chohans which have not the physical "creative fire," because they belong to a much superior sphere of being, but they have all the fires of the spiritual-intellectual realms active or latent within them as the case may be. In preceding manvantaras they had finished their evolution so far as the realms of astral and physical matter were concerned, and when the proper time came in the cycling ages, the agnishvatta-pitris came to the rescue of those who had only the physical creative fire, or barhishad-pitris, the lunar pitris, inspiring and enlightening these lower pitris with the spiritual and intellectual energies or "fires."

In other words, the lunar pitris may briefly be said to be those consciousness-centers in the human constitution which feel humanly, which feel instinctually, and which possess the brain-mind mentality. The agnishvatta-pitris are those monadic centers of the human constitution which are of a purely spiritual type. (*See also Agnishvatas, Lunar Pitris*)

Plane(s) This is a word used in theosophy for the various ranges or steps of the hierarchical ladder of lives which blend into each other. There are no solutions of continuity in space, either in inner and invisible space or in outward and visible space. The physical world grades off into the astral world, which grades off again into a world higher than it, the world which is superior to the astral world; and so it continues throughout the series of hierarchical steps which compose a universe such as our universe. Remember also that the boundless All is filled full with universes, some so much greater than ours that the utmost reach of our imagination cannot conceive of them. To quote H. P. Blavatsky in this connection, in her *Theosophical Glossary* under this same head: "As used in Occultism, the term denotes the range or extent of some state of consciousness, or of the perceptive power of a particular set of senses, or the action of a particular force, or the state of matter corresponding to any of the above." (*See also Hierarchy*)

Planetary Chain Every kosmic body or globe, be it sun or planet, nebula or comet, atom or electron, is a composite entity formed of or comprised of inner and invisible energies and substances and of an outer, to us, and often visible, to us, physical vehicle or body. These elements all together number seven (or twelve), being what is called in theosophy the seven principles or elements of every self-contained entity; in other words, of every individual life-center. Thus every one of the physical globes that we see scattered over the fields of space is accompanied by six invisible and superior globes, forming what in theosophy is called a chain. This is the case with every sun or star, with every planet, and with every moon of every planet. It is likewise the case with the nebulae and the comets as above stated: all are septiform entities, all have a sevenfold constitution, even as man has, who is a copy in the little of what the universe is in the great, there being for us one life in that universe, one natural system of "laws" in that universe. Every entity in the universe is an inseparable part of it; therefore what is in the whole is in every part, because the part cannot contain anything that the whole does not contain, the part cannot be greater than the whole. Our own earth-chain is composed of seven (or twelve) globes, of which only one, our earth, is visible on this our earth plane to our physical sense apparatus, because that apparatus is builded or rather evolved to cognize this earth plane and none other. But the populations of all the seven (or twelve) globes of this earth-chain pass in succession, and following each other, from globe to globe, thus gaining experience of energy and matter and consciousness on all the various planes and spheres that this chain comprises. The other six (or eleven) globes of our earth-chain are invisible to our physical sense, of course; and, limiting our explanation only to the manifest seven globes of the complete chain of twelve globes, the six globes other and higher than the earth exist two by two, on three planes of the solar system superior to our physical plane where our earth-globe is -- this our earth. These three superior planes or worlds are each one superior to the world or plane immediately beneath or inferior to it. Our earth-globe is the fourth and lowest of all the manifest seven globes of our earth-chain. Three globes precede it on the descending or shadowy arc, and three globes follow it on the ascending or luminous arc of evolution. *The Secret Doctrine* by H. P. Blavatsky and the more recent work, *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy* (1932), contain most suggestive material for the student interested in this phase of the esoteric philosophy. (*See also* Ascending Arc)

Planetary Spirit(s) Every celestial body in space, of whatever kind or type, is under the overseeing and directing influence of a hierarchy of spiritual and quasi-spiritual and astral beings, who in their aggregate are generalized under the name of celestial spirits. These celestial spirits exist therefore in various stages or degrees of evolution; but the term planetary spirits is usually restricted to the highest class of these beings when referring to a planet. In every case, and whatever the celestial body may be, such a hierarchy of ethereal beings, when the most advanced in evolution of them are considered, in long past cycles of kosmic evolution had evolved through a stage of development corresponding to the humanity of earth. Every planetary spirit therefore, wherever existent, in those far past aeons of kosmic time was a man or a being equivalent to what we humans on earth call man. The planetary spirits of earth, for instance, are intimately linked with the origin and destiny of our present humanity, for not only are they our predecessors along the evolutionary path, but certain classes of them are actually the spiritual guides and instructors of mankind. We humans, in far distant aeons of the future, on a planetary chain which will be the child or grandchild of the present earth-chain, will be the planetary spirits of that future planetary chain. It is obvious that as H. P. Blavatsky says: "Our Earth, being as yet only in its Fourth Round, is far too young to have produced high Planetary Spirits"; but when the seventh round of this earth planetary chain shall have reached its end, our present humanity will then have become dhyanchohans of various grades, planetary spirits of one group or class, with necessary evolutionary differences as among themselves. The planetary spirits watch over, guide, and lead the hosts of evolving entities inferior to themselves during the

various rounds of a planetary chain. Finally, every celestial globe, whether sun or planet or other celestial body, has as the summit or acme of its spiritual hierarchy a supreme celestial spirit who is the hierarch of its own hierarchy. It should not be forgotten that the humanity of today forms a component element or stage or degree in the hierarchy of this (our) planetary chain.

Prajapati (Sanskrit) A word meaning "governor" or "lord" or "master" of "progeny." The word is applied to several of the Vedic gods, but in particular to Brahma -- that is to say the second step from parabrahman -- the evolver-creator, the first and most recondite figure of the Hindu triad, consisting of Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva. Brahma is the emanator or evolver, Vishnu the sustainer or preserver, and Siva, a name which may be translated euphemistically perhaps as "beneficent," the regenerator. Prajapati is a name which is often used in the plural, and refers to seven and also to ten different beings. They are the producers and givers of life of all on earth and, indeed, on the earth's planetary chain.

Prakriti (Sanskrit) A compound consisting of the prepositional prefix *pra*, meaning "forwards" or "progression," and *kriti*, a noun-form from the verbal root *kri*, "to make" or "to do." Therefore *prakriti* means literally "production" or "bringing forth," "originating," and by an extension of meaning it also signifies the primordial or original state or condition or form of anything: primary, original substance. The root or parent of prakriti is mula-prakriti or root of prakriti. Prakriti is to be considered with *vikriti* -- *vikriti* signifying change or an alteration of some kind, or a production or evolution from the *prakriti* which precedes it. As an illustration, the chemical elements hydrogen and oxygen combine in the proportion H₂O, producing thus a substance known in its most common form as water; but this same H₂O can appear as ice as well as vapor-gas; hence the vapor, the water, and the ice may be called the vikritis of the original prakriti which is the originating hydrogen and oxygen. The illustration is perhaps not a very good one but is suggestive. In common usage prakriti may be called nature in general, as the great producer of entities or things, and through this nature acts the ever-active Brahma or Purusha. Purusha, therefore, is spirit, and prakriti is its productive veil or sheath. Essentially or fundamentally the two are one, and whatever prakriti through and by the influence of Purusha produces is the multitudinous and multiform vikritis which make the immense variety and diversity in the universe around us. In one or more of the Hindu philosophies, prakriti is the same as sakti, and therefore prakriti and sakti are virtually interchangeable with maya or mahamaya or so-called illusion. Prakriti is often spoken of as matter, but this is inexact although a very common usage; matter is rather the "productions" or phases that prakriti brings about, the vikritis. In the Indian Sankhya philosophy pradhana is virtually identical with prakriti, and both are often used to signify the producing element from and out of which all illusory material manifestations or appearances are evolved.

Pralaya (Sanskrit) A compound word, formed of *laya*, from the root *li*, and the prefix *pra*. *Li* means "to dissolve," "to melt away," "to liquefy," as when one pours water upon a cube of salt or of sugar. The cube of salt or of sugar vanishes in the water -- it dissolves, changes its form -- and this may be taken as a figure, imperfect as it is, or as a symbol, of what pralaya is: a crumbling away, a vanishing away, of matter into something else which is yet in it, and surrounds it, and interpenetrates it. Such is pralaya, usually translated as the state of latency, state of rest, state of repose, between two manvantaras or life cycles. If we remember distinctly the meaning of the Sanskrit word, our minds take a new bent in direction, follow a new thought. We get new ideas; we penetrate into the arcanum of the thing that takes place. Pralaya, therefore, is dissolution, death. There are many kinds of pralayas. There is the universal pralaya, called *prakritika*, because it is the pralaya or vanishing away, melting away, of prakriti or nature. Then there is the solar pralaya. Sun in Sanskrit is *surya*, and the adjective from this is *saurya*: hence, the saurya

pralaya or the pralaya of the solar system. Then, thirdly, there is the terrestrial or planetary pralaya. One Sanskrit word for earth is *bhumi*, and the adjective corresponding to this is *bhaumika*: hence, the bhaumika pralaya. Then there is the pralaya or death of the individual man. Man is *purusha*; the corresponding adjective is *paurusha*: hence, the paurusha pralaya or death of man. These adjectives apply equally well to the several kinds of manvantaras or life cycles. There is another kind of pralaya which is called *nitya*. In its general sense, it means "constant" or "continuous," and can be exemplified by the constant or continuous change -- life and death -- of the cells of our bodies. It is a state in which the indwelling and dominating entity remains, but its different principles and *rupas* undergo continuous and incessant change. Hence it is called *nitya*, signifying continuous. It applies to the body of man, to the outer sphere of earth, to the earth itself, to the solar system, and indeed to all nature. It is the unceasing and chronic changing of things that are -- the passing from phase to phase, meaning the pralaya or death of one phase, to be followed by the rebirth of its succeeding phase. There are other kinds of pralayas than those herein enumerated.

Prana (Sanskrit) The word is derived from *pra*, prepositional prefix meaning "before"; and *an*, verb meaning "to breathe," "to blow," "to live." Usually translated "life," but rather the psychoelectrical veil or psychoelectrical field manifesting in the individual as vitality. Commonly called "life principle." This Sanskrit word is used by modern theosophists in a *general* sense, although in the Sanskrit it has a rather specific and restricted meaning, because there are, as a matter of fact, a number of life currents, vital fluids. They have each one its own name. One system gives the number as three; another as five, which is the commonly accepted number; another enumeration is seven; another again is twelve, as is found in some Upanishads; and one old writer even gives them as thirteen. The life-atoms of the prana, or psychoelectrical field, fly instantly back at the moment of physical dissolution to the natural pranic reservoirs of the planet.

Pratyeka Buddha (Sanskrit) *Pratyeka* is a compound of two words: *prati*, prepositional prefix meaning "towards" or "for"; *eka*, the numeral "one"; thus we can translate the compound by the paraphrase "each one for himself." The Pratyeka Buddha, he who achieves buddhahood for himself, instead of feeling the call of almighty love to return and help those who have gone less far, goes ahead into the supernal light -- passes onwards and enters the unspeakable bliss of nirvana -- and leaves mankind behind. Though exalted, nevertheless he does not rank with the unutterable sublimity of the Buddha of Compassion. The Pratyeka Buddha concentrates his energies on the one objective -- spiritual self-advancement: he raises himself to the spiritual realm of his own inner being, enwraps himself therein and, so to speak, goes to sleep. The Buddha of Compassion raises himself, as does the Pratyeka Buddha, to the spiritual realms of his own inner being, but does not stop there, because he expands continuously, becomes one with All, or tries to, and in fact does so in time. When the Pratyeka Buddha in due course emerges from the nirvanic state in order to take up his evolutionary journey again, he will find himself far in the rear of the Buddha of Compassion.

Preexistence This term means that the human soul did not first come into being or existence with its present birth on earth; in other words, that it preexisted before it was born on earth.

This doctrine of preexistence is by no means typically theosophical, for it likewise was a part of the early teachings of Christianity, as is evidenced in the writings that remain to us of Origen, the great Alexandrian Church Father, and of his school. The theosophical student should be very careful in distinguishing the technical meanings that pertain to several words which in popular and mistaken usage are often employed interchangeably, as for example preexistence,

metempsychosis, transmigration, reincarnation, reimpodiment, rebirth, metensomatosis, palingenesis. Each one of these words has a specific meaning typically its own, and describes or sets forth one phase of the destiny of a reimpodiment and migrating entity. In popular usage, several of these words are used as synonyms, and this usage is wrong. Preexistence, for instance, does not necessarily signify the transmigration of an entity from plane to plane nor, indeed, does it signify as does reincarnation that a migrating monad reimpodiments or reincarnates itself through its ray on earth. Preexistence signifies only that a soul, be it human or other, preexisted before its birth on earth. The doctrine of the great Origen, as found in his works that remain to us, was that the human soul preexisted in the spiritual world, or within the influence or range of the divine essence or "God," before it began a series of reincarnations on earth. It is obvious that Origen's manner of expressing his views is a more or less faithful but distorted reflection of the teaching of the esoteric philosophy. The teaching of preexistence as outlined by Origen and his school and followers, with others of his mystical quasi-theosophical doctrines, was formally condemned and anathematized at the Home Synod held under Mennas at Constantinople about 543 of the Christian era. Thus passed out of orthodox Christian theology as a "newly discovered heresy" what was a most important and mystical body of teaching of the early centuries of the new Christian religion -- to the latter's great loss, spiritual and intellectual. The doctrines of Origen and his school may be said to have formed an important part of original Christian theosophy, a form of universal theosophy of Christianized character. (See under their respective heads the various correlated doctrines mentioned above.)

Principles of Man The seven principles of man are a likeness or rather copy of the seven cosmic principles. They are actually the offspring or reflection of the seven cosmic principles, limited in their action in us by the workings of the law of karma, but running in their origin back into THAT which is beyond: into THAT which is the essence of the universe or the universal -- above, beyond, within, to the unmanifest, to the unmanifestable, to that first principle which H. P. Blavatsky enunciates as the leading thought of the wisdom-philosophy of *The Secret Doctrine*. These principles of man are reckoned as seven in the philosophy by which the human spiritual and psychical economy has been publicly explained to us in the present age. In other ages these principles or parts of man were differently reckoned -- the Christian reckoned them as body, soul, and spirit, generalizing the seven under these three heads. Some of the Indian thinkers divided man into a basic fourfold entity, others into a fivefold. The Jewish philosophy, as found in the Qabbalah which is the esoteric tradition of the Jews, teaches that man is divided into four parts: *neshamah*, *ruah*, *nefesh*, and *guf*. Theosophists for convenience often employ in their current literature a manner of viewing man's composite constitution which is the dividing of his nature into a trichotomy, meaning a division into three, being spirit, soul, and body, which in this respect is identical with the generalized Christianized theosophical division. Following this trichotomy, man's three parts, therefore, are: first and highest, the divine spirit or the divine monad of him, which is rooted in the universe, which spirit is linked with the All, being in a highly mystical sense a ray of the All; second, the intermediate part, or the spiritual monad, which in its higher and lower aspects is the spiritual and human souls; then, third, the lowest part of man's composite constitution, the vital-astral-physical part of him, which is composed of material or quasi-material life-atoms. (See also Atman, Buddhi, Manas, Kama, Prana, Linga-sarira, Sthula-sarira)

Psychic Powers The lowest powers of the intermediate or soul-nature in the human being, and we are exercising and using them all the time -- yes, and we cannot even control them properly! Men's emotional thoughts are vagrant, wandering, uncertain, lacking precision, without positive direction, and feebly governed. The average man cannot even keep his emotions and thoughts in the grip of his self-conscious will. His weakest passions lead him astray. It is this part of his

nature whence flow his "psychic powers." It is man's work to transmute them and to turn them to employment which is good and useful and holy. Indeed, the average man cannot control the ordinary psycho-astral-physical powers that he commonly uses; and when, forsooth, people talk about cultivating occult powers, by which they mean merely psychic powers, it simply shows that through ignorance they know not to what they refer. Their minds are clouded as regards the actual facts. Those who talk so glibly of cultivating occult powers are just the people who cannot be trusted as real guides, for before they themselves can crawl in these mysterious regions of life, they seem to desire to teach other people how to run and to leap. What most people really mean, apparently, when they speak of cultivating occult powers is "I want to get power over other people." Such individuals are totally unfit to wield occult powers of any kind, for the motive is in most cases purely selfish, and their minds are beclouded and darkened with ignorance. The so-called psychic powers have the same relation to genuine *spiritual powers* that baby-talk has to the discourse of a wise philosopher. Before occult powers of any kind can be cultivated safely, man must learn the first lesson of the mystic knowledge, which is to control himself; and all powers that later he gains must be laid on the altar of impersonal service -- on the altar of service to mankind. Psychic powers will come to men as a natural development of their inner faculties, as evolution performs its wonderful work in future ages. New senses, and new organs corresponding to these new senses, both interior and exterior, will come into active functioning in the distant future. But it is perilous both to sanity and to health to attempt to force the development of these prematurely, and unless the training and discipline be done under the watchful and compassionate eye of a genuine occult teacher who knows what he is about. The world even today contains hundreds of thousands of "sensitives" who are the first feeble forerunners of what future evolution will make common in the human race; but these sensitives are usually in a very unfortunate and trying situation, for they themselves misunderstand what is in them, and they are misunderstood by their fellows. (*See also Occultism*)

Psychology This word is ordinarily used to signify in our days, and in the seats of learning in the Occident, a study mostly beclouded with doubts and hypotheses, and often actual guesswork, meaning little more than a kind of mental physiology, practically nothing more than the working of the brain-mind in the lowest astral-psychical apparatus of the human constitution. But in the theosophical philosophy, the word psychology is used to mean something very different and of a far nobler character: we might call it pneumatology, or the science or the study of spirit and its rays, because all the inner faculties and powers of man ultimately spring from his spiritual nature. The term psychology ought really to connote the study of the inner intermediate economy of man, and the interconnection of his principles and elements or centers of energy or force -- what the man really is inwardly. In days of the far bygone past, psychology was indeed what the word signifies: "the science of soul"; and upon this science was securely based the collateral and subordinate science of genuine physiology. Today, however, it is physiology which serves as the basis for psychology because of a mistaken view of man's constitution. It is a case of *hysteron proteron* -- putting the cart before the horse.

Puranas (Sanskrit) A word which literally means "ancient," "belonging to olden times." In India the word is especially used as a term comprehending certain well-known sacred scriptures, which popular and even scholarly authorities ascribe to the poet Vyasa. The Puranas contain the entire body of ancient Indian mythology. They are usually considered to be eighteen in number, and each Purana, to be complete, is supposed to consist of five topics or themes. These five topics or themes are commonly enumerated as follows: (1) the beginnings or "creation" of the universe; (2) its renewals and destructions, or manvantaras and pralayas; (3) the genealogies of the gods, other divine beings, heroes, and patriarchs; (4) the reigns of the various manus; and (5) a resume of the history of the solar and lunar races. Practically none of the Puranas as they stand

in modern versions contains all these five topics, except perhaps the *Vishnu-Purana*, probably the most complete in this sense of the word; and even the *Vishnu-Purana* contains a great deal of matter not directly to be classed under these five topics. All the Puranas also contain a great deal of symbolical and allegorical writing.

Purusha (Sanskrit) A word meaning "man," the Ideal Man, like the Qabbalistic Adam Qadmon, the primordial entity of space, containing with and in prakriti or nature all the septenary (or denary) scales of manifested being. More mystically Purusha has a number of different significancies. In addition to meaning the Heavenly Man or Ideal Man, it is frequently used for the spiritual man in each individual human being or, indeed, in every self-conscious entity -- therefore a term for the spiritual self. Purusha also sometimes stands as an interchangeable term with Brahma, the evolver or "creator." Probably the simplest and most inclusive significance of Purusha as properly used in the esoteric philosophy is expressed in the paraphrase "the entitative, individual, everlasting divine-spiritual self," the spiritual monad, whether of a universe or of a solar system, or of an individual entity in manifested life, such as man.

Qabbalah (More frequently spelled *Kabala* or *Kabbala*.) The Hebrew word for what the Jewish theosophical initiates called "the Tradition," or "the Secret Doctrine" -- meaning something which is handed down or passed down from man to man by tradition; from a Hebrew word meaning "to receive" or "to take over." Unquestionably the Jewish Qabbalah existed as a traditional system of doctrine long before the present manuscripts of it were written, for these are of comparatively late production and probably date from the European Middle Ages; and one proof of this statement is found in the fact that in the earliest centuries of the Christian era several of the Church Fathers of the new Christian religion used language which could have been taken only from the Hebrew theosophy, that is, the Hebrew Qabbalah. The expressions here are in some cases identic, and the thought is in all cases the same. The *Zohar* may be called the original and main book of the Qabbalah. The basis of the Jewish Qabbalah was the archaic Chaldean secret doctrine which was a system of occult or esoteric philosophy handed down in part by oral, and in part by written, transmission -- and mostly by oral reception, wholly so in the case of the deeper mysteries of the Qabbalah. The Jewish Qabbalah, such as it exists today, has been disfigured and distorted by the interpolations and mutilations of many Western occultists, especially by mystics of strong Christian bias. The Qabbalah, therefore, is essentially the theosophy of the Jews, or rather the form which the universal theosophy of the archaic ages took in its transmission through the Jewish mind.

Races During evolution on our earth (and on the other six manifest globes of the planetary chain of earth correspondentially), mankind as a life-wave passes through seven evolutionary stages called root-races. Seven such root-races form the evolutionary cycle on this globe earth in this fourth round through the planetary chain; and this evolutionary cycle through our globe earth is called one globe round. We are at the present time in the fourth subrace of our present fifth root-race, on globe D or our earth. Each root-race is divided in our teachings into seven minor races, and each one of these seven minor races is again in its turn subdivided into seven branchlet or still smaller racial units, etc. The student who is interested in the matter of tracing the evolutionary arrangement or history of the seven root-races on our globe earth is referred primarily to H. P. Blavatsky's *The Secret Doctrine*, and secondarily to *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*. Each one of the seven root-races reaches its maximum of material efflorescence and power at about its middle point. When half of the cycle of any one of the seven root-races is run, then the racial cataclysm ensues, for such is the way in which nature operates; and at this middle racial point, at the middle point of the fourth subrace of the mother-race or root-race, a new root-race begins or is born out of the preceding root-race, and pursues its

evolution from birth towards maturity, side by side with, or rather in connection with, the latter half of the preceding mother-race or root-race. It is in this fashion that the root-races overlap each other, a most interesting fact in ethnological or racial history. This overlapping likewise takes place in the cases of the minor and branchlet races. It will be between sixteen thousand and twenty thousand years more before the racial cataclysm will ensue which will cut our own fifth root-race in two -- exactly as the same racial cataclysmic occurrence happened to the fourth-race Atlanteans who preceded us, and to the third-race Lemurians who preceded them; and as it will happen to the two root-races which will follow ours, the sixth and seventh -- for we are now approaching the middle point of our own fifth root-race, because we are nearing the middle point of the fourth subrace of this fifth root-race. (*See also* Globe, Planetary Chain, Round)

Rajas (Sanskrit) One of the three gunas or "qualities" in the correlations of force and matter, the other two being respectively sattva and tamas. Rajas is the guna or the "quality" of longing, passion, activity, one of the three divisions of nature. In a sense it is the result or consequence of the elementary urge in nature producing change and the longing therefor.

Rebirth One of the several aspects or branches of the general doctrine of reïmbodiment. A word of large and generalized significance. Signifying merely a succession of rebirths, the definition becomes generalized, excluding specific explanations as to the type or kind of reïmbodiment. The likeness between the idea comprised in this word and that belonging to the term reincarnation is very close, yet the two ideas are quite distinct. (For this difference *see* Reincarnation; *also* Preexistence, Metempsychosis, Transmigration, etc.)

Rechaka (*Recaka*, Sanskrit) One of the practices used in the hatha yoga system for the regulation of the breath. The breath is expelled or expired from one of the nostrils while the other nostril is held closed with the finger, and then the operation is repeated with the other nostril. These operations, as observed under Kumbhaka, are extremely dangerous to health and mental balance, and cannot be encouraged. Indeed, they should be unequivocally discouraged.

Reïmbodiment This term means that the living and migrating entity takes upon itself a new body at some time after death. Its meaning, therefore, is a highly generalized one, and the specific significance is that of assuming new imbodiments periodically. It teaches something more than that the soul merely preexists, the idea being that the soul takes unto itself a succession of new bodies -- on whatever plane it may happen to be. This particular aspect or branch of the general doctrine of the migration of living entities tells us not what kind of body the soul newly assumes, nor whether that body be taken here on earth or elsewhere, that is to say, whether the new body is to be a visible body or an invisible one in the invisible realms of nature. It simply says that the life-center *reïmbodies* itself; and this is the essence of the specific meaning of this word. (*See also* Preexistence, Rebirth, Metempsychosis, Reincarnation, etc.)

Reincarnating Ego In the method of dividing the human principles into a trichotomy of an upper duad, an intermediate duad, and a lower triad -- or distributively spirit, soul, and body -- the second or intermediate duad, manas-kama, or the intermediate nature, is the ordinary seat of human consciousness, and itself is composed of two qualitative parts: an upper or aspiring part, which is commonly called the reincarnating ego or the higher manas, and a lower part attracted to material things, which is the focus of what expresses itself in the average man as the human ego, his everyday ordinary seat of consciousness. When death occurs, the mortal and material portions sink into oblivion; while the reincarnating ego carries the best and noblest parts of the spiritual memory of the man that was into the devachan or heaven world of postmortem rest and recuperation, where the ego remains in the bosom of the monad or of the monadic essence in a

state of the most perfect and utter bliss and peace, constantly reviewing and improving upon in its own blissful imagination all the unfulfilled spiritual yearnings and longings of the life just closed that its naturally creative faculties automatically suggest to the entity now in the devachan. But the monad above spoken of passes from sphere to sphere on its peregrinations from earth, carrying with it the reincarnating ego, or what we may for simplicity of expression call the earth-child, in its bosom, where this reincarnating ego is in its state of perfect bliss and peace, until the time comes when, having passed through all the invisible realms connected by chains of causation with our own planet, it slowly "descends" again through these higher intermediate spheres earthwards. Coincidentally does the reincarnating ego slowly begin to reawaken to self-conscious activity. Gradually it feels, at first unconsciously to itself, the attraction earthwards, arising out of the karmic seeds of thought and emotion and impulse sown in the preceding life on earth and now beginning to awaken; and as these attractions grow stronger, in other words as the reincarnating ego awakens more fully, it finds itself under the domination of a strong psychomagnetic attraction drawing it to the earth-sphere. The time finally comes when it is drawn strongly to the family on earth whose karmic attractions or karmic status or condition are the nearest to its own characteristics; and it then enters, or attaches itself to, by reason of the psychomagnetic attraction, the human seed which will grow into the body of the human being to be. Thus reincarnation takes place, and the reincarnating ego reawakens to life on earth in the body of a little child.

Reincarnation An anglicized word of Latin derivation, meaning "reinfleshment," the coming again into a human body of an incarnate human soul. The repetitive reimpodiment of the reincarnating human ego in vehicles of human flesh -- this being a special case of the general doctrine of reimpodiment. This general doctrine of reimpodiment applies not solely to man, but to all centers of consciousness whatsoever, or to all monads whatsoever -- wheresoever they may be on the evolutionary ladder of life, and whatsoever may be their particular developmental grade thereon. The meaning of this general doctrine is very simple indeed. It is as follows: every life-consciousness-center, in other words, every monad or monadic essence, reincorporates itself repeatedly in various vehicles or bodies, to use the popular word. These bodies may be spiritual, or they may be physical, or they may be of a nature intermediate between these two, i.e., ethereal. This rule of nature, which applies to all monads without exception, takes place in all the different realms of the visible and invisible universe, and on all its different planes, and in all its different worlds. There are eight words used in the theosophical philosophy in connection with reimpodiment, which are not all synonymous, although some of these eight words have almost the same specific meaning. They are: preexistence, rebirth, reimpodiment, palingenesis, metempsychosis, metempsychosis, transmigration, reincarnation (see under each word for definition). Of these eight words, four only may be said to contain the four different basic ideas of the general doctrine of reimpodiment, and these four are preexistence, reimpodiment, metempsychosis, and transmigration. In no case is the word reincarnation *identical* with any of the other seven words, though of course it has grounds of strong similarity with them all, as for instance with preexistence, because obviously the entity preexists before it reincarnates; and on the same grounds it is similar to rebirth, reimpodiment, and metempsychosis. The meaning of the word reincarnation differs specifically from rebirth in this, that the latter word simply means rebirth in human bodies of flesh on this earth; while the former term also contains the implication, tacit if not expressed, of possible incarnations in flesh by entities which have finished their earthly pilgrimage or evolution, but who can and sometimes do return to this earth in order to incarnate for the purpose of aiding their less evolved brothers.

Relativity The modern scientific doctrine of relativity, despite its restrictions and mathematical limitations, is extremely suggestive because it introduces metaphysics into physics, does away

with purely speculative ideas that certain things are absolute in a purely relative universe, and brings us back to an examination of nature as nature is and not as mathematical theorists have hitherto tacitly taken it to be. The doctrine of relativity in its essential idea of relations rather than absolutes is true; but this does not mean that we necessarily accept Einstein's or his followers' deductions. These latter may or may not be true, and time will show. In any case, relativity is not what it is often misunderstood to be -- the naked doctrine that "everything is relative," which would mean that there is nothing fundamental or basic or real anywhere, whence other things flow forth; in other words, that there is no positively real or fundamental divine and spiritual background of being. The relativity theory is an adumbration, a reaching out for, a groping after, a very, very old theosophical doctrine -- the doctrine of maya. The manner in which theosophy teaches the conception of relativity is that while the universe is a relative universe and all its parts are therefore relative -- each to each, and each to all, and all to each -- yet there is a deathless reality behind, which forms the substratum or the truth of things, out of which the phenomenal in all its myriad relative manifestations flows. And there is a way, a road, a path, by which men may reach this reality behind, because it is in man as his inmost essence and therefore primal origin. In each one is fundamentally this reality of which we are all in search. Each one is the path that leads to it, for it is the heart of the universe. In a sense still more metaphysical, even the heart of a universe may be said to exist relatively in connection with other universes with their hearts. It would be quite erroneous to suppose that there is one Absolute Reality in the old-fashioned European sense, and that all relative manifestations flow forth from it, and that these relative manifestations although derived from this Absolute Reality are without links of union or origin with an Absolute even still more essential and fundamental and vaster. Once the conception of boundless infinitude is grasped, the percipient intelligence immediately realizes that it is simply hopeless, indeed impossible, to postulate ends, absolute Absolutes, as the divine *ultima thule*. No matter how vast and kosmic an Absolute may be, there are in sheer frontierless infinitude always innumerable other Absolutes equal to or greater than it.

Religion An operation of the human spiritual mind in its endeavor to understand not only the *how* and the *why* of things, but comprising in addition a yearning and striving towards self-conscious union with the divine All and an endlessly growing self-conscious identification with the cosmic divine-spiritual realities. One phase of a triform method of understanding the nature of nature, of universal nature, and its multiform and multifold workings; and this phase cannot be separated from the other two phases (science and philosophy) if we wish to gain a true picture of things *as they are in themselves*. Human religion is the expression of that aspect of man's consciousness which is intuitional, aspirational, and mystical, and which is often deformed and distorted in its lower forms by the emotional in man. It is usual among modern Europeans to derive the word religion from the Latin verb meaning "to bind back" -- *religare*. But there is another derivation, which is the one that Cicero chooses, and of course he was a Roman himself and had great skill and deep knowledge in the use of his own native tongue. This other derivation comes from a Latin root meaning "to select," "to choose," from which, likewise, we have the word *lex*, "law," i.e., the course of conduct or rule of action which is chosen as the best, and is therefore followed; in other words, that which is the best of its kind, as ascertained by selection, by trial, and by proof. Thus then, the meaning of the word religion from the Latin *religio*, means a careful selection of fundamental beliefs and motives by the higher or spiritual intellect, a faculty of intuitional judgment and understanding, and a consequent abiding by that selection, resulting in a course of life and conduct in all respects following the convictions that have been arrived at. This is the religious spirit. To this the theosophist would add the following very important idea: behind all the various religions and philosophies of ancient times there is a secret or esoteric wisdom given out by the greatest men who have ever lived, the founders and builders of the various world religions and world philosophies; and this sublime system in fundamentals

has been the same everywhere over the face of the globe. This system has passed under various names, e.g., the esoteric philosophy, the ancient wisdom, the secret doctrine, the traditional teaching, theosophy, etc. (*See also Science, Philosophy*)

Right-hand Path From time immemorial, in all countries of the earth, among all races of men, there have been existent two opposing and antagonistic schools of occult or esoteric training, the one often technically called the Path of Light, and the other the Path of Darkness or of the Shadows. These two paths likewise are much more commonly called the right-hand path and the left-hand path, and although these are technical names in the rather shaky occultism of the Occident, the very same expressions have prevailed all over the world, and are especially known in the mystical and esoteric literature of Hindustan. The right-hand path is known in Sanskrit writings by the name *dakshina-marga*, and those who practice the rules of conduct and follow the manner of life enjoined upon those who follow the right-hand path are technically known as *dakshinacharins*, and their course of life is known as *dakshinachara*. Conversely, those who follow the left-hand path, often called Brothers of the Shadow, or by some similar epithet, are called *vamacharins*, and their school or course of life is known as *vamachara*. An alternative expression for *vamachara* is *savyachara*. The white magicians or Brothers of Light are therefore *dakshinacharins*, and the black magicians or Brothers of the Shadow, or workers of spiritual and intellectual and psychical evil, are therefore *vamacharins*. To speak in the mystical language of ancient Greece, the *dakshinacharins* or Brothers of Light pursue the winding ascent to Olympus, whereas the *vamacharins* or Brothers of the Left-hand follow the easy but fearfully perilous path leading downwards into ever more confusing, horrifying stages of matter and spiritual obscuration. The latter is the *faciles descensus averno* (*Aeneid*, 6.126) of the Latin poet Virgil. Woe be to him who, refusing to raise his soul to the sublime and cleansing rays of the spiritual sun within him, places his feet upon the path which leads downwards. The warnings given to students of occultism about this matter have always been solemn and urgent, and no esotericist should at any moment consider himself safe or beyond the possibilities of taking the downward way until he has become at one with the divine monitor within his own breast, his own inner god.

Ring-Pass-Not A profoundly mystical and suggestive term signifying the circle or bounds or frontiers within which is contained the consciousness of those who are still under the sway of the delusion of separateness -- and this applies whether the ring be large or small. It does not signify any one especial occasion or condition, but is a general term applicable to any state in which an entity, having reached a certain stage of evolutionary growth of the unfolding of consciousness, finds itself unable to pass into a still higher state because of some delusion under which the consciousness is laboring, be that delusion mental or spiritual. There is consciously a ring-pass-not for every globe of the planetary chain, a ring-pass-not for the planetary chain itself, a ring-pass-not for the solar system, and so forth. It is the entities who labor under the delusion who therefore actually create their own rings-pass-not, for these are not actual entitative material frontiers, but boundaries of consciousness. A ring-pass-not furthermore may perhaps be said with great truth to be somewhat of the nature of a spiritual laya-center or point of transmission between plane and plane of consciousness. The rings-pass-not as above said, however, have to do with phases or states of consciousness only. For instance, the ring-pass-not for the beasts is self-consciousness, i.e., the beasts have not yet been enabled to develop forth their consciousness to the point of self-consciousness or reflective consciousness except in minor degree. A dog, for example, located in a room which it desires to leave, will run to a door out of which it is accustomed to go and will sit there whining for the door to be opened. Its consciousness recognizes the point of egress, but it has not developed the self-conscious mental activity to open

the door. A general ring-pass-not for humanity is their inability to self-consciously participate in spiritual self-consciousness.

Round The doctrine concerning our planetary chain commonly called that of the seven rounds means that the life cycle or life-wave begins its evolutionary course on globe A, the first of the series of seven (or ten) globes; then, completing its cycles there, runs down to globe B, and then to globe C, and then to globe D, our earth; and then, on the ascending arc, to globe E, then to globe F, and then to globe G. These are the manifest seven globes of the planetary chain. This is one *planetary round*. After the planetary round there ensues a planetary or chain nirvana, until the second round begins in the same way, but in a more "advanced" degree of evolution than was the first round. A *globe round* is one of the seven passages of a life-wave during its planetary round, on any one (and therefore on and through each) of the globes. When the life-wave has passed through globe D, for instance, and ends its cycles on globe D, this is the globe round of globe D for that particular planetary round; and so with all the globes respectively. Seven root-races make one globe round. There are seven globe rounds therefore (one globe round for each of the seven globes) in each planetary round. Seven planetary rounds equal one kalpa or manvantara or Day of Brahma. When seven planetary rounds have been accomplished, which is as much as saying forty-nine globe rounds (or globe manvantaras), there ensues a still higher nirvana than that occurring between globes G and A after each planetary round. This higher nirvana is coincident with what is called a pralaya of that planetary chain, which pralaya lasts until the cycle again returns for a new planetary chain to form, containing the same hosts of living beings as on the preceding chain, and which are now destined to enter upon the new planetary chain, but on and in a higher series of planes or worlds than in the preceding one. When seven such planetary chains with their various kalpas or manvantaras have passed away, this sevenfold grand cycle is one solar manvantara, and then the solar system sinks into the solar or cosmic pralaya. There are outer rounds and inner rounds. An inner round comprises the passage of the life-wave in any one planetary chain from globe A to globe G once around, and this takes place seven times in a planetary manvantara. The outer round comprises the passage of the entirety of a life-wave of a planetary chain along the circulations of the solar system, from one of the seven sacred planets to another; and this for seven (or ten) times. There is another aspect of the teaching concerning the outer rounds which cannot be elucidated here.

Rupa (Sanskrit) A word meaning "form," "image," "similitude," but this word is employed technically, and only rarely in the popular sense in which it is commonly used in English. It signifies rather an atomic or monadic aggregation about the central and indwelling consciousness, forming a vehicle or body thereof. Thus the rupa-lokas are lokas or worlds where the body-form or vehicle is very definitely outlined in matter; whereas the arupa-lokas are worlds where the body-forms or "images" are outlined in a manner which *to us humans* is much less definite. It should be noted that the word rupa applies with equal force to the bodies or vehicles even of the gods, although these latter to us are purely subjective or arupa. (*See also* Loka)

Sabda-Brahman (Sanskrit) A phrase literally signifying "WordBrahman" -- a curious analogy with the archaic Greek mystical teaching concerning the Logos. SabdaBrahman, therefore, may be rendered as the active unmanifest Logos of the solar system, and hence as the soul of Brahman expressing itself through its akasic veils as the divine Logos, or Word or Sound. This term is closely connected in meaning with the teaching concerning daiviprakriti. H. P. Blavatsky in her posthumous *Glossary* speaks of the Sabda-Brahman as "Ethereal Vibrations diffused throughout Space."

Sakti (Sanskrit) A term which may be briefly defined to mean one of what in modern Occultism are called the seven forces of nature, of which six are manifest and the seventh unmanifest, or only partly manifest. Sakti in general may be described as universal energy, and is, as it were, the feminine aspect of fohat. In popular Hinduism the various saktis are the wives or consorts of the gods, in other words, the energies or active powers of the deities represented as feminine influences or energies. These anthropomorphic definitions are unfortunate, because misleading. The saktis of nature are really the veils, or sheaths, or vehicular carriers, through which work the inner and ever-active energies. As substance and energy, or force and matter, are fundamentally one, as modern science in its researches has begun to discover, it becomes apparent that even these saktis or sheaths or veils are themselves energetic to lower spheres or realms through which they themselves work. The crown of the astral light, as H. P. Blavatsky puts it, is the generalized sakti of universal nature in so far as our solar system is concerned.

Samadhi (Sanskrit) A compound word formed of *sam*, meaning "with" or "together"; *a*, meaning "towards"; and the verbal root *dha*, signifying "to place," or "to bring"; hence *samadhi*, meaning "to direct towards," generally signifies to combine the faculties of the mind with a direction towards an object. Hence, intense contemplation or profound meditation, with the consciousness directed to the spiritual. It is the highest form of self-possession, in the sense of collecting all the faculties of the constitution towards reaching union or quasi-union, long or short in time as the case may be, with the divine-spiritual. One who possesses and is accustomed to use this power has complete, absolute control over all his faculties, and is, therefore, said to be "completely *self*-possessed." It is the highest state of yoga or "union." Samadhi, therefore, is a word of exceedingly mystical and profound significance implying the complete abstraction of the percipient consciousness from all worldly or exterior or even mental concerns or attributes, and its absorption into or, perhaps better, its becoming the pure unadulterate, undilute superconsciousness of the god within. In other words, samadhi is self-conscious union with the spiritual monad of the human constitution. Samadhi is the eighth or final stage of genuine occult yoga, and can be attained at any time by the initiate without conscious recourse to the other phases or practices of yoga enumerated in Oriental works, and which other and inferior practices are often misleading, in some cases distinctly injurious, and at the best mere props or aids in the attaining of complete mental abstraction from worldly concerns. The eight stages of yoga usually enumerated are the following: (1) *yama*, signifying "restraint" or "forbearance"; (2) *niyama*, religious observances of various kinds, such as watchings or fastings, prayings, penances, etc.; (3) *asana* (q.v.), postures of various kinds; (4) *pranayama*, various methods of regulating the breath; (5) *pratyahara*, a word signifying "withdrawal," but technically and esoterically the "withdrawal" of the consciousness from sensual or sensuous concerns, or from external objects; (6) *dharana* (q.v.), firmness or steadiness or resolution in holding the mind set or concentrated on a topic or object of thought, mental concentration; (7) *dhyana* (q.v.), abstract contemplation or meditation when freed from exterior distractions; and finally, (8) *samadhi*, complete collection of the consciousness and of its faculties into oneness or union with the monadic essence. It may be observed, and should be carefully taken note of by the student, that when the initiate has attained samadhi he becomes practically omniscient for the solar universe in which he dwells, because his consciousness is functioning at the time in the spiritual-causal worlds. All knowledge is then to him like an open page because he is self-consciously conscious, to use a rather awkward phrase, of nature's inner and spiritual realms, the reason being that his consciousness has become cosmic in its reaches.

Sambhala (Sanskrit) A place-name of highly mystical significance. Many learned occidental Orientalists have endeavored to identify this mystical and unknown locality with some well-known modern district or town, but unsuccessfully. The name is mentioned in the Puranas and

elsewhere, and it is stated that out of Sambhala will appear in due course of time the Kalki-Avatara of the future. The Kalki-Avatara is one of the manifestations or avataras of Vishnu. Among the Buddhists it is also stated that out of Sambhala will come in due course of time the Maitreya-Buddha or next buddha. Sambhala, however, although no erudite Orientalist has yet succeeded in locating it geographically, is an actual land or district, the seat of the greatest brotherhood of spiritual adepts and their chiefs on earth today. From Sambhala at certain times in the history of the world, or more accurately of our own fifth root-race, come forth the messengers or envoys for spiritual and intellectual work among men. This Great Brotherhood has branches in various parts of the world, but Sambhala is the center or chief lodge. We may tentatively locate it in a little-known and remote district of the high tablelands of central Asia, more particularly in Tibet. A multitude of airplanes might fly over the place without "seeing" it, for its frontiers are very carefully guarded and protected against invasion, and will continue to be so until the karmic destiny of our present fifth root-race brings about a change of location to some other spot on the earth, which then in its turn will be as carefully guarded as Sambhala now is.

Sambhogakaya (Sanskrit) This is a compound of two words meaning "enjoyment-body," or rather "participation-body"; *sambhoga* meaning "enjoyment together," or "delightful participation," etc.; and *kaya*, meaning "body." This is the second of the glorious vestures, the other two being dharmakaya, the highest, and nirmanakaya, the lowest. The buddha in the sambhogakaya state still participates in, still retains more or less, his self-consciousness as an individual, his egotism and his individual soul-sense, though he is too far above material or personal concerns to care about or to meddle with them. In consequence, a buddha in the sambhogakaya state would be virtually powerless here on our material earth.

Sannyasin (Sanskrit) One who renounces (a renouncer); from *sannyasa*, "renunciation," abandonment of worldly bonds and attractions. Resignation to the service of the spiritual nature.

Sarira (Sanskrit) From a root which can best be translated by saying that it means what is easily dissolved, easily worn away; the idea being something transitory, foam-like, full of holes, as it were. Note the meaning hid in this -- it is very important. A term which is of common usage in the philosophy of Hindustan, and of very frequent usage in modern theosophical philosophy. A general meaning is a composite body or vehicle of impermanent character in and through which an ethereal entity lives and works. (*See also* Linga-Sarira; Sthula-Sarira)

Sat (Sanskrit) A word meaning the real, the enduring fundamental essence of the world. In the ancient Brahmanical teachings the terms *sat*, *chit*, *ananda*, were used to signify the state of what one may call the Absolute: *sat* meaning "pure being"; *chit*, "pure thought"; *ananda*, "bliss," and these three words were compounded as *sachchidananda*. (*See also* Asat)

Sattva (Sanskrit) One of the *trigunas* or "three qualities," the other two being rajas and tamas. Sattva is the quality of truth, goodness, reality, purity. These three gunas or qualities run all through the web or fabric of nature like threads inextricably mingled, for, indeed, each of these three qualities participates likewise of the nature of the other two, yet each one possessing its predominant (which is its own *svabhava*) or intrinsic characteristic. One who desires to gain some genuine understanding of the manner in which the archaic wisdom looks upon these three phases of human intellectual and spiritual activity must remember that not one of these three can be considered apart from the other two. The three are fundamentally three operations of the human consciousness, and essentially are that consciousness itself.

Science An operation of the human spirit-mind in its endeavor to understand the *how* of things -- not any particular science whatsoever, but the thing in itself, science per se -- ordered and classified knowledge. One phase of a triform method of understanding the nature of universal nature and its multiform and multifold workings; and this phase cannot be separated from the other two -- philosophy and religion -- if we wish to gain a true picture of things *as they are in themselves*. Science is the aspect of human thinking in the activity of the mentality in the latter's inquisitive, researching, and classifying functions.

Second Death This is a phrase used by ancient and modern mystics to describe the dissolution of the principles of man remaining in kama-loka after the death of the physical body. For instance, Plutarch says: "Of the deaths we die, the one makes man two of three, and the other, one out of two." Thus, using the simple division of man into spirit, soul, and body: the first death is the dropping of the body, making two out of three; the second death is the withdrawal of the spiritual from the kama-rupic soul, making one out of two. The second death takes place when the lower or intermediate duad (manas-kama) in its turn separates from, or rather is cast off by, the upper duad; but preceding this event the upper duad gathers unto itself from this lower duad what is called the reincarnating ego, which is all the best of the entity that was, all its purest and most spiritual and noblest aspirations and hopes and dreams for betterment and for beauty and harmony. Inherent in the fabric, so to speak, of the reincarnating ego, there remain of course the seeds of the lower principles which at the succeeding rebirth or reincarnation of the ego will develop into the complex of the lower quaternary. (*See also* Kama-Rupa)

Self Man is a sheaf or bundle of forces or energies and material elements combined; and the power controlling all and holding them together, making out of the composite aggregate a unity, is what theosophists call the Self -- not the mere ego, but the Self, a purely spiritual unit, in its essence divine, which is the same in every man and woman on earth, the same in every entity everywhere in all the boundless fields of limitless space, as we understand space. If one closely examine his own consciousness, he will very soon know that this is the pure consciousness expressed in the words, "I am" -- and this is the Self; whereas the ego is the cognition of the "I am I." Consider the hierarchy of the human being growing from the Self as its seed -- ten stages: three on the arupa or immaterial plane; and seven (or perhaps better, six) on the planes of matter or manifestation. On each one of these seven planes (or six planes), the Self or paramatman develops a sheath or garment, the upper ones spun of spirit, or light if you will, and the lower ones spun of shadow or matter; and each such sheath or garment is a soul; and between the Self and a soul -- any soul -- is an ego.

Seven Principles of Man Every one of the seven principles of man, as also every one of the seven elements in him, is itself a mirror of the universe. (*See also* Principles of Man)

Seven Sacred Planets The ancients spoke of seven planets which they called the seven sacred planets, and they were named as follows: Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sun, Venus, Mercury, and Moon. Each one of these seven globes is a body like our own Earth in that each is a septenary chain, sevenfold in composition: six other superior globes of finer and more ethereal matter above the physical sphere or globe. Only those globes which are on the same cosmic plane of nature or being are physically visible to each other. For instance, we can see only the fourth-plane planetary globe of each of the other planetary or sidereal chains, because we ourselves are on the fourth cosmic plane, as they also are. There is a very important and wide range of mystical teaching connected with the seven sacred planets which it would be out of place to develop here.

Silent Watcher A term used in modern theosophical esoteric philosophy to signify a highly advanced spiritual entity who is, as it were, the summit or supreme chief of a spiritual-psychological hierarchy composed of beings beneath him and working under the Silent Watcher's direct inspiration and guidance. The Silent Watchers, therefore, are relatively numerous, because every hierarchy, large or small, high or low, has as its own particular hierarch or supreme head a Silent Watcher. There are human Silent Watchers, and there is a Silent Watcher for every globe of our planetary chain. There is likewise a Silent Watcher of the solar system of vastly loftier state or stage, etc. "Silent Watcher" is a graphic phrase, and describes with fair accuracy the predominant trait or characteristic of such a spiritual being -- one who through evolution having practically gained omniscience or perfect knowledge of all that he can learn in any one sphere of the kosmos, instead of pursuing his evolutionary path forwards to still higher realms, remains in order to help the multitudes and hosts of less progressed entities trailing behind him. There he remains at his self-imposed task, waiting and watching and helping and inspiring, and so far as we humans are concerned, in the utter silences of spiritual compassion. Thence the term Silent Watcher. He can learn nothing more from the particular sphere of life through which he has now passed, and the secrets of which he knows by heart. For the time being and for ages he has renounced all individual evolution for himself out of pure pity and high compassion for those beneath him.

Sishta(s) (*Sista*, Sanskrit) This is a word meaning "remainders," or "remains," or "residuals" -- anything that is left or remains behind. In the especial application in which this word is used in the ancient wisdom, the sishtas are those superior classes -- each of its own kind and kingdom -- left behind on a planet when it goes into obscurity, in order to serve as the *seeds of life* for the inflow of the next incoming life-wave when the dawn of the new manvantara takes place on that planet. When each kingdom passes on to its next globe, each one leaves behind its sishtas, its lives representing the very highest point of evolution arrived at by that kingdom in that round, but leaves them sleeping as it were: dormant, relatively motionless, including life-atoms among them. Not without life, however, for everything is as much alive as ever, and there is no "dead" matter anywhere; but the sishtas considered aggregatively as the remnants or residuals of the life-wave which has passed on are sleeping, dormant, resting. These sishtas await the incoming of the life-waves on the next round, and then they re-awaken to a new cycle of activity as the seeds of the new kingdom or kingdoms -- be it the three elemental kingdoms or the mineral or vegetable or the beast or the next humanity. In a more restricted and still more specific sense, the sishtas are the great elect, or sages, left behind after every obscurity.

Skandha(s) (Sanskrit) Literally "bundles," or groups of attributes, to use H. P. Blavatsky's definition. When death comes to a man in any one life, the seeds of those causes previously sown by him and which have not yet come forth into blossom and full-blown flower and fruit, remain in his interior and invisible parts as impulses lying latent and sleeping: lying latent like sleeping seeds for future flowerings into action in the next and succeeding lives. They are psychological impulse-seeds lying asleep until their appropriate stage for awakening into action arrives at some time in the future. In the case of the cosmic bodies, every solar or planetary body upon entering into its pralaya, its prakritika-pralaya -- the dissolution of its lower principles -- at the end of its long life cycle, exists in space in the higher activity of its spiritual principles, and in the dispersion of its lowest principles, which latter latently exist in space as skandhas in a laya-condition. When a laya-center is fired into action by the touch of wills and consciousnesses on their downward way, becoming the embodying life of a solar system, or of a planet of a solar system, the center manifests first on its highest plane, and later on its lower plane. The skandhas are awakened into life one after another: first the highest ones, next the intermediate ones, and lastly the inferior ones, cosmically and qualitatively speaking. The term skandhas in

theosophical philosophy has the general significance of bundles or groups of attributes, which together form or compose the entire set of material and also mental, emotional, and moral qualities. Exoterically the skandhas are "bundles" of attributes five in number, but esoterically they are seven. These unite at the birth of man and constitute his personality. After the death of the body the skandhas are separated and so remain until the reincarnating ego on its downward path into physical incarnation gathers them together again around itself, and thus reforms the human constitution considered as a unity. In brief, the skandhas can be said to be the aggregate of the groups of attributes or qualities which make each individual man the *personality* that he is; but this must be sharply distinguished from the individuality.

Sloka (Sanskrit) "The Sanskrit epic meter formed of thirty-two syllables: verses in four half lines of eight, or in two lines of sixteen syllables each" (H. P. Blavatsky, *Theosophical Glossary*).

Soul This word in the ancient wisdom signifies "vehicle," and *upadhi* -- that vehicle, or any vehicle, in which the monad, in any sphere of manifestation, is working out its destiny. A soul is an entity which is evolved by experiences; it is not a spirit, but it is a vehicle of a spirit -- the monad. It manifests in matter through and by being a substantial portion of the lower essence of the spirit. Touching another plane below it, or it may be above it, the point of union allowing ingress and egress to the consciousness, is a laya-center -- the neutral center, in matter or substance, through which consciousness passes -- and the center of that consciousness is the monad. The soul in contradistinction with the monad is its vehicle for manifestation on any one plane. The spirit or monad manifests in seven vehicles, and each one of these vehicles is a soul. On the higher planes the soul is a vehicle manifesting as a sheaf or pillar of light; similarly with the various egos and their related vehicle-souls on the inferior planes, all growing constantly more dense, as the planes of matter gradually thicken downwards and become more compact, into which the monadic ray penetrates until the final soul, which is the physical body, the general vehicle or bearer or carrier of them all. Our teachings give to every animate thing a soul -- not a human soul, or a divine soul, or a spiritual soul -- but a soul corresponding to its own type. What it is, what its type is, actually comes from its soul; hence we properly may speak of the different beasts as having one or the other, a "duck soul," an "ostrich soul," a "bull" or a "cow soul," and so forth. The entities lower than man -- in this case the beasts, considered as a kingdom, are differentiated into the different families of animals by the different souls within each. Of course behind the soul from which it springs there are in each individual entity all the other principles that likewise inform man; but all these higher principles are latent in the beast. Speaking generally, however, we may say that the soul is the intermediate part between the spirit which is deathless and immortal on the one hand and, on the other hand, the physical frame, entirely mortal. The soul, therefore, is the intermediate part of the human constitution. It must be carefully noted in this connection that soul as a term employed in the esoteric philosophy, while indeed meaning essentially a "vehicle" or "sheath," this vehicle or sheath is nevertheless an animate or living entity much after the manner that the physical body, while being the sheath or vehicle of the other parts of man's constitution, is nevertheless in itself a discrete, animate, personalized being. (*See also Vahana*)

Soulless Beings "We elbow soulless men in the streets at every turn," wrote H. P. Blavatsky. This is an actual fact. The statement does not mean that those whom we thus elbow have no soul. The significance is that the spiritual part of these human beings is sleeping, not awake. They are animate humans with an animate working brain-mind, an animal mind, but otherwise "soulless" in the sense that the soul is inactive, sleeping; and this is also just what Pythagoras meant when he spoke of the "living dead." They are everywhere, these people. We elbow them, just as H. P. Blavatsky says, at every turn. The eyes may be physically bright, and filled with the vital

physical fire, but they lack soul; they lack tenderness, the fervid yet gentle warmth of the living flame of inspiration within. Sometimes impersonal love will awaken the soul in a man or in a woman; sometimes it will kill it if the love become selfish and gross. The streets are filled with such "soulless" people; but the phrase soulless people does not mean "lost souls." The latter is again something else. The term soulless people therefore is a technical term. It means men and women who are still connected, but usually quite unconsciously, with the monad, the spiritual essence within them, but who are not *self-consciously* so connected. They live very largely in the brain-mind and in the fields of sensuous consciousness. They turn with pleasure to the frivolities of life. They have the ordinary feelings of honor, etc., because it is conventional and good breeding so to have them; but the deep inner fire of yearning, the living warmth that comes from being more or less at one with the god within, they know not. Hence, they are "soulless," because the soul is not working with fiery energy in and through them. A lost soul, on the other hand, means an entity who through various rebirths, it may be a dozen, or more or less, has been slowly following the "easy descent to Avernus," and in whom the threads of communication with the spirit within have been snapped one after the other. Vice will do this, continuous vice. Hate snaps these spiritual threads more quickly than anything else perhaps. Selfishness, the parent of hate, is the root of all human evil; and therefore a lost soul is one who is not merely soulless in the ordinary theosophical usage of the word, but is one who has lost the last link, the last delicate thread of consciousness, connecting him with his inner god. He will continue "the easy descent," passing from human birth to an inferior human birth, and then to one still more inferior, until finally the degenerate astral monad -- all that remains of the human being that once was -- may even enter the body of some beast to which it feels attracted (and this is one side of the teaching of transmigration, which has been so badly misunderstood in the Occident); some finally go even to plants perhaps, at the last, and will ultimately vanish. The astral monad will then have faded out. Such lost souls are exceedingly rare, fortunately; but they are not what we call soulless people. If the student will remember the fact that when a human being is filled with the living spiritual and intellectual fiery energies flowing into his brain-mind from his inner god, he is then an insouled being, he will readily understand that when these fiery energies can no longer reach the brain-mind and manifest in a man's life, there is thus produced what is called a soulless being. A good man, honorable, loyal, compassionate, aspiring, gentle, and true-hearted, and a student of wisdom, is an "insouled" man; a buddha is one who is fully, completely insouled; and there are all the intermediate grades between.

Space Our universe, as popularly supposed, consists of space and matter and energy; but in theosophy we say that space itself is both conscious and substantial. It is in fact the root of the other two, matter and energy, which are fundamentally one thing, and this one fundamental thing is SPACE -- their essential and also their instrumental cause as well as their substantial cause -- and this is the reality of being, the heart of things. Our teaching is that there are many universes, not merely one, our own home-universe; therefore are there many spaces with a background of a perfectly incomprehensible greater SPACE inclosing all -- a space which is still more ethereal, tenuous, spiritual, yes, divine, than the space-matter that we know or rather conceive of, which in its lowest aspect manifests the grossness of physical matter of common human knowledge. Space, therefore, considered in the abstract, is BEING, filled full, so to say, with other entities and things, of which we see a small part -- globes innumerable, stars and planets, nebulae and comets. But all these material bodies are but effectual products or results of the infinitudes of the invisible and inner causal realms -- by far the larger part of the spaces of Space. The space therefore of any one universe is an entity -- a god. Fundamentally and essentially it is a spiritual entity, a divine entity indeed, of which we see naught but what we humans call the material and energetic aspect -- behind which is the causal life, the causal intelligence. The word is likewise frequently used in theosophical philosophy to signify the frontierless infinitudes of the

Boundless; and because it is the very *esse* of life-consciousness-substance, it is incomparably more than the mere "container" that it is so often supposed to be by Occidental philosophers. (See also Universe; Milky Way)

Spirit In the theosophical philosophy there is a distinct and important difference in the use of the words *spirit* and *soul*. The spirit is the immortal element in us, the deathless flame within us which dies never, which never was born and which retains throughout the entire mahamanvantara its own quality, essence, and life, sending down into our own being and into our various planes certain of its rays or garments or souls *which we are*. The divine spirit of man is linked with the All, being in a highly mystical sense a ray of the All. A soul is an entity which is evolved by experiences; it is not a spirit because it is a vehicle of a spirit. It manifests in matter through and by being a substantial portion of the lower essence of the spirit. Touching another plane below it, or it may be above it, the point of union allowing ingress and egress to the consciousness is a laya-center. The spirit manifests in seven vehicles, and each one of these vehicles is a soul; and that particular point through which the spiritual influence passes in the soul is the laya-center, the heart of the soul, or rather the summit thereof -- homogeneous soul-substance, if you like. In a kosmical sense spirit should be applied only to that which belongs without qualifications to universal consciousness and which is the homogeneous and unmixed emanation from the universal consciousness. In the case of man, the spirit within man is the flame of his deathless ego, the direct emanation of the spiritual monad within him, and of this ego the spiritual soul is the enclosing sheath or vehicle or garment. Making an application more particularly and specifically to the human principles, when the higher manas of man which is his real ego is indissolubly linked with buddhi, this, in fact, is the spiritual ego or spirit of the individual human being's constitution. Its life term before the emanation is withdrawn into the divine monad is for the full period of a kosmic manvantara.

Spirit (in reference to Matter) The theosophist points out that what men call spirit is the summit or acme or root or seed or beginning or noumenon -- call it by any name -- of any particular hierarchy existing in the innumerable hosts of the kosmic hierarchies, with all of which any such hierarchy is inextricably interblended and interworking. When theosophists speak of spirit and substance, of which matter and energy or force are the physicalized expressions, we must remember that all these terms are abstractions, generalized expressions for certain entities manifesting aggregatively. Spirit, for instance, is not essentially different from matter, and is only relatively so different, or evolutionally so different: the difference not lying in the roots of these two where they become one in the underlying consciousness-reality, but in their characters they are two evolutionary forms of manifestation of that underlying reality. In other words, to use the terminology of modern scientific philosophy, spirit and matter are, each of them, respectively an "event" as the underlying reality passes through eternal duration.

Spiritual Soul The spiritual soul is the vehicle of the individual monad, the jivatman or spiritual ego; in the case of man's principles it is essentially of the nature of atma-buddhi. This spiritual ego is the center or seed or root of the reincarnating ego. It is that portion of our spiritual constitution which is deathless as an individualized entity -- deathless until the end of the mahamanvantara of the cosmic solar system. The spiritual soul and the divine soul, or atman, combined, are the inner god -- the inner buddha, the inner christ.

Sthula-Sarira (Sanskrit) *Sthula* means "coarse," "gross," not refined, heavy, bulky, fat in the sense of bigness, therefore, conditioned and differentiated matter; *sarira*, "form," generally speaking. The lowest substance-principle of which man is composed, usually classified as the seventh in order -- the physical body. The sthula-sarira or physical hierarchy of the human body

is builded up of cosmic elements, themselves formed of living atomic entities which, although subject individually to bewilderingly rapid changes and reimpodiments, nevertheless are incomparably more enduring in themselves as expressions of the monadic rays than is the transitory physical body which they temporarily compose. The physical body is composed mostly of porosity, if the expression be pardoned; the most *unreal* thing we know, full of holes, foamy as it were. At death the physical body follows the course of natural decay, and its various hosts of life-atoms proceed individually and collectively whither their natural attractions call them. Strictly speaking, the physical body is not a principle at all; it is merely a house, man's carrier in another sense, and no more is an essential part of him -- except that he has *excreted* it, *thrown it out from himself*-- than are the clothes in which his body is garmented. Man really is a complete human being without the sthula-sarira; and yet this statement while accurate must be taken not too literally, because even the physical body is the expression of man's constitution on the physical plane. The meaning is that the human constitution can be a complete human entity even when the physical body is discarded, but the sthula-sarira is needed for evolution and active work on this subplane of the solar kosmos.

Sudra (Sanskrit) In ancient India a man of the servile or fourth or lowest caste, social and political, of the early civilizations of Hindustan in the Vedic and post-Vedic periods. The other three grades or classes are respectively the Brahmana or priestphilosopher; the Kshatriya, the administrator -- king, noble -- and soldier; and third, the Vaisya, the trader and agriculturist.

Sutratman (Sanskrit) A compound word meaning "thread-self," the golden thread of individuality -- the stream of self-consciousness -- on which all the substance-principles of man's constitution are strung, so to say, like pearls on a golden chain. The sutratman is the stream of consciousness-life running through all the various substance-principles of the constitution of the human entity -- or indeed of any other entity. Each such pearl on the golden chain is one of the countless personalities which man uses during the course of his manvantara-long evolutionary progress. The sutratman, therefore, may be briefly said to be the immortal or spiritual monadic ego, the individuality which incarnates in life after life, and therefore is rightly called the thread-self or fundamental self. It is this sutratman, this thread-self, this consciousness-stream, or rather stream of consciousness-life, which is the fundamental and individual selfhood of every entity, and which, reflected in and through the several intermediate vehicles or veils or sheaths or garments of the invisible constitution of man, or of any other being in which a monad enshrouds itself, produces the egoic centers of self-conscious existence. The sutratman, therefore, is rooted in the monad, the monadic essence.

Svabhava (Sanskrit) A compound word derived from the verb-root *bhu*, meaning "to become" -- not so much "to be" in the passive sense, but rather "to become," to "grow into" something. The quasi-pronominal prefix *sva*, means "self"; hence the noun means "self-becoming," "self-generation," "self-growing" into something. Yet the essential or fundamental or integral *Self*, although following continuously its own lofty line of evolution, cannot be said to suffer the changes or phases that its vehicles undergo. Like the monads, like the One, thus the Self fundamental -- which, after all, is virtually the same as the one monadic essence -- sends down a ray from itself into every organic entity, much as the sun sends a ray from itself into the surrounding "darkness" of the solar universe. Svabhava has two general philosophical meanings: first, self-begetting, self-generation, self-becoming, the general idea being that there is no merely mechanical or soulless activity of nature in bringing us into being, for *we brought ourselves forth*, in and through and by nature, of which we are a part of the conscious forces, and therefore are our own children. The second meaning is that each and every entity that exists is the result of what he actually is spiritually in his own higher nature: he brings forth *that which he is in*

himself interiorly, nothing else. A particular race, for instance, remains and is that race as long as the particular race-svabhava remains in the racial seed and manifests thus. Likewise is the case the same with a man, a tree, a star, a god -- what not! What makes a rose bring forth a rose always and not thistles or daisies or pansies? The answer is very simple; very profound, however. It is because of its svabhava, the essential nature in and of the seed. Its svabhava can bring forth only that which itself is, its essential characteristic, its own inner nature. Svabhava, in short, may be called the essential individuality of any monad, expressing its own characteristics, qualities, and type, by *self-urged evolution*. The seed can produce nothing but what it itself is, what is in it; and this is the heart and essence of the doctrine of svabhava. The philosophical, scientific, and religious reach of this doctrine is simply immense; and it is of the first importance. Consequently, each individual svabhava brings forth and expresses as its own particular vehicles its various *svarupas*, signifying characteristic bodies or images or forms. The svabhava of a dog, for instance, brings forth the dog body. The svabhava of a rose brings forth the rose flower; the svabhava of a man brings forth man's shape or image; and the svabhava of a divinity or god brings forth its own *svarupa* or characteristic vehicle.

Svabhavat (Sanskrit) The neuter present participle of a compound word derived from the verb-root *bhu*, meaning "to become," from which is derived a secondary meaning "to be," in the sense of growth. Svabhavat is a state or condition of cosmic consciousness-substance, where spirit and matter, which are fundamentally one, no longer are dual as in manifestation, but one: that which is neither manifested matter nor manifested spirit alone, but both are the primeval unity -- spiritual akasa -- where matter merges into spirit, and both now being really one, are called "Father-Mother," spirit-substance. Svabhavat never descends from its own state or condition, or from its own plane, but is the cosmic reservoir of being, as well as of beings, therefore of consciousness, of intellectual light, of life; and it is the ultimate source of what science, in our day, so quaintly calls the energies of nature universal. The northern Buddhists call svabhavat by a more mystical term, *Adi-buddhi*, "primeval buddhi"; the Brahmanical scriptures call it akasa; and the Hebrew Old Testament refers to it as the cosmic "waters." The difference in meaning between svabhavat and svabhava is very great and is not generally understood; the two words often have been confused. Svabhava is the characteristic nature, the type-essence, the individuality, of svabhavat -- of any svabhavat, each such svabhavat having its own svabhava. Svabhavat, therefore, is really the *world-substance* or stuff, or still more accurately that which is causal of the world-substance, and this causal principle or element is the spirit and essence of cosmic substance. It is the plastic *essence* of matter, both manifest and unmanifest. (*See also Akasa*)

Tala (Sanskrit) A word which is largely used in the metaphysical systems of India, both in contrast and at the same time in conjunction with loka. As the general meaning of loka is "place" or rather "world," so the general meaning of tala is "inferior world." Every loka has as its twin or counterpart a corresponding tala. Wherever there is a loka there is an exactly correspondential tala, and in fact the tala is the nether pole of its corresponding loka. Lokas and talas, therefore, in a way of speaking, may be considered to be the spiritual and the material aspects or substance-principles of the different worlds which compose and in fact are the kosmic universe. It is impossible to separate a tala from its corresponding loka -- quite as impossible as it would be to separate the two poles of electricity. The number of talas as generally outlined in the exoteric philosophies of Hindustan is usually given as seven, there being thus seven lokas and seven talas; but, as a matter of fact, this number varies. If we may speak of a loka as the spiritual pole, we may likewise call it the principle of any world; and correspondentially when we speak of the tala as being the negative or inferior pole, it is quite proper also to refer to it as the element of its corresponding loka or principle. Hence, the lokas of a hierarchy may be called the principles of a

hierarchy, and the talas, in exactly the same way, may be called the elements or substantial or material aspects of the hierarchy. It should likewise be remembered that all the seven lokas and all the seven talas are continuously and inextricably interblended and interworking; and that the lokas and the talas working together form the universe and its various subordinate hierarchies that encompass us around. The higher lokas with the higher talas are the forces or energies and substantial parts of the spiritual and ethereal worlds; the lowest lokas and their corresponding talas form the forces or energies and substantial parts of the physical world surrounding us; and the intermediate lokas with their corresponding talas form the respective energies and substantial parts of the intermediate or ethereal realms. Briefly, therefore, we may speak of a tala as the material aspect of the world where it predominates, just as when speaking of a loka we may consider it to be the spiritual aspect of the world where it predominates. Every loka, it should be always remembered, is coexistent with and cannot be separated from its corresponding tala on the same plane. As an important deduction from the preceding observations, be it carefully noted that man's own constitution as an individual from the highest to the lowest is a hierarchy of its own kind, and therefore man himself as such a subordinate hierarchy is a composite entity formed of lokas and talas inextricably interworking and intermingled. In this subordinate hierarchy called man live and evolve vast armies, hosts, multitudes, of living entities, monads in this inferior stage of their long evolutionary peregrination, and which for convenience and brevity of expression we may class under the general term of life-atoms.

Tamas (Sanskrit) One of the three gunas or qualities or essential attributes of manifested beings and things. Tamas is the quality of darkness, illusion, ignorance; it also means, in a quite different sense, quiescence, passivity, repose, rest, inertia. It becomes immediately obvious from the distinctions that these two series of words show, that there is both a good and an evil side to tamas, just as indeed there is a good and evil side to rajas, and even to sattva. The condition of manifested existence in the state of cosmic pralaya is in one sense of the word the tamasic condition, signifying quiescence or rest. When the universe is in the stage of active manvantaric manifestation, we may in a generalizing sense say that the universe is in the rajasic state or condition; and that aspect of the universe which we may call the divine-spiritual, whether in the universe itself or in the manvantara or in the pralaya of a globe, can be spoken of as the sattvic state or condition. From these observations it should be evident that the three gunas -- sattva, rajas, tamas -- not only can exist contemporaneously and coincidentally, but actually do so exist, and that in fact the three are inextricably interblended. They are really three phases or conditions of imbodyed consciousnesses, and each has its noble and each its "evil" side.

Tanha (Pali) A word familiar in Buddhism and signifying the "thirst" for material life. It is this thirst or yearning to return to familiar scenes that brings the reincarnating ego back to earth-life -- and this yearning is more effectual as an individual cause for reincarnation, perhaps, than all else. (*See also* Trishna)

Tantra(s) (Sanskrit) A word literally meaning a "loom" or the warp or threads in a loom, and, by extension of meaning, signifying a rule or ritual for ceremonial rites. The Hindu Tantras are numerous works or religious treatises teaching mystical and magical formulae or formularies for the attainment of magical or quasi-magical powers, and for the worship of the gods. They are mostly composed in the form of dialogs between Siva and his divine consort Durga, these two divinities being the peculiar objects of the adoration of the Tantrins. In many parts of India the authority of the Tantras seems almost to have superseded the clean and poetical hymns of the Vedas. Most tantric works are supposed to contain five different subjects: (1) the manifestation or evolution of the universe; (2) its destruction; (3) the worship or adoration of the divinities; (4) the achievement or attainment of desired objects and especially of six superhuman faculties; (5)

modes or methods of union, usually enumerated as four, with the supreme divinity of the kosmos by means of contemplative meditation. Unfortunately, while there is much of interest in the tantric works, their tendency for long ages has been distinctly towards what in occultism is known as sorcery or black magic. Some of the rites or ceremonies practiced have to do with revolting details connected with sex. Durga, the consort of Siva, his sakti or energy, is worshiped by the Tantrins as a distinct personified female power. The origin of the Tantras unquestionably goes back to a very remote antiquity, and there seems to be little doubt that these works, or their originals, were heirlooms handed down from originally debased or degenerate Atlantean racial offshoots. There is, of course, a certain amount of profoundly philosophical and mystical thought running through the more important tantric works, but the tantric worship in many cases is highly licentious and immoral.

Tantrik or Tantrika (Sanskrit) The adjective corresponding to tantra. This adjective, however, is sometimes employed to signify one who is deeply versed in some study -- a scholar; but more particularly the adjective concerns the Tantras and the doctrines contained in them.

Tat (Sanskrit) A pronominal neuter particle which is often used as a noun having the signification THAT. By this word the Vedic sages and archaic scriptural writers of India described the unutterable principle from which all in a single kosmic universe sprang, contrasting it with the pronominal particle *idam*, meaning "this" and signifying the manifested universe. (*See also* Parabrahman)

Tattvas (Sanskrit) A word the meaning of which is the elementary principles or elements of original substance, or rather the different principles or elements in universal, intelligent, conscious nature when considered from the standpoint of occultism. The word tattva perhaps may be literally translated or rendered as "thatness," reminding one of the "quiddity" of the European Scholastics. The number of tattvas or nature's elemental principles varies according to different systems of philosophy. The Sankhya, for instance, enumerates twenty-five tattvas. The system of the Mahesvaras or worshipers of Siva with his consort Durga, reckons five principles, which are simply the five elements of nature found in all ancient literatures. Occultism, of course, recognizes seven tattvas, and, indeed, ten fundamental element-principles or element-substances or tattvas in universal nature, and each one of these tattvas is represented in the human constitution and active therein. Otherwise, the human constitution could not cohere as an organic entity.

Theosophy A compound Greek word: *theos*, a "divine being," a "god"; *sophia*, "wisdom"; hence divine wisdom. Theosophy is the majestic wisdom-religion of the archaic ages and is as old as thinking man. It was delivered to the first human protoplasts, the first thinking human beings on this earth, by highly intelligent spiritual entities from superior spheres. This ancient doctrine, this esoteric system, has been passed down from guardians to guardians to guardians through innumerable generations until our own time. Furthermore, portions of this original and majestic system have been given out at various periods of time to various races in various parts of the world by those guardians when humanity stood in need of such extension and elaboration of spiritual and intellectual thought. Theosophy is not a syncretistic philosophy-religion-science, a system of thought or belief which has been put together piecemeal and consisting of parts or portions taken by some great mind from other various religions or philosophies. This idea is false. On the contrary, theosophy is that single system or systematic formulation of the facts of visible and invisible nature which, as expressed through the illuminated human mind, takes the apparently separate forms of science and of philosophy and of religion. We may likewise describe theosophy to be the formulation in human language of the nature, structure, origin,

destiny, and operations of the kosmical universe and of the multitudes of beings which infill it. It might be added that theosophy, in the language of H. P. Blavatsky (*Theosophical Glossary*, p. 328), is "the sub-stratum and basis of all the world-religions and philosophies, taught and practiced by a few elect ever since man became a thinking being. In its practical bearing, Theosophy is purely *divine ethics*; the definitions in dictionaries are pure nonsense, based on religious prejudice and ignorance." (*See also* Universal Brotherhood)

Thought Transference The power of transferring one's thoughts without a word -- voiceless speech. This is no psychical power. Its psychical aspect, commonly called thought transference or telepathy, is but a feeble manifestation of a truly sublime power, and is illusory, because it is but a reflected light of the real spiritual power within. True thought transference is a spiritual faculty. Having this spiritual power you can transfer your thought and your consciousness and your will to any part of the earth -- and actually be there, see what goes on, know what is happening there. No merely psychical power will ever enable you to do that. In Tibet this power is called by the generalizing name hpho-wa. Having this power your conscious and percipient inner self can pass through stone walls as easily as the electric current runs along or through the copper wire. (*See also* Mayavi-Rupa)

Transmigration This word is grossly misunderstood in the modern Occident, as also is the doctrine comprised under the old Greek word metempsychosis, both being modernly supposed to mean, through the common misunderstanding of the ancient literatures, that the human soul at some time after death migrates into the beast realm and is reborn on earth in a beast body. The real meaning of this statement in ancient literature refers to the destiny of what theosophists call the life-atoms, but it has absolutely no reference to the destiny of the *human* soul, as an entity. Theosophy accepts all aspects of the ancient teaching, but explains and interprets them. Our doctrine in this respect unless, indeed, we are treating of the case of a "lost soul," is "once a man, always a man." The human soul can no more migrate over and incarnate in a beast body than can the psychical apparatus of a beast incarnate in human flesh. Why? Because in the former case, the beast vehicle offers to the human soul no opening at all for the expression of the spiritual and intellectual and psychical powers and faculties and tendencies which make a man human. Nor can the soul of the beast enter into a human body, because the impassable gulf of a psychical and intellectual nature, which separates the two kingdoms, prevents any such passage from the one up into another so much its superior in all respects. In the former case, there is no attraction for the man beastwards; and in the latter case there is the impossibility of the imperfectly developed beast mind and beast soul finding a proper lodgment in what to it is truly a godlike sphere which it simply cannot enter. Transmigration, however, has a specific meaning when the word is applied to the human soul: the living entity migrates or passes over from one condition to another condition or state or plane, as the case may be, whether these latter be in the invisible realms of nature or in the visible realms, and whether the state or condition be high or low. The specific meaning of this word, therefore, implies nothing more than a change of state or of condition or of plane: a migrating of the living entity from one to the other, but always in conditions or estates or habitudes appropriate and pertaining to its human dignity. In its application to the life-atoms, to which are to be referred the observations of the ancients with regard to the lower realms of nature, transmigration means briefly that the particular life-atoms, which in their aggregate compose man's lower principles, at and following the change that men call death migrate or transmigrate or pass into other bodies to which these life-atoms are attracted by similarity of development -- be these attractions high or low, and they are usually low, because their own evolutionary development is as a rule far from being advanced. Nevertheless, it should be remembered that these life-atoms compose man's inner -- and outer -- vehicles or bodies, and that in consequence there are various grades or classes of these life-

atoms, from the physical upwards (or inwards if you please) to the astral, purely vital, emotional, mental, and psychical. This is, in general terms, the meaning of transmigration. The word means no more than the specific senses just outlined, and stops there. But the teaching concerning the destiny of the entity is continued and developed in the doctrine pertaining to the word metempsychosis.

Trishna (Sanskrit) The meaning of this word is "thirst" or "longing," but it is a technical term embodying the idea that it is this "thirst" for the things which the human ego formerly knew, and which it wills and desires to know again -- things familiar and akin to it from past experiences -- which draws the intermediate nature or human ego of man back again to incarnation in earth-life. It is attracted anew to what is to it old and familiar worlds and scenes; it thirsts for the manifested life comprising them, for the things which it formerly made akin to itself; and thus is it attracted back to those spheres which it left at some preceding period of its evolutionary journey through them, when death overtook it. Its attraction to return to earth is naught but an operation of a law of nature. Here the intermediate nature or human ego sowed the seeds of thought and of action in past lives, and here therefore must it of necessity reap their fruits. It cannot reap where it has not sown, as is obvious enough. It never goes whither it is not attracted or drawn. After death has released the intermediate nature, and during long ages has given to it its period of bliss and rest and psychical recuperation -- much as a quiet and reposeful night's sleep is to the tired physical body -- then, just as a man reawakens by degrees, so does this intermediate nature or human ego by degrees recede or awaken from that state of rest and bliss called devachan. And the seeds of thoughts, the seeds of actions which it had done in former lives, are now laid by in the fabric of itself -- seeds whose natural energy is still unexpended and unexhausted -- and inhere in that inner psychical fabric, for they have nowhere else in which to inhere, since the man produced them there and they are a part of him. These seeds of former thoughts and acts, of former emotions, desires, loves, hates, yearnings, and aspirations, each one of such begins to make itself felt as an urge earthwards, towards the spheres and planes in which they are native, and where they naturally grow and expand and develop. In this our present life, all of us are setting in motion causes in thought and in action which will bring us back to this earth in the distant future. We shall then reap the harvest of the seeds of thought and action that we are in this present life planting in the fields of our human nature. In the Pali books of the Orient this word is called tanha.

Universal Brotherhood Universal brotherhood as understood in the esoteric philosophy, and which is a sublime natural fact of universal nature, does not signify merely sentimental unity, or a simple political or social cooperation. Its meaning is incomparably wider and profounder than this. The sense inherent in the words in their widest tenor or purport is the *spiritual brotherhood of all beings*; particularly, the doctrine implies that all human beings are inseparably linked together, not merely by the bonds of emotional thought or feeling, but by the very fabric of the universe itself, all men -- as well as all beings, both high and low and intermediate -- springing forth from the inner and spiritual sun of the universe as its hosts of spiritual rays. We all come from this one source, that spiritual sun, and are all builded of the same life-atoms on all the various planes. It is this interior unity of being and of consciousness, as well as the exterior union of us all, which enables us to grasp intellectually and spiritually the mysteries of the universe; because not merely ourselves and our own fellow human beings, but also all other beings and things that are, are children of the same cosmic parent, great Mother Nature, in all her seven (and ten) planes or worlds of being. We are all rooted in the same cosmic essence, whence we all proceeded in the beginning of the primordial periods of world evolution, and towards which we are all journeying back. This interlocking and interblending of the numberless hierarchies of beings forming the universe itself extends everywhere, in the invisible worlds as

well as in the worlds which are visible. Finally, it is upon this fact of the spiritual unity of all beings and things that reposes the basis and foundation of human ethics when these last are properly understood. In the esoteric philosophy ethics are no mere human convention or rules of action convenient and suitable for the amelioration of the asperities of human intercourse, but are fundamental in the very structure and inextricably coordinated operations of the universe itself.

Universal Self The universal self is the heart of the universe, for these two phrases are but two manners of expressing the same thing. It is the source of our being; it is also the goal whither we are all marching, we and the hierarchies above us as well as the hierarchies and the entities which compose them inferior to us. All come from the same ineffable source, the heart of being, the universal self. All pass at one period of their evolutionary journey through the stage of humanity, gaining thereby self-consciousness or the ego-self, the "I am I," and they find this ego-self or consciousness, as they advance along this evolutionary path, expanding gradually into universal consciousness -- an expansion, however, which never has an end, because the universal consciousness is endless, limitless, boundless, and without any frontiers whatsoever. (*See also* Paramatman; Self)

Universe The theosophical philosophy divides the universe into two general functional portions -- one the consciousness side, the abode or dwelling place, and at the same time the aggregate, of all the self-conscious, thinking entities that the boundless universe contains; and the other, the material side of nature, which is their schoolhouse, their home, and their playground too. This so-called material side is a practically infinite aggregate of monads or consciousness-centers passing through that particular phase of their evolutionary journey.

This universe, therefore, is a vast aggregate of consciousness-centers in both the two functional portions of it; and these consciousness-centers theosophists call monads. They are entities conscious in differing degrees, stretching along the boundless scale of the universal life; but in that particular phase which passes through what we humans call matter, those monads belonging to and forming that side of the universe, in the course of their long, long, evolutionary journey have not yet attained self-conscious powers or faculties. And furthermore, what we call matter, in its last analysis is actually an aggregate of these monads manifesting in their physical expressions as life-atoms. The consciousness side of universal nature, which also consists of countless hosts of self-conscious entities, works in and through this other or material side; for these hosts of consciousnesses self-express themselves through this other or material function or side, through these other countless hosts of younger and inferior and embryo entities, which are the life-atoms -- embryo gods. The universe is therefore actually and literally imbodyed consciousnesses.

Upadhi (Sanskrit) A word which is used in various senses in Indian philosophy, the vocable itself meaning "limitation" or "a peculiarity" and hence "a disguise"; and from this last meaning arises the expression "vehicle," which it often bears in modern theosophical philosophy. The gist of the word signifies "that which stands forth following a model or pattern," as a canvas, so to say, upon which the light from a projecting lantern plays. An upadhi therefore, mystically speaking, is like a play of shadow and form, when compared with the ultimate reality, which is the cause of this play of shadow and form. Man may be considered as a being composed of three (or even four) essential upadhis or bases.

Upanishad (Sanskrit) A compound, composed of *upa* "according to," "together with," *ni* "down," and the verbal root *sad*, "to sit," which becomes *shad* by Sanskrit grammar when preceded by the particle *ni*: the entire compound thus signifying "following upon or according to

the teachings which were received when we were sitting down." The figure here is that of pupils sitting in the Oriental style at the feet of the teacher, who taught them the secret wisdom or rahasya, in private and in forms and manners of expression that later were written and promulgated according to those teachings and after that style. The Upanishads are examples of literary works in which the rahasya -- a Sanskrit word meaning "esoteric doctrine" or "mystery" -- is embodied. The Upanishads belong to the Vedic cycle and are regarded by orthodox Brahmins as a portion of the *sruti* or "revelation." It was from these wonderful quasi-esoteric and very mystical works that was later developed the highly philosophical and profound system called the Vedanta. The Upanishads are usually reckoned today as one hundred and fifty in number, though probably only a score are now complete without evident marks of literary change or adulteration in the way of excision or interpolation. The topics treated of in the Upanishads are highly transcendental, recondite, and abstruse, and in order properly to understand the Upanishadic teaching one should have constantly in mind the master-keys that theosophy puts into the hand of the student. The origin of the universe, the nature of the divinities, the relations between soul and ego, the connections of spiritual and material beings, the liberation of the evolving entity from the chains of maya, and kosmological questions, are all dealt with, mostly in a succinct and cryptic form. The Upanishads, finally, may be called the exoteric theosophical works of Hindustan, but contain a vast amount of genuine esoteric information.

Vach (Sanskrit) A term which means "speech" or "word"; and by the same procedure of mystical thought which is seen in ancient Greek mysticism, wherein the Logos is not merely the speech or word of the Divinity, but also the divine reason, so Vach has come to mean really more than merely word or speech. The esoteric Vach is the subjective creative intelligent force which, emanating from the subjective universe, becomes the manifested or concrete expression of ideation, hence Word or Logos. Mystically, therefore, Vach may be said to be the feminine or vehicular aspect of the Logos, or the power of the Logos when enshrined within its vehicle or sheath of action. Vach in India is often called *Sata-rupa*, "the hundred-formed." Cosmologically in one sense daiviprakriti may be said to be a manifestation or form of Vach.

Vahana (Sanskrit) A "vehicle" or carrier. This word has a rather wide currency in philosophical and esoteric and occult thought. Its signification is a bearer or vehicle of some entity which, through this carrier or vehicle, is enabled to manifest itself on planes or in spheres or worlds hierarchically inferior to its own. Thus the vahana of man is, generally speaking, his body, although indeed man's constitution comprises a number of vahanas or vehicles, each one belonging to -- and enabling the inner man, or manifesting spiritual or intellectual entity, to express itself on -- the plane where the vahana is native. Vahana is thus seen to have a number of different meanings, or, more accurately, applications. E.g., the vahana of man's spiritual monad is his spiritual soul; the vahana of man's human ego is his human soul; and the vahana of man's psycho-vital-astral monad is the linga-sarira working through its vahana or carrier, the sthula-sarira or physical body. The wire which carries the current of electricity can be said to be the vahana of the electric current; or again, the intermolecular ether is the vahana of many of the radioactive forces of the world around us, etc. Every divine being has a vahana or, in fact, a number of vahanas, through which it works and through which it is enabled to express its divine powers and functions on and in worlds and planes below the sphere or world or plane in which it itself lives. (*See also* Soul; Upadhi)

Vaisya (Sanskrit) The third of the four castes or social classes into which the inhabitants of ancient India were divided. The Vaisya is the trader and agriculturist. (*See also* Brahmana; Kshatriya; Sudra)

Vedanta (Sanskrit) From the Upanishads and from other parts of the wonderful cycle of Vedic literature, the ancient sages of India produced what is called today the Vedanta -- a compound word meaning "the end (or completion) of the Veda" -- that is to say, instruction in the final and most perfect exposition of the meaning of the Vedic tenets. The Vedanta is the highest form that the Brahmanical teachings have taken, and under the name of the *Uttara-Mimamsa* attributed to Vyasa, the compiler of the Vedas, the Vedanta is perhaps the noblest of the six Indian schools of philosophy. The Avatara Sankaracharya has been the main popularizer of the Vedantic system of philosophical thought, and the type of Vedantic doctrine taught by him is what is technically called the *Advaita-Vedanta* or nondualistic. The Vedanta may briefly be described as a system of mystical philosophy derived from the efforts of sages through many generations to interpret the sacred or esoteric meaning of the Upanishads. In its *Advaita* form the Vedanta is in many, if not all, respects exceedingly close to, if not identical with, some of the mystical forms of Buddhism in central Asia. The Hindus call the Vedanta *Brahma-jnana*.

Veda(s) (Sanskrit) From a verbal root *vid* signifying "to know." These are the most ancient and the most sacred literary and religious works of the Hindus. *Veda* as a word may be described as "divine knowledge." The Vedas are four in number: the *Rig-Veda*, the *Yajur-Veda*, the *Sama-Veda*, and the *Atharva-Veda*, this last being commonly supposed to be of later date than the former three. Manu in his *Work on Law* always speaks of the three Vedas, which he calls "the ancient triple Brahman" -- *sanatanam trayam brahma*." Connected with the Vedas is a large body of other works of various kinds, liturgical, ritualistic, exegetical, and mystical, the Veda itself being commonly divided into two great portions, outward and inner: the former called the *karma-kanda*, the "Section of Works," and the latter called *jnana-kanda* or "Section of Wisdom." The authorship of the Veda is not unitary, but almost every hymn or division of a Veda is ascribed to a different author or rather to various authors; but they are supposed to have been compiled in their present form by Veda-Vyasa. There is no question in the minds of learned students of theosophy that the Vedas run back in their origins to enormous antiquity, thousands of years before the beginning of what is known in the Occident as the Christian era, whatever Occidental scholars may have to say in objection to this statement. Hindu pandits themselves claim that the Veda was taught orally for thousands of years, and then finally compiled on the shores of the sacred lake Manasa-Sarovara, beyond the Himalayas in a district of what is now Tibet.

Vidya (Sanskrit) The word (derived from the same verbal root *vid* from which comes the noun *Veda*) for "knowledge," "philosophy," "science." This is a term very generally used in theosophical philosophy, having in a general way the three meanings just stated. It is frequently compounded with other words, such as: *atma-vidya* -- "knowledge of atman" or the essential Self; *Brahma-vidya* -- "knowledge of Brahman," knowledge of the universe, a term virtually equivalent to theosophy; or, again, *guhya-vidya* -- signifying the "secret knowledge" or the esoteric wisdom. Using the word in a collective but nevertheless specific sense, *vidya* is a general term for occult science.

Yoga (Sanskrit) Literally "union," "conjunction," etc. In India it is the technical name for one of the six Darsanas or schools of philosophy, and its foundation is ascribed to the sage Patanjali. The name Yoga itself describes the objective of this school, the attaining of union or at-one-ness with the divine-spiritual essence within a man. The yoga practices when properly understood through the instructions of genuine teachers -- who, by the way, never announce themselves as public lecturers or through books or advertisements -- are supposed to induce certain ecstatic states leading to a clear perception of universal truths, and the highest of these states is called *samadhi*. There are a number of minor forms of yoga practice and training such as the karma

yoga, hatha yoga, bhakti yoga, raja yoga, jnana yoga, etc. Similar religious aspirations or practices likewise exist in Occidental countries, as, for instance, what is called salvation by works, somewhat equivalent to the Hindu karma yoga or, again, salvation by faith -- or love, somewhat similar to the Hindu bhakti yoga; while both Orient and Occident have, each one, its various forms of ascetic practices which may be grouped under the term hatha yoga. No system of yoga should ever be practiced unless under the direct teaching of one who knows the dangers of meddling with the psychomental apparatus of the human constitution, for dangers lurk at every step, and the meddler in these things is likely to bring disaster upon himself, both in matters of health and as regards sane mental equilibrium. The higher branches of yoga, however, such as the raja yoga and jnana yoga, implying strict spiritual and intellectual discipline combined with a fervid love for all beings, are perfectly safe. It is, however, the ascetic practices, etc., and the teachings that go with them, wherein lies the danger to the unwary, and they should be carefully avoided.

Yogi (*Yogin*, Sanskrit) A yogi is a devotee, one who practices the Yoga system or one or more of its various subordinate branches. In some cases, yogis are those who strive in various ways to conquer the body and physical temptations, for instance by torture of the body. They also study more or less some of the magnificent philosophical teachings of India coming down from far distant ages of the past; but mere mental study will not make a man a mahatma, nor will any torture of the body bring about the spiritual vision -- the vision sublime. (*See also* Yoga)

Yuga (Sanskrit) A word meaning an "age," a period of time. A yuga is a period of mundane time, and four of these periods are usually enumerated in "divine years":

1. Krita or Satya Yuga.	4,000	Sandhya.	400	Sandhyamsa.	400	Total	
.	4,800	2. Treta Yuga.	3,000	Sandhya.	300	Sandhyamsa.	300
.	2,000	Total	3,600	3. Dvapara Yuga.			
.	2,400	2,000 Sandhya.	200	Sandhyamsa.	200	Total	
.	2,400	Total	2,400	4. Kali Yuga.	1,000	Sandhya.	100
.	1,200	Sandhyamsa.	100	Total			
.	1,200	TOTAL	12,000	This rendered in years of mortals equals: 4,800 x 360 = 1,728,000			
.		3,600 x 360 = 1,296,000					
.		2,400 x 360 = 864,000					
.		1,200 x 360 = 432,000					
. Total 4,320,000. Of these four yugas, our present racial period is the fourth or kali yuga, often called the "iron age" or the "black age." It is stated to have commenced at the moment of Krishna's death, usually given as 3,102 years before the Christian era. There is a very important point of the teaching in connection with the yugas which must not be forgotten. It is the following: The four yugas as above outlined refer to what modern theosophical philosophy calls a root-race, although indeed a root-race from its individual beginning to its individual ending is about double the length of the composite yuga above set forth in columnar form. The racial yugas, however, overlap because each new great race is born at about the middle period of the parent race, although the individual length of any one race is as above stated. Thus it is that by the overlapping of the races, a race and its succeeding race may for a long time be contemporaneous on the face of the globe. As the four yugas are a reflection in human history of what takes place in the evolution of the earth itself and of the planetary chain, therefore the same scheme of yugas applies also on a cosmic scale -- there exist the four series of satya yuga, treta yuga, dvapara yuga, and kali yuga, in the evolution of the earth, and on a still larger scale in the evolution of a planetary chain. Of course these cosmic yugas are very much longer than the racial yugas, but the same general scheme of 4, 3, 2 applies throughout. For further details of the teaching concerning the yugas, the student should consult H. P. Blavatsky's <i>The Secret Doctrine</i> , and the work by the present author, <i>Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy</i> .					

Zodiac The Greeks called the zodiac the "circle of life," and they divided it into twelve houses or signs, named as follows: Aries, the Ram; Taurus, the Bull; Gemini, the Twins; Cancer, the Crab; Leo, the Lion; Virgo, the Virgin; Libra, the Scales; Scorpio, the Scorpion; Sagittarius, the Archer; Capricornus, the Goat; Aquarius, the Water-bearer; Pisces, the Fishes. The entrance of the sun into each one of the twelve zodiacal constellations or signs brings with it a new cosmic force into operation, not merely on our earth, but distributively speaking throughout our own individual lives. The entering into the present astrological era which is now under way will inaugurate the development in the human race, in a certain line, of powers to come that will be nobler than were those of the last astrological zodiacal era. There is a strict and close correspondence between each one of the globes of our earth-chain, and a respective one of the constellations of the zodiac -- each such constellation being one of the "houses of the circle of life."

Adept: A term usually used to signify an initiate who has reached the highest degree of attainment in the material world, with conscious and complete mastery of the self and the chosen path. Many [schools](#) teach that adepts are exerting a guiding influence over the development of mankind. (See also Ascended Master; Master.)

Affenicum: A word for soul. (See also [Soul](#); [Spirit](#).)

Akasa or Akasha: (Skt) The most subtle of the elements. It is equivalent to ether or "astral substance." It is the stuff of pattern. It might be said that akasha is the "form" of Lewis Brown's treatise on symbol and existence, *The Laws of Form*.

Alexandrians: Witches initiated by (or stemming from those initiated by) Alex and Maxine Sanders. An offshoot of Gardnerian [witchcraft](#), though founded independently.

Amulet: An object worn as a protective charm against evil. (See also [Talisman](#).)

Angas: (Skt) The eight limbs of [yoga](#). These are [yama](#) (abstinence), niyama (observances), asana (postures for meditation), pranayama (breath control for meditation), pratyahara (withdrawal of the senses), dharana (concentration), [dhyana](#) (meditation), and samadhi (contemplation). (See Yoga.)

Anima: The buried feminine elements in a man's psyche.

Animus: The buried masculine elements in a woman's psyche.

Ankh: The *crux ansata* or looped cross, Egyptian hieroglyph for 'life'. Widely used as an occult symbol of the Life Principle.

Aradia: Widely used Wiccan name for the Goddess, derived from the Tuscan witches' usage as recorded in C.G. Leland's *Aradia: the Gospel of the Witches*.

Atma: (Skt) Literally "breath" or "soul." In Vedantic philosophy the atma is the one omnipresent universal spirit, without any condition or attribute, because it is all things. The true self.

Ba'al Shem: (HEB) A phrase meaning "Master of the Devine Name," used by Hasdim and scholars of qabalah to describe someone who possessed knowledge of the Lost Word, the Secret Name of God. See also [Tetragrammaton](#)

Banishing: (1) Repelling an unwelcome [psychic](#) entity. (2) Short for 'banishing the Circle', dispelling a Magic Circle after it has served its purpose. (3) Expelling a witch from a coven for an offence; he or she may apply for readmission after a year and a day or when and if the group decide they trust the witch again.

Besom: A broom. A ritual tool used to cast circles and in certain spells.

Body of Light: The astral body. Often used to refer to a ritually constructed vehicle for astral travel. See also Astral Projection; Simulacrum

Ch'an: (Chi) The Chinese form of Zen Buddhism, The term also refers to the trance state of thought-free consciousness, Dhyana. (See also [Dhyana](#); [Zen](#).)

Ch'i: (Chi) Literally "breath" or "wind". The Chinese name for the vital force in all things. This doctrine is central to [acupuncture](#) and to many styles of martial arts, most natably Tai-Ch'i and Aikido. (See also [Ki](#); Odic Force; Orgone; Prana.)

Consecration: To make sacred. Essentially, the ritual dedication of some person or thing to a specific office or purpose. A good example of a consecrated item would be the host (wafer) used in the Christian eucharist.

Coven: An organized group of witches, meeting and [working](#) regularly together.

Covenstead: A coven's normal place of meeting.

Craft, the:[Witchcraft](#). Wicca. Folk magic.

Deity:The personification of some force or concept of great magnitude. A being embodying the essence or entirety of an aspect of existence. (See [Elder God](#); [God](#); [Goddess](#); [Godhead](#); Pantheon)

Dhyana: (Skt) Meditation. The second stage of concentration, following drarana. The state of clear attention or consciousness unbroken by separate thoughts. Dhyana precedes samadhi. The words Ch'an and Zen both mean dhyana. (See also [Angas](#); [Ch'an](#); [Zen](#).)

Draconian Current: A phrase used by Kenneth Grant (head of the British O.T.O.) to denote the magical tradition behind his system of tantra. Supposedly of ancient Egyptian origin, the Draconian Current is named after Draco, the son of Typhon (the Primeval Mother). (See Kundalini; Tiamat.)

Dracontia: Many temples and sacred sites have been associated with dragons, probably because of their connection with primeval earth forces. This is particularly true of megalithic sites such as Carnac in [Brittany](#). (See [Dragon Tracts](#).)

Dragon: Originally associated with water, lightning, and earth energies. Generally, a symbol of great primeval power. (See [Draconian Current](#), [Dracontia](#), [Dragon Tracks](#); Tiamat.)

Dragon Tracts: A Chinese term for the lines of flow of earth energies.

Ego: The conscious part of the human psyche.

Elder God: A deity having no relationship to humanity or human activities. The personalization of a pattern existing prior to people. The Aztec creation deity Ometecutii is a good example of an elder god. The Aztecs built few temples and rarely worshiped this god because he was considered simply too remote from humanity.

Elders: The third-degree and second-degree members of a coven, or representing witches and pagans of great age and wisdom.

Elemental: Earth, air, fire and water - plus spirit which includes and integrates them all. These are regarded as realms or categories of Nature - the basic modes of existence and action. They are not to be confused with the physicist's table of elements, which the witch of course accepts in their relevant context.

Esbats: A coven meeting other than one of the eight seasonal festivals or [Sabbats](#). Often referred to a full moon or new moon ritual. Some covens hold their esbats weekly, some monthly, again usually at the full moon.

Evocation: The summoning of a non-material entity of a lower order of being than oneself. (see [Invocation](#)).

Exorcism: The expulsion, by psychic means, of an unwelcome entity from a person or place which it is influencing or possessing.

Fana: (ARB) A Sufi term meaning "becoming absorbed in God." (see also [Samadhi](#); [Samaya](#).)

Festival: One of the eight seasonal [Sabbats](#).

Flying Ointment: [Lotion](#) or cremes used to facilitate astral or etheric projection. These mixtures usually contain potent psychedelic agents such as belladonna, henbane, and mandrake. (Caution, these [herbs](#) are VERY toxic and can be deadly if not used properly!)

Gematria: Considered part of the "literal qabalah", gematria is the technique of converting names or words into numbers in order to find meaning in their mathematical relationships, working from the premise that words or phrases which add up to the same number are somehow related. This technique can be viewed as a form of meditation, since the aim is not so much to discover the "true" meanings of words but rather to discern as many patterns and connections as possible. Gematria was originally practiced with the Hebrew language, but the approach can be applied to any set of letters. The practice of gematria formed the early beginnings of numerology. (See Temurah; Literal [Qabalah](#) (article).)

Ghost: From the Old High German word *geist*, meaning spirit. Usually used to refer to the manifestation of a dead human. Many systems describe the soul as made of differing parts or layers. The "lower" or outer parts are responsible for daily habits, memories, and verbal thought. Indeed, the word "habit" comes from the Egyptian words for parts of the soul, *khabit*, meaning "something doubled". When the body dies, the higher part of the soul (the *atma*, or "true self") continues its existence and spiritual journey while the lower parts usually disintegrate.

Sometimes, however, these "shells" are inhabited by an elemental or other spiritual entity. It could be said that a ghost remains where it is and does what it does out of habit. Most ghosts are not malevolent and generally disintegrate and fade away over a period of time unless provided with additional energy by some circumstance. Some spiritualists claim that many ghosts are not aware that they have died. By many accounts, all that is required to banish such entities is to kindly but firmly tell them that their bodies have passed on and the rest of them can leave any time it is ready, thank you. Considering the fragmentary and nonconscious nature of such beings, this is not very difficult to believe. (See Kama-Rupa; Qlippoth; Shell.)

God: The Supreme Being. God is consistently said to be sexless (or both sexes) and without attribute, being within and without, apart from and a part of all things. Hence the prohibition in many religions against idolatry since any image which can be made is not the true image of God. The word "God" is also used to mean a deity of masculine aspect. (See Adonai; [Deity](#); Iao; [Tao](#); Tetragrammaton)

Goddess: A deity of feminine aspect. Many Neopagans and practitioners of modern Witchcraft now use the word "Goddess" to refer to the Supreme Being. Some do this in an attempt to mend the estrangement of flesh and spirit, of humanity and nature, which many believe to be a result of patriarchal, dualistic, hierarchical Western world views. Of course, like the word "God", "Goddess" means different things to different people. (See [Deity](#))

Godhead: Divine Nature or Essence. The source of all emanation and manifestation, of which all deities are but aspects or facets. Godness. The *atma* of Vedantic philosophy.

Handfasting: A Wiccan or pagan wedding ritual.

Hexagram: (1) A six-pointed star, formed by two interlaced equilateral triangles. It is generally called the Star of David in non-occult circles, but its use as an occult symbol is far older than its use as a badge of Judaism. It signifies the Hermetic principle of 'as above, so below'. (See Macrocosm.) (2) Any one of the six-line figures of the [I Ching](#).

High Priest: (1) The male leader of a coven, partner of the High Priestess. (2) Any second-degree or third-degree male witch. (The distinction is between a coven *function* and a personal *rank*.)

High Priestess: The female leader of a coven, partner of the High Priest. (2) Any second-degree or third-degree female witch. (The distinction is between a coven *function* and a personal *rank*.)

I Ching: A Chinese system of divination involving sixty-four 'hexagrams' or six-line combinations of unbroken (*yang*) and broken (*yin*) lines. It is one of the few categories of Eastern esoteric learning which transfer wholly satisfactorily to the West, without risk of cross-cultural confusion, and it is widely used here.

Imbolg, Imbolc, Oimeic: The early Spring Great [Sabbat](#), celebrated on the 2nd of February. It is often known by the name of its Christian equivalent, Candlemas. The name in Gaelic means 'in the belly' - the first stirrings in the womb of Mother Earth.

Incarnation: The manifestations of a living entity into physical form; specifically, any one of the earthly lives of an immortal human [Individuality](#) in the continuing [Reincarnation](#) process.

Individuality: The immortal, reincarnating part of a human being, consisting of the Upper Spiritual, Lower Spiritual and Upper Mental levels; contrasted with the Personality, which consists of the Lower Mental, Upper Astral, Lower Astral, Etheric and Physical levels, and which only persists for one [Incarnation](#), a new Personality being built up around the immortal Individuality for each Incarnation. (see also [Reincarnation](#))

Initiate: Someone possessed of a secret or interior knowledge gained through experience. Someone who has approached the occult through systematic training, usually through a lodge or other organization. (see also [Adept](#))

Initiation: An intense personal experience resulting in an integration or validation of previous personal development. A ritual used to signify entrance or progression in a magical or religious organization, frequently intended to bring about such an intense personal experience. Used informally to mean the knowledge or access to secret or occult information. Also used to refer to any rite of passage.

Invocation: The summoning (or more properly, invitation) of a non-material entity of a higher order of being than oneself. (see [Evocation](#)).

Jhana: (Skt) *Ye-shes* (Tib), literally "primordial knowing". Wisdom. The activity of enlightenment. Knowing which transcends all dualistic conception. Perfect intuition. (See also Neshamah; Prajna.)

Jyotis: (Skt) The solar light which is both physical and material. It manifests in the light of fire, lightning, and in intelligence.

Ka (or Khat): The ancient Egyptian word for the etheric double or body of habits. Supposedly the ka lived on in the tomb after the death of the body. Provisions were left in the tombs by the relatives of the deceased, particularly since the ka might haunt them if it were displeased.

Some consider the ka to be equivalent to the astral body, the part of the soul sometimes used as a vehicle for the consciousness in the astral or mental planes. (See [Astral Planes](#); [Astral Projection](#); [Ghost](#); Kama-Rupa)

Kabbalah: (Heb) (See [Qabalah](#))

Ki: (Jap) The ocean of energy. The invisible activity of the cosmos. Ki is the Japanese form of the Chinese word *Ch'i*. It is also used by some parapsychologists to refer to the human aura and mesmeric emanations (animal magnetism). (See [Ch'i](#); [Mana](#); Prana.)

Kia: A term used by Austin Osman Spare to refer to the atmospheric "I", symbolized by the eye. It is the complement of Zos. (See also [Zos](#).)

Laya Yoga: (Skt) Literally "merging". A yoga which emphasizes the awakening of the kundalini (a latent power said to sleep at the base of the spine). Laya yoga is considered by many to be an extension of raja yoga, both of which are in the general category of tantric yoga. (See also Chakra; Kundalini.)

Ley Lines: A term used by Alfred Watkins to denote lines of earth energies. Supposedly ley lines connect nearly all ancient megalithic sites, forming "power grids" that may be tapped for magical purposes. The most important sites such as Stonehenge and Avebury are built above the conjunction of several ley lines. Ley lines were also studied in ancient China, where they were called "dragon tracks," with regard to geomancy and weather divination. (See also [Dragon Tracks](#).)

Libation: The act of pouring a liquid on a symbolic figure of a deity, or on the ground.

Limbus: The four elements combined in the Universal World as indivisible seed. Matter.

Macrocosm: The Cosmos as a whole, in relation to the Microcosm, its detailed manifestation (the human being in particular). In accordance with the Hermetic principle 'as above, so below', the Microcosm is of the same essence as the Macrocosm and reflects its nature.

Magic(k): "The science and Art of causing Change to occur in conformity with Will" (Aleister Crowley). Crowley added the "k" to distinguish true magic from the debased, escape-from-reality concept of magic, and many occultists have adopted the usage.

It is the movement of natural energies to create needed change. Energy exists within all things - ourselves, plants, stones, colours, sounds, movements. Magick is the process of rousing or building up this energy, giving it purpose, and releasing it. Magic is a natural, not supernatural, practice, though it is little understood.

Mana: A Polynesian term for a magical force in nature capable of inhering in objects or people. (See [Chi](#); Prana.)

Neophyte, Postulant: A newcomer to the coven, awaiting initiation.

Neo-Paganism: A general term for the nature-oriented people which have revived, sprung up, and surfaced in the last several decades. Most Neo-pagans practice some form of Nature/Goddess worship and/or magic, frequently in the Celtic or Saxon traditions, though not limited to these pantheons. Many spiritually inclined feminists have gravitated towards Neo-paganism as a vehicle of women's mysteries. See also [Goddess](#);

Norns: The three goddesses of fate who guard the world-tree, Yggdrasil. They are Urd (the past), Verdandi (the present), and Skuld (the future).

Occult: From *occuere* (LTN), "to cover up." Not revealed. Secret. Mysterious. See also Mystery

Olympicus Spiritus: The Star in Man. The astral body which sends forth doubles. See also [Astral Body](#)

Pentacle: An encircled five-pointed star, an ancient symbol of perfection used from the time of Pythagoras, Greek philosopher and mathematician, 6th century B.C. It is also one of the four elemental tools; an engraved disc (usually of wood, metal, clay, etc.) representing the Earth's element. It is normally the centrepiece of a Wiccan altar, as well as for some non-wiccan witches and pagans.

Pentagram: A five-pointed star. An upright pentagram (i.e., with a single point uppermost) represents (1) a human being (astride with arms outstretched) or (2) the four Elements governed by the fifth, Spirit. An inverted pentagram (i.e., with a single point downwards) represents Spirit still subservient to the four Elements; it is generally seen as a black magic symbol, except when it is used as the symbol of a second-degree initiate, the implication there being that he or she is still on the way to full development.

Planes: The various levels of being and activity - Spiritual, Mental, Astral, Etheric and Physical.

Qabalah: (Heb) Tradition. Sometimes translated as "collected teachings". The word is spelled "cabala" in the Merriam-Webster dictionary. Waite and Mathers used "kabbalah". Crowley used "qabalah," the correct transliteration of the Hebrew (QBL : Qoph Beth Lamed). Alternate spellings abound.

While rooted in Jewish mysticism, the qabalah has absorbed elements of Gnosticism, Neo-Platonism, and various oriental philosophies. It has many interpretations and has been put to philosophical, theurgical, and thaumaturgical uses. The *Zohar* (probably the central book of the qabalah) was written by Moses de Leon in the 13th century.

Qabalah is usually divided into four sections. Practical qabalah: Techniques of talismanic and ceremonial magic. Literal qabalah: Techniques of the altering of words, consisting of gematria, notariqon, and temurah. The unwritten qabalah: Knowledge which is transmitted orally and never committed to writing. Dogmatic qabalah: The published doctrines and treatises of the qabalah. Four important texts constitute the bulk of the dogmatic qabalah. These are the Sepher ha-Zohar (Book of splendor), the Sepher Sephiroth (Book of emanations), the Sepher Yetzirah (Book of formation), and the Esh Mezaresh (Purifying fire).

Qabalah stems from the Hebrew root qab, meaning "to measure." (See also Sephiroth)

Quinances: A five-degree division of the Zodiac, each Zodiacal sign ruling six quinances. A quinance is half a decanate. (See also Decanate).

Reincarnation: The process, generally believed in by witches, pagans and many others, whereby each immortal human [Individuality](#) is reborn to life after life on Earth until all of its Karma is worked out and balanced, and it is sufficiently highly developed to progress to a higher stage. (see also [Incarnation](#), Bodhisattva).

Sabbats: The eight seasonal festivals celebrated by witches, pagans and by many others. In order through the calendar year, they are: [Imbolg](#), 2 February; Ostara, 21 March; Bealtaine, 30 April; Midsummer solstice, 22 June; Lughnasadh, 31 July; Autumn Equinox, 21 September; Samhain, 31 October; and the Winter Solstice or Yule, 22 December. Imbolg, Bealtaine, Lughnasadh, and Samhain are known as the Greater Sabbats, and the Solstices and Equinoxes as the Lesser Sabbats. The dates for observing the Lesser sabbats may vary slightly in different traditions, and the actual dates of the Equinoxes and Solstices do vary, by a day at most, from year to year in astronomical fact.

Samadhi: (SKT) Literally "together with" (*sam*) "the Lord" (*adhi*). *Ting-nge-'dzin* (TIB), "fixing the mind". Sometimes called contemplation. The highest of the eight *angas* or limbs or yoga.

Samadhi is a state of total involvement, unwavering awareness, and complete stillness of mind. The content of the meditation and the meditator are one. There are many different kinds and levels of samadhi. The meditation may be developed with a mental image, concentration upon a specific principle, or with consciousness itself as the object of meditation. Samadhi is the principle of total absorption in meditation. Terms such as *prajna* and *vispa'syana* refer to specific

degrees of insight. The culmination of samadhi is sahaja-samadhi, which is not a trance state but a condition of permanent awareness. (see also Nirvana; Prajna)

Samaya: (SKT) "Coming Together." *Dam-tshig* (TIB), "sacred word" or "vow". A formal vow taken by a disciple during the Vajrayana Abhiseka ritual. During this ceremony the disciple vows to regard the master as an embodiment of enlightenment and to constantly maintain sacred outlook in all of life henceforth. (see also Sacred Outlook)

Soul: The immaterial essence, animating principle, or ultimate pattern of an individual life. Usually used to mean an immaterial entity distinguishable and superior to the body. Spirit. The part of a human considered to be eternal. (See [Atma](#); [Spirit](#).)

Spirit: From the Latin *spiritus*, meaning "breath". A Western term for ether or akasha. The most rarefied of the five elements. Pattern or essence. (See also [Akasha](#); Quintessence.) An immaterial being or entity. Any concept, force, event, object, place, pattern, or person can be thought of as having a spirit. (See also [Soul](#).) Spirit can also be thought of as information perceived as existing distinct from its medium.

Talisman: An object, similar to an [Amulet](#) but more specific and often constructive and not merely protective. It is designed for a particular [individual](#) and purpose, making the maximum use of appropriate symbols.

Tao: (Chi) Literally "way". The Absolute, or noumenal reality. The One which brought forth the Ten Thousand Things. The union of yin and yang. Beyond attribute, the Tao is described, at best, in mysterious terms. Lao Tze (a possibly mythical Chinese sage) is credited with writing the main text of Taoism, the *Tao Te Ching*, or "Way of Changes."
In the Tao Te Ching it is written, "The Tao which can be spoken is not the true Tao."

Tetragrammaton: The Holy Ineffable Name of God, YHWH, or Yahweh (the devine name which was mistranslated by the King James translators as "Jehovah"). The name YHVH means literally "He is". The term Tetragrammaton means "the name of four letters." The term was used, except during ritual, so as not to profane the Name. The title Adonai, meaning Lord, is substituted for YHVH by devout Jews. Various concepts have been attributed to the four letters:
Letter- Element- World- Personification: Yod- Fire- Atziluth (origination)- Father: He- Water- Briah (creation)- Mother: Vau- Air- Yetzirah (formation)- Son: He- Earth- Assiah (materialization)- Daughter. See also Ineffable Name; Logos; Lost Word

Themis: The daughter of Uranis (the heavens) and Gaea (earth), and the mother of the Three Fates in Greek Mythology. Themis was one of the 12 titans. See also Moerae; [Titans](#)

Theurgy: From the Greek words *theos*, "god", and *ergon*, "work". Magic used to grow closer to God or become more godlike, to make changes for personal evolution and spiritual growth. The sacrament of the host could be considered a form of theurgy. (See also [Magic](#).)

Titans: The "first race" to rule earth in Greek mythology, before the rise of the 12 great Olympians. The 12 Titans represented the primeval forces of nature. They can be grouped roughly into male and female pairs: **Male- Female- Aspect:** Oceanus- Tethys- The Sea: Hyperion- Thia- The Sun: Crius- Eurybia (Mnemosyne)- Memory: Coeus- Coeus- The Moon: Kronos- Rhea- Time and Harvests: Iapetus- Themis- Fate and Justice. See also [Elder God](#)

Unction: Ceremonial anointment with oil. Unction is sometimes performed as an act of consecration. It is also used in rites for the severely ill or dying, as in the case of extreme unction. In ceremonial magic, unction is often used as a symbol of the quest for initiation, or the dedication (consecration) of the magician to enlightenment. (See also [Consecration](#); [Theurgy](#))

Vac: (Skt) Literally "speech" or "word". Cosmic reason or pattern, somewhat similar to the Greek idea of Logos. (See also Logos.)

Wai Tai: (Chi) External alchemy. The arts of nourishing life. These arts were said to include transmutation of metals, the secrets of medicine, invisibility, and the techniques of changing shape. The primary direction of wai tai, however, is the attainment of the Tao and physical immortality. (See also Alchemy; [Tao](#).)

Wakan: An American Indian term for the force which suffuses the world and maintains cosmic order. It is the force behind magic and reveals itself in visions and prophecies.

Wic: An Old English word meaning "to bend, to twist, or to wiggle." A very old term for the practice of magic. I have also heard *wic* translated as "to weave, or to know."

Wicca: "Wicce" is the female form. The Old English root words for a male and female witch.

Wiccan: The Plural form of Wicca (or Wicce). Often used by modern practitioners to refer to the Neo-paganist Witchcraft movement in general.

Witchcraft: The *craft* of the Witch-Magic, especially [magic](#) utilizing personal power in conjunction with the energies within stones, herbs, colours and other natural objects. While this may have spiritual overtones, Witchcraft, using this definition, isn't a religion. However, some followers of Wicca use this word to denote their religion.

Wu: (Chi) Eternal nonbeing. The essence of Tao. (See also Sunya.)

Wu-Hsing: (Chi) Elemental activities: Wood, Fire, Metal, Earth, and Water. The Taoist equivalent to the four elements of Western philosophy. The wu-hsing are best thought of as modes of manifestation.

Wu Wei: (Chi) No-activity. Spontaneity. Noninterference with the Tao. (See also [Tao](#).)

Xeni Nephidei: Spirits who delight to reveal to people the hidden properties of nature. (See [Spirit](#).)

Yaksha: (Skt) A nature spirit which resides in a tree, usually regarded as female. Yakshas are said to accompany Kubera, the god of wealth. (See also Dryad.)

Yama: (Skt) Abstinence. In yoga, there are considered to be five abstinences: Ahimsa- Abstinence from injury (nonviolence), Satya- Abstinence from lies (truthfulness), Asteya- Abstinence from theft (absence of envy), Brahmacharya- Abstinence from sensual indulgence (chastity), Aparigraha - Abstinence from greed (nonattachment). Yama is the second of the eight angas or limbs of yoga. (See also [Angas](#).)

Yana: (Skt) *Theg-pa* (Tib), meaning "vehicle".

Zen: (Jap) A system of mental stillness originating in India, where it was known as *dhyana*. It was carried to China by the Buddhist monk Bodhidharma, where it was called *ch'an*. From China it traveled to Japan as Zen. Styles of Zen differ, but there are primarily three means used to attain release from attachment to the objective world: *zazen* (wall gazing), the *mondo* (a sudden illogical question demanding spontaneous answer), and the **koan** (a riddle or paradox requiring an intuitional leap beyond rationality). The goal of Zen is to permit experience by direct perception or intuition. This lightning-flash sort of awareness is called *satori* and is said to be equivalent to *prajna* or *samadhi*. (See also [Dhyana](#).)

Zos: The body considered as a whole. The term "Zos" was used by Austin Osman Spare to refer to the total field of sensation and awareness. The Zos is symbolized by the hand. It is the complement of the Kia. (See also [Kia](#)).

Absorption: An antipsi talent for absorbing the power out of psychic energy fields, including those around other beings. See Tapping and Vampire, Psychic.

Achromatics: The "colors" black, grey and white; used occasionally to refer to moralistic schools of occultism.

Active Ritual: One in which those persons raising and focussing the psychic energies are not the main targets intended to be changed.

Active Talent: A psychic talent that involves the discharge of energy or data from the agent to the target.

Adept: One who is very skilled in magic or mysticism.

Agent: The person or animal exercising a psychic talent.

Air: One of the main "elements" in occultism; associated in the West with thought, knowledge, yellow, blue, swords, activity, daring, light, communication, heat, dampness, etc.

Akasa or Akasha: One of the "elements" in Indian and Tantric occultism, equivalent in most ways to the "ether" concept and/or that of "astral" matter.

Akasic Records: A concept in Indian metaphysics, of a gigantic repository of all the memories of every incarnation of every being; some gifted ones are said to be able to "read" these records (possibly through retrocognition or the clair senses) and to gain data about past events. See Switchboard.

Amplification: A psi or antipsi talent for boosting the power levels of psychic energy fields.

Anachronism: Something that appears to be from a time period other than the one in which it is perceived; as in medieval knights and ladies in modern America or astronomical computers in the Stone Age.

Angel: A personification of what we consider good or pleasant. In theoiology, a being just below the main god(s) in power for good. In some magical systems, a sort of "psychic robot."

Angelology: Medieval science of studying angels. Question: how many angels can dance on the head of a photon? Answer: give the physicists who are working on quantizing consciousness another decade or two.

Animal-Psi or Anpsi: A little-used term for psychic phenomena involving the interactions of animals with humans, each other and the environment.

Animism: The belief that everything is alive. The Law of Personification taken as a statement of universal reality rather than as one of psychic convenience.

Anthropomancy: Divination from human entrails.

Anti-Psi or Antipsi: A categorical term for several genuine psychic talents that (for the most part) serve to frustrate, avoid, confuse, destroy or otherwise interfere with the operation of normal psi; they can affect the power and/or information content and/or vector of psi fields within range.

APK: See Atomic Psychokinesis.

Apopsi or Avoidance: An antipsi power that appears to generate an energy field into which no external psi field can penetrate; may work through transmutation, retuning or apotation; may interfere with internal psi fields as well.

Aportation: A PK talent involving the seemingly instantaneous movement of an object from one location in space-time to another, apparently without going through the normal space-time in between. See Teleportation.

Archetype: (1) Original astral form of a phenomenon; (2) In the psychology of C. G. Jung, an inherited idea or mode of thought derived from the experiences of the species and present in the unconscious of the individual who picks it up from the collective unconscious of the species.

Asceticism: A method of altering the state of one's consciousness through the avoidance of comfort and pleasure; when extreme, may become masochism.

Aspect, Astrological: An angle formed between two items on an astrological chart.

Assimilation: A technique of psychic healing involving the picking up of a patient's pain and/or illness by the healer, who experiences it personally for a short time, after which it is supposed to vanish in both patient and healer; may also be done accidentally.

Association: Connection or correlation between two or more objects, ideas or beings; thus forming a pattern.

Association, Law of: "If any two or more patterns have elements in common, the patterns interact 'through' those common elements and control of one pattern facilitates control over the other(s), depending (among other factors) upon the number of common elements involved."

Astral Planes: Subjectively real "places" where some astral projectors perceive themselves as traveling; said to be multiple "levels" of (a) material density in the same space, and/or (b) awareness and concentration.

Astral Projection: An OOB or Psi talent that may involve traveling GESP with the image of a body and/or the separation of a “less dense” body from the normal physical one.

Astrology: Divination through the correlation of earthly events with celestial patterns.

Athame: Ritual dagger used by Neopagan Witches, borrowed by Gerald Gardner from medieval grimoires. Probably was originally “athane.” May be pronounced as “ATH-ah-may” or “ah-THUH-may” (it's all “ah-THAYM” to me).

Atomic Psychokinesis or **APK:** Psychokinesis done upon the molecular, atomic or subatomic levels; a subcategory of PK.

Augury: Divination by means of whatever is most handy at the time.

Aura: One or more energy fields supposedly generated by and surrounding all beings and many objects; those persons blessed with clairvoyance or other psychic talents can “read” the patterns of energy and determine information about the person or object. See Kirlian Photography.

Belle Indifference: Lack of interest or concern on the part of a “hysteric” or RSPKer towards unusual events occurring in or around him or her.

Beltane: Celtic fire festival beginning the summer half of the year; starts at sunset on May 4th and is also known as Bealtaine, Galan- Mai, Roodmas, Walpurgistag, St. Pierre’s Day, Red Square Day, etc. Celebrated by most Neopagans and many Marxists as a major religious holiday.

Bibliomancy: Divination through the random selection of words or phrases taken out of books, especially the Bible.

Biocurrents: Electrochemical energy currents generated by living cells.

Biological Radio: One Russian term for telepathy.

Biophysics: The physics of biological phenomena.

Bit: From “binary digit,” a unit of data equal to the result of a choice between two equally probable alternatives, used in computer technology. Eight bits usually equals one “byte.”

Black Magic: A racist, sexist, creedist and classist term used to refer to magic being done for “evil” purposes or by people of whom the user of the term disapproves.

Blessing: The use of magic to benefit an object or being.

Bon: The native Tibetan religion that later merged with Buddhism and Tantrism.

Bonding Control: A PK talent involving the creation and/or alteration of bonding patterns on the intermolecular, interatomic and subatomic levels; thus causing disintegration or cohesion. See Geller Effect.

Boomerang Curse: Spell designed to make an attacker suffer the effects of whatever hostile magic they may have launched at the user; a variation of the “mirror effect,” probably operates through reddopsi.

Buddhism A variety of religions founded by a man named Gautama Siddhartha, the Buddha (“Enlightened One”). An outgrowth of Vedic Paleopagan mysticism, rooted in the “Four Noble Truths:” (1) Existence is suffering, (2) Suffering is caused by desire, (3) Desire can be overcome, (4) by following the Eightfold Path (right belief, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right meditation).

Cabala: See Kabbalah.

Cartomancy: Divination through the use of cards, especially Tarot Cards.

Casting Runes: (1) Divination through the use of small objects which have been inscribed with runic letters. (2) A method of focusing or firing a spell through the carving or writing of runes.

Catapsi: An antipsi talent for the generation of strong fields of psychic static, frequently at such high intensity that all other psi fields within range are disrupted and/or drowned out, usually with the information content of those fields collapsing first.

Cause and Effect, Law of: “If **exactly** the same actions are done under **exactly** the same conditions, they will usually be associated with **exactly** the same ‘results’.” Good luck with those “exactlies!”

Cellular Psychokinesis or CPK: A subcategory of PK, involving the use of what is probably several different APK talents in order to psychically affect the structure and behavior of living organisms, working primarily on the cellular level.

Centre or Center, The: Point of intersection of various planes or modes of existence, including space and time, and which can be used for (at least subjective) transportation between them.

Ceremonial Magic: Schools or methods of magic which place their emphasis upon long and complex rituals, especially of the Medieval and later European traditions; often degenerates into ritualism.

Chakras: Several psychic centers of power associated with different parts of the human body in Tantric systems of anatomy.

Chalice: Cup used in rituals and usually associated in western occultism with “element” of Water (though it often contains more potent fluids).

Circuit: A pattern or connection between whole or partial metapatterns within the Switchboard; often may be (or be associated with) an archetype, deity or other spirit.

Clairaudience: ESP input as if it were normal hearing, without the medium of another mind.

Clairempathy: A term I once tried to get people to use instead of “psychometry,” but which I am no longer using myself.

Clairgustance: ESP input as if it were normal tasting, without the medium of another mind.

Clairolfaction: ESP input as if it were normal smelling, without the medium of another mind or of a cosmetics company.

Clair Senses: General term for all the forms of ESP that start with the prefix “Clair-.”

Clairtangency: ESP input as if it were normal touching, without the medium of another mind.

Clairvoyance: ESP input as if it were normal seeing, without the medium of another mind; often used as a term for clair senses, psychometry and/or precognition. See Remote Viewing.
Classification: Association of some phenomenon into a predetermined pattern or class of phenomena.

Cleric: A person who uses both passive and active talents and rites for both thaumaturgical and theurgical purposes, for personal and public benefit.

Cold Control: The use of temperature control to freeze or thaw objects or beings.

Color: An interpretation of the ways in which photons hit your eyes; one way to see the difference between two objects of identical size, shape, distance and illumination.

Color Classifications: Sets of associations between various colors and particular concepts, interests or acts.

Computer: A network of electronic gates and memories that processes data; an unimaginative but very logical problem solving machine; a magnificent slave and miserable ruler; a great tool and toy for any technologically oriented occultist.

Cone of Power: Term for the focusing of a group’s magical energies, visualized as a cone of psychic power based upon a ritual circle containing the participants (who are usually Neopagan or Feminist Witches). There is some confusion among various groups as to what exactly should be done with the energies at the moment of “firing.”

Contagion, Law of: “Objects or beings in physical or psychic contact with each other continue to interact after spacial or temporal separation.”

CPK: See Cellular Psychokinesis.

Craft, The: (1) Old term used by Freemasons to refer to their activities and beliefs. (2) Current term used by Neopagan, Feminist and some other modern Witches to refer to their activities and beliefs.

Critique: A calm and unbiased evaluation of the structure and performance of a ritual, not usually done in American occult groups thanks to internal politics and delicate egos.

Crystallomancy: Divination through the use of (usually) spheres of quartz crystal, glass or plastic as focussing devices.

Cult: Any secretive religious, magical, philosophical or therapeutic group of which the user of this term does not approve. See the [Advanced Bonewits Cult Danger Evaluation Frame](#).

Curse: The use of magic to harm an object or being.

Cybernetics: Comparative study of the autonomic control system formed by the brains and nervous systems of human and other animals, as well as electro-chemical-mechanical devices and communications systems.

Dactylogy: Finger signaling system of language (such as Ameslan) used by deaf and mute persons; can also be used as powerful mudras in rituals.

Dactylomancy: Divination by means of finger movements upon tripods, planchettes, pendulums, Oui-Ja Boards, etc., or through the use of finger rings.

Daemon: A “supernatural” spirit or being in ancient Greek religion and philosophy, far below the Gods in power for good, evil or neutral purposes; probably the actual sort of “demon” conjured by Goetic magicians.

Dagger: A ritual knife used for severing psychic bonds, exorcising, cursing and/or initiating.

Damping: A psi or antipsi talent for lowering the power levels of psychic energy fields.

Data: Information or concepts of any sort.

Definition: The meaning of a word; the classification pattern that it fits into during the time period and for the given population involved.

Deflection or Bouncing: An antipsi talent for altering the force vectors of incoming psi broadcasts, thus “bouncing” them away.

Deity: (1) The most powerful sort of “supernatural” being. (2) A powerful pattern in the Switchboard. (3) The memory of a dead hero(ine) or magician. (4) An ancient visitor from outer space. (5) An ancient visitor from inner space. (6) All of the above?

Demon: (1) A personification of what we consider to be evil or unpleasant (often repressed guilt feelings). (2) A nonphysical entity of a destructive and evil nature opposed to the will of the God(s), such as Maxwell’s.

Demonology: Medieval science of studying demons.

Density Control: A PK talent for increasing or decreasing the density of an object or being.

Devil: A minor spirit perceived as a force for evil.

Devil, The: “Heir of Man,” originally the Evil God of the Zoroastrians; later a creation of Christian and Islamic theologians (who called him Satan and Shaitan) consisting of old fertility gods, wisdom spirits and nature elementals combined with Ahriman into a figure of terror and malevolence fully equal to that of that Good God (Jehovah or Allah); the deity worshiped by Neogothic Witches.

Dharanis: One phrase creeds or statements of belief, often used as mantras, such as “ $E = mc^2$.”

Dhyana: Tantric trance, possibly a form of hypnosis.

Difficult Passage: A common mythological motif involving a hard transition or journey from one state or location to another through impossibly dangerous or paradoxical territory.

Discipline: Training or experience that corrects, molds, strengthens, or perfects (especially) the mental faculties or moral character; noted primarily by its absence in American occult groups.

Disk of Shadows: A grimoire or other magical text (especially one of witchcraft rituals) kept on a computer memory disk.

Divination: The art and science of finding out hidden information about the past, present or future through the use of psychic talents.

Diviner: Obviously, one who does divination.

Dowsing: See Rhabdomancy.

Druids, Ancient: From the root “dru-,” meaning “oak tree, firm, strong;” the entire intelligentsia of the Celtic peoples, including doctors, judges, historians, musicians, poets, priests and magicians; 99.9% of what has been written about them is pure hogwash.

Druids, Masonic: Members of several Masonic and Rosicrucian fraternal orders founded in the 1700’s (and since) in England, France and elsewhere; some claim to go back to the original Druids.

Druids, Reformed: Members of several branches of a movement founded in 1963 c.e. at Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota; most are now Neopagans, though the original founders were not.

Dualism: A religious doctrine that states that all the spiritual forces of the universe(s) are split into Good Guys and Bad Guys (white and black, male and female, etc.) who are eternally at war with each other

Dualistic Polytheism: A style of religion in which the Good Guys and Bad Guys include several major and minor deities (though they may not always be called that by the official theologians); what most so-called “monotheisms” really are. Examples would be Zoroastrianism, Catholicism, and Christian Fundamentalism.

Duotheism: A style of religion in which there are two deities accepted by the polytheologians, usually of opposite gender; all other deities worshiped are considered to be “faces” or aspects of the two main figures.

Dynamic Balance, Law of: “In order to survive, let alone to become a powerful magician, one must keep every aspect of one’s universe(s) in a state of dynamic balance with every other one.”

Earth: One of the main “elements” in occultism; associated in the West with matter, brown, black, pentacles, passivity, inertness, silence, food fertility, wealth, practicality, cold, dryness, etc.

Earth-Mother: Female personification of the Life force, fertility of the Earth and its inhabitants. One of the most widespread deity concepts in the world (though far from universal); She is now worshiped in the West as Mother Nature.

Electric Control: An APK talent involving the control of electricity and other electron phenomena. See Picachu.

Electrochemical: Having to do with the interchanges between electrical and chemical energy, especially (in this text) those taking place in the body.

Electroencephalograph or **EEG:** A machine that records electromagnetic activity in the brain (the so-called “brain waves”), usually upon a moving roll of paper.

Electromagnetic Spectrum: The entire range of frequencies or wave-lengths of electromagnetic radiation from the longest radio waves to the shortest gamma rays. Visible light is only a tiny part of this range.

Elementals: Personifications of the four or five “elements” of Western or Eastern occultism; in the West these are “Gnomes” for Earth, “Undines” for Water, “Sylphs” for Air, “Salamanders” for Fire, and “Sprites” for Spirit.

Elementals, Artificial: Term used by some Western occultists to refer to spiritual entities “created” by magicians, usually to perform specific tasks.

Elementals, Nature: Term used by some to refer to various minor spirits inhabiting or associated with various natural phenomena such as trees, streams, rocks, dust storms, etc.

Elements, The: A classification system based upon the division of all phenomena into four or five categories; in Western occultism there are Earth, Water, Air, Fire and sometimes Spirit or Ether (or in India, Akasha); in Chinese occultism these are Earth, Water, Metal, Fire and Wood.

Empath: One who can use the psi talent of empathy.

Empath, Controlled: Someone who uses psychometry and/or empathy and/or absorption, occasionally to the point of draining others of their psychic energy.

Empath, Total: One who has trouble controlling their empathic and/or other passive psychic talents, and subsequently gets “overloaded” with data and power.

Empathy: As I now use it, a type of telepathic reception limited to the perception of emotions; obviously this talent would tie in nicely with absorption.

Energy Control: In Tantra, the control of biocurrents and their movements through the body; otherwise the control of energy in general.

Energy Field: A continuously distributed something in space that accounts for actions at a distance; an area where energy does something. Don't blame me for the vagueness of this definition; it's a standard one used in modern physics.

Entity: A being, spirit, living creature or personification.

ESP: See Extrasensory Perception.

Ether: A hypothetical "substance" filling all space and conveying waves of energy. See Space-Time Continuum.

Ethics: (1) That part of philosophy and theology dealing with matters of "right and wrong," "good and evil," etc. (2) A set or system of moral values. (3) Principles of conduct governing an individual or profession.

Ethnography: Part of social and cultural anthropology emphasizing descriptions of individual cultures rather than cross-cultural comparisons; when engaged in by the untrained, often degenerates into scrapbooking.

Evocation, Law of: "It is possible to establish external communication with entities from either inside or outside of oneself, said entities seeming to be outside of oneself during the communication process."

Exorcism: The severing or disruption of all unwanted psychic circuits and circuit potentials within a specific object, person or place; hence the dismissal of ghosts and spirits.

Exorcist: (1) One who performs exorcisms. (2) A magician or psychic (often very religious) with strong talents for CPK, antipsi and the clair senses, who specializes in forcing or persuading unwanted psychic energies (including spirits) to depart from objects, persons or places.

Experiment: A test of an idea or guess.

Experimental Design: The way the test is put together, hopefully for maximum output of useful data.

Exponential Decay Function: A "decaying" or "falling apart" function in which an independent variable appears as one of the mathematical exponents.

Extrasensory Perception or ESP: The categorical term for several psi talents involving the reception of (usually) external data through other than the commonly recognized sensory means.

Faith Healing: CPK and/or other psi talents interpreted as religious phenomena in curing.

False: That which is improbable, unpleasant or inconvenient to believe.

Familiars: Animals supposedly used by Gothic Witches and others to help them with their magic; often believed to be incarnated spirits or the messengers of noncarnate ones.

Fam-Trad: Short term for "Familial Tradition." See Witchcraft, Familial and Tradition.

Feedback: Data returned as a reply or result, containing corrections and additions.

Filtering: An antipsi ability to use apopsi, reddopsi or deflection selectively, thus stopping part of a psi broadcast or field while letting the desired remainder (usually part of the information content) through.

Finite Senses, Law of: “Every sense mechanism of every entity is limited by both range and type of data perceived, and many real phenomena exist which may be outside the sensory scanning ability of any given entity.” The Supreme Being(s) may be excepted from this law.

Fire: One of the main “elements” in occultism; associated in the West with flames, red, orange, wands or staves, activity, light, will, animals, energy, assertiveness, heat, dryness, etc.

Firing: The discharge of psychic energy in a ritual, the timing of which is frequently critical.

Folklore: The study of folktales and legends, a subject overlapping that of mythology.

Folktale: Story handed down among a people, such as “Cinderella,” “Rumpelstiltskin” or “Our Leader Knows Best.”

Geller Effect: One or more psi talents (probably including bonding control) that enable the user to bend metal objects without touching them, named after this century’s best known user, Uri Geller. The effect is real and has been done by Geller and others under impeccable laboratory controls, regardless of the tales told by Geller’s supporters and detractors.

General Extrasensory Perception or GESP: A term used when two or more forms of ESP are operating at the same time.

Germ Theory: (1) In Tantra, the theory that every entity has a germinal or root sound, the repetition of which can create that entity. (2) In the West, a folk belief that all diseases are caused by miniature demons called “germs” or “viruses.”

Ghost: Personification of data received as the result of a plug-in to an individual metapattern within the Switchboard, and/or the spirit of a dead person or animal, still existing in a nonphysical manner, and/or something(s) else entirely.

Goal: The general result one actually wishes to accomplish with a particular magical or psychic act. Compare with Target.

God or Goddess, A: See Deity.

God or Goddess, The: The particular masculine or feminine deity worshiped by a particular mono-, heno-, or duotheist.

“God or Goddess, Thou Art:” A statement of divine immanence common among Neopagans, originally from Robert Heinlein’s book, *Stranger in a Strange Land*.

Godling: A young or minor deity.

Goetia: From words meaning “howling or crying,” the medieval books of ceremonial magic, such as *The Greater and Lesser Keys of Solomon*.

Golem: An artificial person given life by the carving of a Sacred Name upon his or her forehead and usually used as a slave. Has deeper meanings in real Hebrew Mysticism, in which we are all golems in some sense.

Graphology: (1) An officially nonpsychic method of personality assessment based upon the study of handwriting samples. (2) A method of divination based upon the use of such samples as contagion links.

Gravity Control: A psychic talent for altering the gravitational fields in a particular location, such as in a room or around an object or being.

Gray Magic: Magic that is neither “black” nor “white,” hence morally neutral, at least according to those who use these quaint terms.

Grimoires: So-called “Black Books” of (usually Goetic) magic, consisting of recipe collections, scrapbooks of magical customs, Who’s Who’s of the spirit worlds and phone directories for contacting various entities. Fairly useless unless you know enough Hebrew, Greek and Latin to correct all the mistakes.

Group mind: A section of the Switchboard consisting of two or more metapatterns linked into an identity circuit. Term is used for those formed telepathically in rituals but can also be used to refer to mobs or other cases of crowd hysteria.

Gymnastics, Metaphysical The fine art of leaping from an unverified assumption to a foregone conclusion, without traversing the logical space in between. See Theology.

Hallucination: (1) Perception of objects or beings with no reality or not present within normal sensory scanning range. (2) Experience of sensations with no exterior cause, usually as a result of nervous dysfunction. (3) Perceptions not in accord with consensus reality.

Hallucination, Veridical: One in which the content is essentially factual.

Hallucinogen: A chemical or biochemical substance capable of inducing hallucinations when introduced into the human metabolism.

Hauntings: Recurrent plug-ins to the Switchboard and/or perceptions of ghostly entities associated with a particular location or being.

Heathenism: The religion of those who live on the heath (where heather grows). See Paganism.

Hedonism: A method for altering the state of one’s consciousness through the experience of intense pleasures; when extreme, may become tiring.

Henotheism: A polytheistic religion where one deity is the official Ruler and is supposed to be the prime focus of attention.

Hepatoscopy: Divination through the use of animal innards (see Anthropomancy), especially livers. When done with French hens, usually indicates cowardice.

Heat Control: The use of temperature control to start or stop fires and other heating phenomena, also called “psychopyresis.”

Hinayana (aka “Lesser Vehicle”) Buddhism The oldest or most “orthodox” form of Buddhism, with deities demoted to very minor roles or completely absent.

Hixson’s Law: “All possible universes that can be constructed out of all possible interactions of all existing subatomic particles through all points in space-time, must exist.”

Horoscope: A two-dimensional chart of the way “important” parts of the sky look at a particular time and location, especially at birth, used in astrology.

Hyperapotheosis: The promotion of one’s tribal deity to the rank of Supreme Being, as in Judaism, Christianity or Islam.

Hypercognition: A categorical term for those psi talents consisting of superfast thinking, usually at a subconscious level, often using data received via ESP, which then reveals all or part of the “gestalt” (whole pattern) of a situation; this is then presented to the conscious mind as a sudden awareness of knowledge (or “a hunch”), without a pseudo-sensory experience. See Retrocognition and Precognition.

Hyperesthesia: Excessive or pathological sensitivity of the skin or other senses; heightened perception or responsiveness to the environment; often mistaken for real ESP.

Hypnosis: (1) As used in this book, an altered state of consciousness within which the following can occur at will: increase in bodily and sensory control, in suggestibility, in ability to concentrate and eliminate distractions, and probably in psychic abilities as well. (2) A useful word and tool for those who cannot conceive of nor practice real mesmerism.

Hypothesis: Scientific term for wild guess, hunch, tentative explanation or possibility to be tested.

Iatromancy: The divination of medical problems and solutions.

I Ching: Chinese “Book of Changes;” key to sortilege system.

Identification, Law of: “It is possible through maximum association of the elements of one’s own metapattern and those of another being’s to actually become that being, at least to the point of sharing its knowledge and wielding its power.”

Imaging or To Image: Term for strong visualization of a concept being used for focusing.

Imbolg or Imelc: Celtic fire festival beginning the second quarter of the year (or spring); starts at sunset on February 3rd and is also known as Candlemas, St. Brigid’s Day, Bride’s Day, Lady Day, etc. Celebrated by most Neopagans as a major religious holiday.

Impossible: Unlikely, difficult, implausible, uncomfortable, new.

Incantation: Words used in a ritual or spell, should always be chanted or sung.

Infinite Data, Law of: “The number of phenomena to be known is infinite and one will never run out of things to learn.”

Infinite Universes, Law of: “The total number of universes into which all possible combinations of existing phenomena could be organized is infinite.” See Hixson’s Law and Personal Universes, Law of.

Information Theory: Study of communication.

Information Transfer: Communication.

Initiation: An intense personal experience, often of a death and rebirth sort, resulting in a higher state of personal development and/or admission to a magical or religious organization.

Input: The way incoming data is interpreted or classified.

Instrumental Act: One which is useful, even if for no other purpose than to relieve stress.

Interdisciplinary Approach: The use of data and techniques from more than one art or science in order to analyze phenomena.

Invocation, Law of: “It is possible to establish internal communications with entities from either inside or outside of oneself, said entities seeming to be inside of oneself during the communication process.”

Jargon: Any technical terminology or characteristic idiom of specialists or workers in a particular activity or area of knowledge; often pretentious or unnecessarily obscure.

Kabbalah: (1) A Hebrew word for “collected teachings,” referring to several different lists of books and manuscripts on various occult and mundane topics. Sloppy translations of a handful of texts in the Kabbalah of Mysticism, with Christian names and concepts forcibly inserted, are responsible for much of what is now called “Cabala” by western metaphysicians. If you can’t think fluently in Hebrew, you have no business trying to do Kabbalistic magic. (2) A general term for collections of magical and mystical texts from various cultures, thus “Greek Kabbalah,” “Arabic Cabala,” etc.

Kachina: A (usually benevolent) supernatural being in Hopi religion; may be a personification of an aspect of nature, an ancestor, or something revealed in a dream.

Kama-kali: Ritual sexual intercourse in Tantra.

Karma: In many eastern religions, the load of guilt or innocence carried from one incarnation to the next, determining one’s lot in the next life; often used by American occultists as a general term for moral responsibility, as in “You can do that if you want to, but it’s your karma.”

Karma Dumping Run: American occult slang for a ritual process of visiting someone’s “just deserts” upon them, by “concentrating the karma” they may have earned in their life (or recent

past) and delivering it back to them in one brief period of time; usually done when someone is suspected of evil doing but proof is lacking, since it is considered a morally neutral way of stopping them.

Kinesis: Physical movement including quantitative, qualitative, and positional change; sometimes movement caused by stimulation but not directional or aimed.

Kinetic Energy: Energy associated with motion.

Kirlian Photography: A lenseless electrical photographic technique invented by Russian parapsychologists S. D. and V. Kirlian in 1939 and which can be used to record energy fields around living or once living objects and beings. Although the “Kirlian auras” vary with emotional excitement and intent, there is as yet no proof that they are the same as the “psychic auras” traditionally seen by clairvoyants. Time will tell.

Klutzokinesis: Term invented by Arlynde d’Loughlan to describe the use of CPK to make people more clumsy (or agile) through interference with neuron or muscle activities.

Knowledge, Law of: “Understanding brings control; the more that is known about a phenomenon, the easier it is to exercise control over it.”

Koran: The sacred book of Islam.

Ksana: The “favorable moment;” a temporal Centre.

Law: A statement of the ways phenomena seem to work.

Law of Magic: A statement of the ways magical phenomena seem to work.

Laws, Law of: “The more evidence one looks for to support a given law, the more one finds.”

Law, Sturgeon’s: From science fiction writer Theodore Sturgeon: “90% of everything is crud.”

Left-Hand Path: (1) The people we don’t like who are doing magic. (2) Occultists who spend their time being destructive, manipulative and “evil” — or at least annoying.

Levitation: A psi talent involving the combination of PK proper with Gravity Control and/or Mass Control in order to produce floating effects.

Light Control: An APK talent for the control of photons.

Linguistics: The study of human speech, including the units, nature, structure and development of language(s).

Litany: Long prayer or incantation with constantly repeating refrain.

Lodges: Groups of magical and mystical workers similar to (1) the old European guild systems, with apprentices, journeypeople and masters, or (2) church organizations with rank based upon goodness or evilness. In America at least, these are usually tiny, incompetent and riddled with internal and external warfare and politics.

Lughnasadh: Celtic fire festival beginning the third quarter of the year (or fall); starts at sunset on August 6th or 7th and is also known as Lammas, Apple Day, etc. Celebrated by most Neopagans as a major religious holiday.

Mage: A general term for anyone doing magic, especially of the active kinds; often used as synonym for “magus.”

Magi: Zoroastrian priests. Later used for powerful magicians of any sort.

Magic: (1) A general term for arts, sciences, philosophies and technologies concerned with (a) understanding and using various altered states of consciousness within which it is possible to have access to and control over one’s psychic talents, and (b) the uses and abuses of those psychic talents to change interior and/or exterior realities. (2) A science and an art comprising a system of concepts and methods for the build-up of human emotions, altering the electrochemical balance of the metabolism, using associational techniques and devices to concentrate and focus this emotional energy, thus modulating the energies broadcast by the human body, usually to affect other energy patterns whether animate or inanimate, but occasionally to affect the personal energy pattern. (3) A collection of rule-of-thumb techniques designed to get one’s psychic talents to do more or less what one wants, more often than not, one hopes. It should be obvious that these are thaumaturgical definitions.

Magic Circle: A mandala-mudra-mantra combination used around an area where all or part of a ritual is to take place, so that an individual or group can more easily control the energies generated.

Magician: (1) As a general term, anyone who does any sort of magic at all. (2) More specifically, someone who uses mostly active talents and rites for mostly thaumaturgical purposes.

Magician, Goetic: A magician and psychic who frequently “summons up” various nonhuman entities (good, bad or ugly) in order to gain both occult and mundane knowledge, which is then used for thaumaturgical, theurgical and nonmagical purposes.

Magister: Master, teacher or magician.

Magnetic Control: An APK talent involving the control of magnetic, diamagnetic and paramagnetic lines of force and other magnetic phenomena.

Magos: Greek word for “magi.”

Magus: Originally, the singular form of “magi.” Later, a powerful magician.

Mahayana (or “Greater Vehicle”) Buddhism A later, “heterodox” version of Buddhism which incorporates many Paleopagan deities from throughout Asia as Buddhas or Saints.

Mana: Polynesian word for psychic energy.

Mandala: Sights (especially drawings, paintings and carvings) used primarily as associational and/or trance inducing devices.

Mantic Arts: The various methods of divination.

Mantis: A diviner or seer.

Mantra: Sounds used primarily as associational and/or trance inducing devices.

Mass: The property of a body that is a measure of its inertia, that causes it to have weight (in a gravitational field), and that is a measure of the amount of material it contains.

Mass Control: An APK talent for increasing or decreasing the mass of an object or being.

Maya: (1) Sanscrit for “illusion.” (2) A tribe of Central American Indians.

Mayin: One who controls the worlds of illusion, a magician or mystic.

Mechanistic: A word used (usually as an insult) to refer to those who prefer to analyze even supposedly nonphysical phenomena in terms of physical or mechanical patterns of behavior.

Medicine Person: A tribal official who combines the modes of magician, psychic and cleric, using her or his talents for personal and tribal benefit; especially in such matters as healing, hunting, fertility, weather and war magic.

Medium: A psychic (and frequently cleric as well) who specializes in being possessed by or otherwise communicating with, various spirits especially those of dead humans; someone who knows how to plug-in to the metapatterns of the recently dead, or can arrange such plug-ins for others. See Necromancer.

Mental Projection: An OOB or psi talent that may involve traveling GESP without the image of an “astral body” being brought along.

Mesmerism: From Franz Mesmer, a form of telepathic sending in which the data sent consists of suggestions backed by the insistent power of the sender.

Mesopaganism or Meso-Paganism: A general term for a variety of movements both organized and nonorganized, started as attempts to recreate, revive or continue what their founders **thought** were the best aspects of the Paleopagan ways of their ancestors (or predecessors), but which were heavily influenced (accidentally, deliberately and/or involuntarily) by concepts and practices from the monotheistic, dualistic, or nontheistic worldviews of Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, or early Buddhism. Examples of Mesopagan belief systems would include Freemasonry, [Rosicrucianism](#), [Theosophy](#), [Spiritualism](#), etc., as well as those forms of [Druidism](#) influenced by those movements, the many Afro-Diasporatic faiths (such as [Voudoun](#), [Santeria](#), [Candomble](#), etc.), [Sikhism](#), several sects of Hinduism that have been influenced by Islam and Christianity, Mahayana [Buddhism](#), Aleister Crowley’s religion/philosophy of [Thelema](#), Odinism (most Norse Paganism), most “Family Traditions” of Witchcraft (those that aren’t completely fake), and most orthodox (aka “British Traditionalist”) denominations of Wicca. Some Mesopagan belief systems may be racist, sexist, homophobic, etc. There are at least a billion Mesopagans living and worshiping their deities today. See Paleopaganism and Neopaganism.

Metabolism: The sum or gestalt of the processes going on inside your body.

Metamorphosis: Change, especially of the outward appearance. See Werewolf, or your local politicians.

Metapattern: As used in this text, the sum and gestalt of all the interlocking patterns that make up an individual, including the body (or bodies), the various levels of mind or awareness, the psychic and artistic abilities, memory and intellectual capacities, and perhaps whatever it is that is usually called “the soul.”

Metaphysics: Philosophy of the relations between “underlying reality” and its manifestations.

Miracle: A paranormal act or occurrence done by or for someone who belongs to a religion that you approve of, usually credited to divine intervention.

Miracle, Counterfeit: A paranormal act or occurrence done by or for someone who belongs to a religion that you do not approve of; usually credited to demonic intervention.

Monotheism: A style of religion in which the theologians (or theologians) claim that there is only one deity (theirs of course) and that all other spirits claiming (or claimed) to be deities are “actually” demons in disguise. If other deities have cults that can be made to support the One Deity, they are kept on as “angels” or “saints.” See Hyperapotheosis.

Moon Sign: In astrology, the zodiacal sign that the moon appeared to be in at the time and location for which the chart is cast.

Motif: A common pattern running through stories, folktales or myths.

Motion: The act or process of a body passing from one place or position to another. Completely relative.

Mudra: Physical gestures, positions or postures (including dance movements) used primarily as associational and/or trance inducing devices.

Mundane: Worldly, ordinary, common, simple; pertaining to “the earth plane.”

Mysteries: Secret rituals usually involving the display of sacred mandalas and other objects to, and the performance of various mudras with and in front of, and the chanting of mantras and dharanis in the hearing of, properly initiated worshipers, for theurgical purposes in this life and the next.

Mystery Cult: A group of people who get together regularly to perform sacred mysteries and to study their meanings.

Mystery School: In theory, a group of magicians and/or mystics who have gathered together to share their wisdom and secrets with each other and with new seekers. In practice, usually a group of would-be “enlightened masters” who are primarily interested in impressing each other and in fleecing the gullible. After all, “there’s a seeker born every minute!”

Mystic: (1) One who practices mysticism. (2) A person who uses mostly passive talents and rites for mostly theurgical purposes.

Mysticism: (1) The doctrine or belief that direct knowledge of the God(s), o spiritual truth, of ultimate reality, or of comparable matters is attainable through immediate intuition, insight or illumination and in a way differing from ordinary sense perception or conscious thought. (2) The concepts and theories behind the theurgical approach to occultism.

Myth: (1) Technically, a traditional story with its emphasis upon the actions of deities; (2) commonly, a false or simplistic belief.

Mythology: The study of myths, and thus a field overlapping folklore; sometimes used to refer to a specific body of myths pertaining to a given culture or motif. The study of someone else's religious stories.

Mythos: A system of myths within a society or culture.

Names, Law of: "Knowing the complete and true name of an object, being or process gives one complete control over it."

Necromancer: (1) A magician and psychic who specializes in "summoning" the spirits of dead persons, usually without possession, in order to gain both occult and mundane knowledge, which is then used for thaumaturgical, theurgical and nonmagical purposes. (2) Generally, anyone who does any form of divination involving the dead. See Medium.

Negapsi or Reversing: An antipsi ability to reverse all or part of the information content of a psi broadcast or field.

Neopaganism or Neo-Paganism: A general term for a variety of movements both organized and (usually) nonorganized, started since 1960 c.e. or so (though they had literary roots going back to the mid-1800's), as attempts to recreate, revive or continue what their founders **thought** were the best aspects of the Paleopagan ways of their ancestors (or predecessors), blended with modern humanistic, pluralist and inclusionary ideals, while consciously striving to eliminate as much as possible of the traditional Western monotheism, dualism, and puritanism. The [core Neopagan beliefs](#) include a multiplicity of deities of all genders, a perception of those deities as both immanent and transcendent, a commitment to environmental awareness, and a willingness to perform magical as well as spiritual rituals to help both ourselves and others. Examples of Neopaganism would include the [Church of All Worlds](#), most [heterodox Wiccan](#) traditions, Druidism as practiced by [Ár nDraíocht Féin](#) and the [Henge of Keltria](#), some Norse Paganism, and some modern forms of Buddhism whose members refer to themselves as "Buddheo-Pagans." Neopagan belief systems are **not** racist, sexist, homophobic, etc. There are hundreds of thousands of Neopagans living and worshipping their deities today. As "Neo-Paganism," this term was popularized in the 1960's and 1970's by Oberon Zell, a founder of the [Church of All Worlds](#).

Neotarot Cards: A collection of divination cards designed to be used in the same general ways as regular Tarot Cards, but which have different (non-Tarot) archetypal images as their main contents. Examples would include "Morgan's Tarot," "The Illuminated Tarot," etc.

Nervous System: The bodily system made up of nerves, senses, and brain, including all connectors such as the spinal cord.

Numerology: Divination by means of numbers and numerical “values” of letters.

Objective: “Reality” as it supposedly is “in itself,” instead of as it may be perceived.

Observation: A part of the scientific method that involves a careful cataloging of perceptions involving any particular phenomenon.

Obsession: Being besieged or impelled by an outside force (often perceived as demonic) to entertain thoughts or perform actions of an unpleasant, malign, pathological or unprofitable nature; thus causing anxiety and fear to be experienced by the person involved and/or observers. See Possession.

Occam’s Razor: A philosophical axiom credited to William of Occam: “Entities should not be multiplied without reason.” Or as I put it, “Don’t complicate theories unnecessarily, but beware of being simplistic.”

Occult: That which is hidden or known only to a few.

Occultism: The study and or practice of that which is occult, especially (in this century) in reference to the powers of the mind.

Onieromancy: Divination by means of dream interpretations.

OUBE: See Out of the Body Experience.

Oui-Ja Board: A flat board with letters, numbers and/or words upon it, used with a planchette or pendulum for divination.

Out of the Body Experience: A perception of one’s consciousness as being outside of one’s physical body and usually as movable. See Astral Projection and Mental Projection.

Pagan, Paganism: Originally from the Latin “*paganus*,” meaning “villager,” “country dweller,” or “hick.” The Roman army used it to refer to civilians. Early Roman Christians used “pagan” to refer to everyone who preferred to worship pre-Christian divinities and who were unwilling to enroll in “the Army of the Lord.” Eventually, “pagan” became simply an insult, with the connotation of “a false religion and its followers.” By the beginning of the twentieth century, the word’s primary meanings became a blend of “atheist,” “agnostic,” “hedonist,” “religionless,” etc., (when referring to an educated, white, male, heterosexual, non-Celtic European) and “ignorant savage and/or pervert” (when referring to everyone else on the planet). “Paganism” is now a general term for polytheistic, nature-centered religions, old and new, with “Pagan” used as the adjective as well as the membership term. It should always be capitalized just as other religious noun/adjective combinations are, such as “Buddhist,” “Hindu,” “Christian,” etc. See Paleopaganism, Mesopaganism, Neopaganism.

Paleopaganism or Paleo-Paganism: A general term for the original polytheistic, nature-centered faiths of tribal Europe, Africa, Asia, the Americas, Oceania and Australia, when they were (or in some rare cases, still are) practiced as intact belief systems. Of the so-called “Great Religions of the World,” [Hinduism](#) (prior to the influx of Islam into India), [Taoism](#) and [Shinto](#), for example, fall under this category, though many members of these faiths might be reluctant to

use the term. Some Paleopagan belief systems may be racist, sexist, homophobic, etc. There are billions of Paleopagans living and worshiping their deities today. See Mesopaganism and Neopaganism.

Palmistry: Divination by means of the folds and other features of the hands.

Pantheon: The organization of deities and lesser spirits in any given religion.

Para-anthropology: The study of paranormal phenomena in tribal, traditional and/or nonliterate cultures.

Paranoia: Slang term taken from psychology, used to refer to general terror or anxiety, usually with associated feelings of persecution.

Paranormal: Unusual or “supernatural.”

Paraphysics: (1) The physics of paranormal phenomena. (2) The study of PK.

Parapsychology: (1) The general and interdisciplinary study of paranormal phenomena. (2) The study of that which is “beyond” the field of “normal” psychology. (3) The scientific branch of occultism.

Passive Ritual: One in which those persons raising and focusing the psychic energies are the main targets intended to be changed.

Passive Talent: A psychic talent that involves the reception of energy or data by the agent from the target.

Path: A method, system or approach to magical or mystical knowledge.

Path, The: The One-True-Right-And-Only-Way followed by the user of the term.

Pendulum: Any small object on a string or chain, the movements of which can be used for divination. See Rhabdomancy.

Pentalpha: A five pointed star made by interweaving five letter A’s.

Pentacle: Originally a talisman of a five pointed star, now used as a general term for talismans in general. When made of clay, glass, metal or wood, often used in western occultism as a symbol of the “element” of Earth.

Pentagram: Another word for a five pointed star, used as a symbol for the occult in general and Neopagan and Feminist Witchcraft in particular.

Perception: The process of classifying sensations.

Personal Universes, Law of: “Every sentient being lives in and quite possibly creates a unique universe which can never be 100% identical to that lived in by another.” See Hixson’s Law and Infinite Universes, Law of.

Personification, Law of: “Any phenomenon may be considered to be alive and to have a personality, and may be effectively dealt with as such.”

Perversity, Law of: “If anything can go wrong, it will — and in the most annoying manner possible.” Also known as “Murphy’s Law.”

Perversion: (1) A variation in a process that effectively negates or contradicts what the user of this term considers to be the original purpose of the process. (2) Using the entire chicken.

Phrenology: Divination by means of the features of the head (exterior).

Physiology: The study of the living body.

PK: See Psychokinesis.

Placebo Effect: (1) Term used to refer to the process by which the belief of a target may cause results (physical or psychic) to occur with no known effort being made by the supposed agent. (2) The most powerful, cheapest, and therefore least researched method of healing.

Placebo Spell: Obviously, a spell that works by the placebo effect.

Planchette: A triangular object with short legs used as a divination tool, usually by moving it over a Oui-Ja Board.

Plant-Psi or Plantpsi: A little-used term for psychic phenomena involving the interaction of plants with humans, each other and the environment.

Plug-in: To “close a circuit” or otherwise make a connection with a part of the Switchboard or a smaller group mind.

Poet: (1) One who fashions words artistically. (2) One who can control the power of words and is thus a magician. (3) To the ancient Greeks, one who is a specialist in retrocognition.

Polarism: A religious doctrine that states that all the spiritual forces of the universe(s) are split into Guys and Gals, (good, weird, horny, scary, whimsical, etc.) who are eternally in bed with each other.

Polarity, Law of: “Any pattern of data can be split into (at least) two patterns with ‘opposing’ characteristics, and each will contain the essence of the other within itself.”

Poltergeist: From the German, meaning “noisy spirit;” an old term for RSPK, resulting from a personification of the phenomena.

Polytheism: A style of religion in which the polytheologists claim that there are many deities, of varying power, and many lesser spirits as well, all of whom are considered to be “real” and to be worthy of respect and/or worship.

Polytheology: Intellectual speculations concerning the natures of the Gods and Goddesses and Their relations to the world in general and humans in particular; etc., etc., etc.: see Theology, Theology. I’m now using this term instead of Theoilogy.

Possession: The process or experience of having another being (divine, demonic or other) inside of one's own body, usually as the result of a conscious or unconscious invocation. See Obsession.

Pragmatism, Law of: "If a pattern of belief or behavior enables a being to survive and to accomplish chosen goals, then that belief or behavior is 'true,' 'realistic,' and/or 'sensible'."

Precognition: Hypercognition done about future phenomena.

Priest or Priestess: A cleric who is an official representative of a given religion, sect or cult, and who is responsible for leading other people in rituals.

Prophet: (1) A person (usually a cleric) who "speaks out for" a deity or other powerful spirit, usually about future events. (2) A diviner of the future.

Prop: Tools, physical emblems and other objects used primarily as associational and/or trance inducing devices.

Psi: Short for "psychic."

Psi Corps: Organizations set up by governments in order to use psychic talents for the benefit of the governments involved, especially in matters of espionage, sabotage and assassination.

Psionics: A scientific way to get around using the dirty word "magic;" probably coined by John Campbell, the word is usually used to refer to technologically oriented parapsychology.

Pseudo: Fake, deceptive, erroneous or otherwise "unreal."

Psychic: As used in this text, a word referring to rare or seldom-used powers of the (usually) human mind, which are capable of causing effects that appear to contradict the mainstream worldview of western science and philosophy.

Psychic, A: Anyone who uses mostly passive talents and rites for mostly thaumaturgical purposes.

Psychoenergetics: A fashionable term for parapsychology in Russia.

Psychokinesis or PK: A categorical term for those psi talents that involve the movement of matter and energy through space-time.

Psychokinesis Proper: A specific term for the psychically induced movement of objects (including the physical bodies of beings) through normal space-time.

Psychology: Divination by means of the features of the head (interior).

Psycholuminescence: See Light Control.

Psychometry: (1) The science of statistical measurements in the field of psychology. (2) An undefeatable term for a psychic talent involving the reception of data "from" objects or

surroundings about events and/or persons connected to those objects or surroundings; quite possibly the ability to use objects or places as contagion links for telepathic reception, the clair senses, and/or retrocognition.

Psychopyresis: See Heat Control.

Psychotronics: Another new way to avoid saying “magic;” the popular term in Eastern Europe.

Radiation Control: An APK talent for speeding up and slowing down the decay rates of radioactive materials.

Radio Waves: Waves on the electromagnetic spectrum between infrared radiation (less than 1 cm from crest to crest) and those called “Very Low Frequency” (over 10,000 km); only a tiny portion of this wavespread is used for common radio and television broadcasting.

Reality: (1) The result of consensus opinion. (2) That which is most comfortable and convenient to believe. (3) My universe.

Reality, Levels of: The concept (resulting from the Law of True Falsehoods) that a given idea may be “true” in some situations and “false” in others, depending upon the aspects, sections, areas or other subsets of the personal or consensus universes involved; such subsets may be considered “levels” of reality.

Recurrent Spontaneous Psychokinesis or RSPK: Term coined by William Roll. Refers to the unconscious use of PK and APK talents (usually by adolescents) as a release for frustration and means of obtaining attention.

Reddopsi or Returning: An antipsi talent for reversing the force vectors of incoming psi broadcasts, thus returning them to their senders. Probably a variation of deflection.

Reincarnation: A belief concerning the supposed process by which souls reinhabit body after body, life after life. The mathematics are implausible and most of the evidence has other possible explanations.

Religion: (1) The body of institutionalized expressions of sacred beliefs, observances and practices found within a given cultural context. (2) A magical system combined with a philosophical and ethical system, usually oriented towards “supernatural” beings. (3) A psychic structure composed of the shared beliefs, experiences and related habits of all members (not just the theologians) of any group calling itself “a religion.”

Remote Viewing: The currently fashionable term being used by parapsychologists in the U.S.A. to refer to clairvoyance, presumably because it sounds “more scientific.” So far, no one has said anything about “remote hearing,” “remote smelling,” etc.

Repeatability: The ability of a phenomenon to be repeated at will, especially as the result of a scientific experiment; one of the major dogmas of scientism is that an unrepeatable experiment is not a valid one.

Retrocognition: Hypercognition done about past phenomena.

Rhodomancy: Divination by means of wands, sticks, rods and pendulums, usually when searching for water, minerals or other valuable items. Sometimes called “dowsing” or “water witching.”

Right Hand Path: (1) The people we like who are doing magic. (2) Occultists who spend their time being constructive, manipulative and “good.”

Rising Sign: In Astrology, the zodiacal sign that was coming over the eastern horizon at the time and location for which the chart is cast.

Ritual: Any ordered sequence of events, actions and/or directed thoughts, especially one that is repeated in the “same” manner each time, that is designed to produce a predictable altered state of consciousness within which certain magical or religious (or artistic or scientific?) results may be obtained.

Ritual Cannibalism: The eating of all or part of the physical or symbolic body of a given person or personified entity in hopes of gaining one or more of their desirable attributes.

Ritualism: Devotion to the use of rituals and ceremonies above and beyond the call of sanity; often, an uncritical acceptance of rituals constructed in the past.

Role Playing: (1) A flavor of “modern” psychology, discovered by Aeschylus and Shakespeare, saying that we all wear masks and play various roles as conditions seem to require, even when alone. (2) A type of game in which the participants cooperate in the creation of a living fantasy novel.

Runes: Letters in the old Celtic, Teutonic and Scandinavian alphabets; the word is based on roots meaning “secret” or “occult.” If you try to practice any form of magic within these cultural contexts, especially for deceptive purposes, then your career will lie in runes.

Samhain: Celtic fire festival beginning the winter half of the year and being the Day Between Years; starts at sunset on November 7th and is also known as La Samhna, Nos Galen-gaeof, All Hallow’s Eve and Halloween. Celebrated by most Neopagans as a major religious holiday.

Satan: See Devil, The.

Satya-vacana: In Tantra, the solemn uttering of a Great Truth, used as a mantra for magical or religious effects such as exorcisms.

Schemhampheres: One of several spellings of a word from Christian Cabala, meaning “the expository” or “the 72 Names of God and His Angels;” originally the title of a collection of magical names, now used as a magical word itself.

Science: Accumulated and accepted knowledge that has been systematized and formulated with reference to the discovery of general truths or the operation of general laws; knowledge classified and made available in work, life or the search for truth; comprehensive, profound or philosophical knowledge, especially knowledge obtained and tested through the use of the scientific method.

Scientific Method: The principles and procedures used in the systematic pursuit of intersubjectively (consensus reality) accessible knowledge and involving as necessary conditions the recognition and formulation of a problem, the collection of data through observation and if possible experiment, the formulation of hypotheses, and the testing and confirmation of the hypotheses formulated.

Seer: One who can see the hidden, a diviner.

Self-Knowledge, Law of: “The most important kind of knowledge is about oneself; a magician must be familiar with her or his own strengths and weaknesses.”

Sensation: The noticing of a change in the internal or external environment; the activity of a sense before classification.

Sense: A mechanism that notices or causes sensation.

Shaman: A medicine person and medium who frequently uses astral and/or mental projection to fly into “the spirit world,” in order to represent his or her tribe to the spirits there and who is often possessed by them as well.

Shield: An area around a being or object within which one or more forms of (usually) antipsi energies are operating in order to defend the being or object from unwanted psychic intrusions; the process of setting up and maintaining such an antipsi field.

Sign: A pattern of sensory stimuli which is intended to communicate data.

Signs of the Zodiac: In astrology, twelve approximately equal segments of the Ecliptic (the belt of sky through which the planets appear to move “around the Earth”); in many systems of astrology, these no longer occupy the same space as the constellations for which they were originally named.

Silver Cord: Supposed umbilical cord connecting an astral projector to her or his body.

Silver Dagger: A traditional weapon for destroying various monsters.

Similarity, Law of: “Effects are liable to have one or more outward physical or inward mental appearances similar to one or more of said appearances of their causes.”

Sorcerer or Sorceress: Indiscriminate terms for those who use (or are suspected of using) magic, especially when acting as independent agents and/or using their magic for “evil” purposes.

Sortilege: Divination by means of sticks, coins, bones, dice, lots, beans, yarrow stalks, stones or any other small objects.

Space: A three-dimensional something that extends without bounds in all directions (this week) and is the field of physical objects and events and their order and relationships.

Space-Time or Space-Time Continuum: The four-dimensional system consisting of three coordinate axes for spacial location and one axis for temporal location, upon which any physical

event may be determined by citing its four coordinates; also, the four dimensional space formed by these four axes.

Spell: (1) A magical act designed with an emphasis upon the use of mantras and the literal spelling of words. (2) Any magical ritual.

Spiritualism: A religion based upon the belief in life after death and the experiences of various mediums over the last hundred years; organized primarily to provide legal protection for the mediums and their followers.

Splodging or Yelling: An antipsi talent for the generation of specific psi broadcasts (usually of emotions) so strong that all other psi signals in range are drowned out or disrupted, with the information content of those signals collapsing first; may be a form of reversed empathy or of single-content telepathic sending.

Sprites: Disembodied spirits, elves, fairies or daemons; often the term used for the Air elemental known as “sylphs,” or as the name of the elementals of Spirit.

Statistics, Three Magical Laws of: “Once is dumb luck, twice is coincidence and three times is Somebody Trying to Tell You Something.”

Stimuli: Those things that arouse sensations; energy fluctuations.

Subject: In science, someone or something being observed and/or experimented upon.

Subjective: “Reality” as it is perceived, instead of as it may be “in itself.”

Sun Sign: In astrology, the zodiacal sign that the sun appeared to be in at the time and location for which the chart is cast. In isolation, the sun sign reveals very little data.

Supernatural: Rare, unusual, beyond the common, extraordinary, unexplainable at the time, paranormal; usually input as “religious” phenomena.

Superstitions: (1) Fixed irrational notions held stubbornly in the face of evidence to the contrary; beliefs, practices, concepts or acts resulting from ignorance, fear of the unknown, morbid scrupulosity, erroneous concepts of causality, etc., as in the words and actions of many critics of parapsychology and the occult. (2) “A belief not founded in any coherent worldview” (J. B. Russell). (3) Someone else’s religious or philosophical beliefs.

Supplication: The normal form of prayer, that is to say, begging; occasionally, asking an entity to give you her or his attention for a moment.

Survival Phenomena: Paranormal phenomena that appear to bear relevance to the questions of survival after physical death; at one time the main area of study in parapsychology when it was still being called “psychic research.”

Suspension of Disbelief: Temporary curtailment of critical faculties for a specific time and specific purpose, it is absolutely necessary during the performance of a ritual. Before and after the ritual, however, the participants can and should criticize all that they can.

Sutra: Book or traditional collection of sayings.

Switchboard, The: A theory of the author's concerning a postulated network of interlocking metapatterns of everyone who has ever lived or who is living now, expressed as constantly changing and infinitely subtle modifications of current telepathic transmissions and receptions. Many phenomena interpreted as "spirits" may actually be "circuits" within this Switchboard, as may be many other "archetypes" of the "collective unconscious." See Akasic Records, Archetype, Circuit, and Unconscious, Collective.

Sword: An archaic weapon used in western occultism as a symbol of the "element" of Air, as well as for fighting psychic battles, concentrating and directing energies, and for severing psychic links or bonds.

Symbol: A sign plus an associated concept.

Synchronicity, Law of: "Two or more events happening at the 'same' time are likely to have more associations in common than the merely temporal."

Synthesis, Law of: "The synthesis of two or more 'opposing' patterns of data will produce a new pattern that will be 'truer' than either of the first ones were."

Table Tipping: The use of tables for dactylomancy.

Talent: As used in this text, an ability to use psychic energies in one or more forms, including ESP, Hypercognition, PK and the Antipsi powers. Talents may be active, passive or both.

Talisman: A psychically charged mandala carried about (or placed in a special spot), expected to work via contagion.

Talmud, Babylonian and Palestinian: Records of the processes by which Hebrew scholars debated and developed their laws and rulings.

Tantra: Indian systems of theurgical concepts and magical training methods, easily adaptable for thaumaturgic purposes.

Tantrism: The religious window dressing added to Tantra.

Tapping: The absorption of psychic energy from the ether or from groups or individuals who are willing (such as congregations of worshippers or various deities). See Absorption and Vampire, Psychic.

Target: The person, object or process one wishes to effect in order to accomplish one's goal.

Tarot Cards: Ancestors of modern playing cards, originally designed for divination use and now used for meditational and magical focusing as well.

Technology: The study of applying scientific, artistic, psychic or other knowledge to practical ends; the use of methods, skills, crafts, arts, sciences, knowledge and beliefs to provide the material needs of a people.

Telekinesis: Synonym for “psychokinesis.”

Telepathy: A type of ESP involving the communication of data from one mind to another without the use of the normal sensory channels. Note that telepathic sending and reception may be two different talents.

Teleportation: A PK talent involving the seemingly instantaneous movement of a person or other being from one location in space-time to another, apparently without going through the normal space-time in between. See Aportation.

Temperature or Thermal Control: An APK talent for altering the speed of atoms and molecules, so as to change the temperature of an object of being; see its two main subsets: Heat Control and Cold Control.

Thaumaturgy: The use of magic for nonreligious purposes; the art and science of “wonder working;” using magic to actually change things on the Earth Plane.

Thaumaturgical Design: Experimental design for magic.

Thealogy: Intellectual speculations concerning the nature of the Goddess and Her relations to the world in general and humans in particular; rational explanations of religious doctrines, practices and beliefs, which may or may not bear any connection to any religion as actually conceived and practiced by the majority of its members.

Theology: A term I am no longer using for polytheistic theology or Polytheology, since I got tired of telling people it wasn't a typo.

Theology: Intellectual speculations concerning the nature of the God and His relations to the world in general and humans in particular; etc., etc., etc.: see Thealogy.

Theory: (1) A belief, policy or procedure proposed or followed as the basis of action. (2) An ideal or hypothetical set of facts, principles or circumstances. (3) The body of generalizations and principles developed in association with practice in a field of activity. (4) A judgment, conception, proposition or formula formed by speculation or deduction, or by abstraction and generalization from facts. (5) A working hypothesis given probability by experimental evidence or by factual or conceptual analysis but not conclusively established or accepted as a law.

Theurgy: The use of magic for religious and/or psychotherapeutic purposes, in order to attain “salvation” or “personal evolution.”

Three M's: Mantra, mandala and mudra; the prime associational and trance inducing devices.

Time: A function of the ways in which humans perceive their universes, as being composed of phenomena that occur “before,” “during” or “after” each other.

Torah, The: The first five books of the Bible.

Tradition or Trad: A term used by Neopagan and other Witches to refer to the exact distinctions between each body of organized sectarian beliefs and practices, thus some groups refer to themselves as Manx Traditional Witchcraft, Scottish Trad, English Traditional,

Continental, German, etc. The assumption or claim is usually that each “tradition” represents several centuries’ worth of an organized system of witchcraft, though in point of fact the overwhelming majority of trads can be easily proven to be less than thirty years old. The term, however, seems to be evolving to mean just a sect or flavor of modern Paganism, with no implied claims of antiquity.

Trance: An altered state of consciousness (at least for most people) which is characterized by disassociation and withdrawal from the mundane environment.

Transmutation: An APK talent for changing the atomic structure of matter, so as to alter its elemental or molecular nature.

Treatise: A writing that treats a subject; specifically, one that provides in a systematic manner and for an expository or argumentative purpose a methodical discussion of the facts and principles involved and conclusions reached.

Tribal Magical Systems: All systems of magic and mysticism practiced by peoples living in tribal cultures at any time in the past or present, anywhere in the world. True: That which is probable, pleasant or convenient to believe.

True Falsehoods, Law of: “It is possible for a concept or act to violate the truth patterns of a given personal universe (including a single person’s part of a consensus reality) and yet to still be ‘true,’ provided that it ‘works’ in a specific situation.” See Pragmatism, Law of and Reality, Levels of.

Unconscious, Collective: A theoretical construct of C. G. Jung, who believed that all human beings have access to the collected mental experience of all their ancestors and that, in essence, these memories (usually in highly symbolic forms) are carried genetically from one generation to the next; sometimes called “racial” unconscious, though whether the species as a whole or specific gene pools are referred to is unclear.

Unity, Law of: “Every phenomenon in existence at any point in space or time is linked, directly or indirectly, to every other one.”

Universals, Cultural: Patterns of belief or behavior that show up in all or a majority of human cultures, that are related to specific topics.

Universe: The total gestalt of all data patterns one may have about that which seems to be oneself and that which seems to be not-oneself; depending upon whether or not one believes in an objective reality, the universe can be considered to be a part of one’s metapattern or vice versa.

Vampire: A person who has supposedly risen from the dead and who survives through a process of inducing willing or unwilling blood donations.

Vampire, Psychic: A person or institution practicing the absorption of psychic energy to the point of actually damaging the people they attack. See Absorption and Tapping.

Variable: A factor, as in an equation or experiment, that changes from situation to situation and thus affects the outcome.

Varna: In Tantra, the principle that sound is eternal and that every letter of the alphabet is a deity.

Vodun or Voudoun: (1) A West African word meaning “deity” or “power.” (2) General term for a variety of eclectic religions and associated magical systems practiced throughout the Americas, consisting of mixtures of various African tribal beliefs with various Native American tribal beliefs, Roman Catholicism and Protestantism, Spiritualism, Theosophy and other systems (including Hinduism, Islam, Neopagan Witchcraft and anything else that seems useful). Different names include Candomble, Macumba, Santeria, Hoodoo, Voodoo and many others. (3) In the United States and Canada, systems of thaumaturgic magic and religion practiced by people who are usually poor, uneducated and nonwhite. Therefore, see Black Magic.

Vortex Field: An energy field causing rapid circular movement around an axis.

Wand: A short stick of wood or metal, used ritually in western occultism as a symbol (usually) of the “element” of Fire, as well as for concentrating and directing energies.

Warlock: (1) One who bends (or bends with) words, a magician and/or liar. (2) Used by some to refer to male witches.

Water: One of the main “elements” in occultism; associated in the West with emotions, intuition, blue, green, silver, cups, bowls, wisdom, passivity, cleansing, passive psychic arts, cold, dampness, etc.

Water Witching: Rhabdomancy when done for finding water.

Web, The: (1) The total pattern formed by all the interactions of all matter and all energy. (2) The current best example of the Law of Infinite Data.

Weight: The effect of gravity upon mass.

Weight Control: Mass control and/or gravity control when done in a gravity well (on the surface of a planet, for example).

Werewolf: Someone who can supposedly change their body into that of a wolf’s, as a result of deliberate intent or unfortunate curse.

White Magic: A racist, sexist, creedist and classist term used to refer to magic being done for “good” purposes or by people of whom the user of the term approves.

Wic-: An Old English root meaning (1) to bend, turn or twist, and (2) to practice magic. No significant connection to “wisdom.”

Wicca and Wicce: The male and female terms, respectively, in Old English that eventually became “witch” in Modern English.

Wiccan: (1) The original plural form for “wicca/wicce” or “witch.” (2) An adjective used to describe their religion by the followers of Neopagan Witchcraft.

Wiccian or Wicle: The Old English words for the activities of a “wicca/wicce.”

Window Dressing: The scenery and passive props used to provoke and reinforce specific moods and associations.

Witch: Anyone who calls themselves a “witch” or is called such by others; an utterly useless term without a qualifying adjective in front of it. The only thing the definitions of “witch” have in common is the idea of magic or other techniques of change being practiced.

Witchcraft: From “wiccecraft,” the craft of being a witch. Notice that “craft” has no specifically religious connotation.

Witchcraft, Alexandrian: A variety of Gardnerian Witchcraft founded by British magician Alex Sanders.

Witchcraft, Anthropologic: Anything called “witchcraft” by an anthropologist, usually referring to (a) the practices of independent (real or supposed) magic users who are suspected of at least sometimes using their magic outside of their society’s accepted cultural norms, and/or (b) a perceived state, often involuntary, of being a monster who can curse people with the “evil eye.” Definition (a) is what the word “wicce” probably originally referred to, annoying as that may be to modern Wiccans.

Witchcraft, Classic: The practices of the persons often called “witches” (if seldom to their faces) in pre-medieval Europe, to wit: midwifery; healing with magic, herbs and other folk remedies; providing abortions, love potions and poisons; divination; casting curses and blessings, etc. A Classic Witch’s religion may well have been irrelevant to his or her techniques. After the monotheistic conquests, most survivors were — at least officially — Christians (or Moslems in Spain and Portugal). Some may have retained a certain amount of pre-Christian/Islamic magical and religious tradition. Classic Witches have continued to exist to this very day, in ever dwindling numbers, mostly in the remotest villages and among the Romany or other Traveling Peoples.

Witchcraft, Dianic: (1) A postulated medieval cult of Diana and/or Dianus worshipers. (2) Term used by some henotheistic Neopagan Witches to refer to their concentration on the Goddess.(3) Term used by some Feminist separatist Witches to describe their practices and beliefs.

Witchcraft, Ethnic: The practices of various non-English-speaking people who use magic, religion and alternative healing methods in their own communities, and who are called “witches” by English speakers who don’t know any better.

Witchcraft, Familial or “Fam-Trad:” The practices and beliefs of those who claim to belong to (or have been taught by members of) families that supposedly have been underground Paleopagans for several centuries in Europe and/or the Americas, using their wealth and power to stay alive and secret. Even if they existed, none of them could have a pure religious or magical tradition by now; instead, they would have fragments of Paleopagan customs mixed with Christianity or Islam as well as every new occult wave that hit the West. 99.9% of all the people I have ever met who claimed to be Fam-Trad Witches were lying, or had been lied to by their teachers. Also sometimes called “Hereditary Witchcraft” or even “Genetic Witchcraft” by those

who think they must claim a witch as an ancestor in order to be a witch today.

Witchcraft, Fairy or Faery or Faerie Trad: (1) Any of several traditions of Mesopagan and/or Neopagan Witchcraft started by the blind poet and scoundrel guru Victor Anderson since the 1970s, mixing British and Celtic folklore about the fairies, Gardnerianism, Voodoo, Hawaiian Huna (itself a Mesopagan invention of Max Freedom Long), Tantra, Gypsy magic, Native American beliefs, and anything else he was thinking about at the time he was training the founders of each trad. (2) Varieties of Neopagan Witchcraft focused around homosexual or bisexual images and magical techniques rather than the heterosexual (and often homophobic) ones used in most Wiccan traditions. (3) Other sects of Neopagan Witchcraft focused around real or made-up fairy lore, often taken from romantic poems, plays, and novels about the fairies. In most of these traditions, there is usually an assumption that the ancient associations between fairies and witches were true, and that the fairies were originally the Paleopagan nature spirits and/or deities.

Witchcraft, Feminist: Several new monotheistic religions started since the early 1970s by women in the feminist community who belonged to the women's spirituality movement and/or who had contact with Neopagan Witches. It is partially an outgrowth of Neopagan Witchcraft, with male deities booted unceremoniously(!) out of the religion entirely, and partially a conglomeration of independent and eclectic do-it-yourself covens of spiritually-inclined feminists. The religions usually involve worshiping only the syncretic Goddess and using Her as a source of inspiration, magical power and psychological growth. Their scholarship is generally abysmal and men are usually not allowed to join or participate.

Witchcraft, Gardnerian: The originally Mesopagan source of what has now become Neopagan Witchcraft, founded by Gerald Gardner and friends in the late 1940s and 1950s, based upon his alleged contacts with British Fam-Trads. After he finished inventing, expanding and/or reconstructing the rites, laws and other materials, copies were stolen by numerous others who then claimed Fam-Trad status and started new religions of their own. (See Ronald Hutton's *Triumph of the Moon* for all the messy details.) Though Gardnerians are sometimes called "the scourge of the Craft," together with the Alexandrians and members of some other British Traditions, they may be considered simply the orthodox branch of Neopagan Witchcraft.

Witchcraft, Genetic: See Witchcraft, Familial and Grandmotherly.

Witchcraft, Gothic: A postulated cult of devil worshipers invented by the medieval Church, used as the excuse for raping, torturing and killing scores of thousands of women, children and men. The cult was said to consist of people who worshiped the Christian Devil in exchange for magical powers then used to benefit themselves and harm others. Also called "Diabolic Witchcraft" and "Satanic Witchcraft." I coined this term many years ago, before the rise of the "Goth" subculture of the 1980s.

Witchcraft, Grandmotherly: Refers to the habit common among modern Witches of claiming to have been initiated at an early age by a mother or grandmother who belonged to a Fam-Trad but who is conveniently dead, doesn't speak English, and/or is otherwise unavailable for questioning.

Witchcraft, Hereditary: See Witchcraft, Familial and Grandmotherly.

Witchcraft, Immigrant or “**Imm-Trad:**” Refers to the customs and beliefs of Mesopagan peasants and supposed Fam-Trad members who immigrated to the Americas and mingled their magical and religious customs with each other, the Native Americans, enslaved Blacks, and the previous immigrants, helping to produce the dozens of kinds of Voodoo and Hoodoo, along with Pennsylvania “hex” magic and Appalachian magical lore.

Witchcraft, Neoclassic: The current practices of those who are consciously or unconsciously duplicating some or many of the activities of the Classic Witches and who call themselves (or are called by others) witches.

Witchcraft, Neogothic: The beliefs and practices of modern Satanists, most of whom work very hard to be everything that the medieval Church and current Fundamentalists say they should be. Some of them perform Black Masses, commit blasphemy and sacrilege, hold (or long to hold) orgies, etc. There is some small overlap with the Goth subculture of the 1980s.

Witchcraft, Neopagan: Several new duotheistic religions founded since the 1960s, most of which are variations of Gardnerian Witchcraft but some of which are independent inventions and/or reconstructions based on real or supposed Family Traditions, Immigrant Traditions, literary creations, etc. — just like Gardner’s! Most groups who call what they do “Wicca” are Neopagan Witches.

Witchcraft, Neoshamanic: (1) The beliefs and practices of those modern persons who are attempting to rediscover, duplicate and/or expand upon the practices of the original (postulated) Shamanic Witches. (2) Neopagan Witchcraft with feathers, drums, crystals, and other New Age additions of a vaguely Shamanic flavor. Most use drums and chanting rather than drugs to achieve their desired trance states.

Witchcraft, Shamanic: (1) Originally, the beliefs and practices of members of *postulated* independent belladonna/Moon Goddess cults throughout pre-medieval Europe, remnants of which *might* have survived into the Middle Ages. (2) Currently, Neoshamanic Witchcraft done by those who do not use the Neo- prefix.

Witchcraft, Traditional: See Tradition and Witchcraft, Familial.

Witch Cult of Western Europe: A European-wide cult of underground Pagans postulated, in a book of that name, by Margaret Murray as having been the actual cause or spark of the medieval persecutions, but which is not believed in by most of the historians, linguists, folklorists or anthropologists who have examined her arguments. Also known as the “Unitarian Universalist White Witch Cult of Western Theosophical Brittany.”

Witchdoctor: A medicine person or shaman who hunts down and fights “evil” Anthropologic Witches.

Witchfinder: A cleric or other person who seeks out and tortures alleged Gothic Witches.

Witchmark: Blemish supposedly placed upon a Gothic Witch by The Devil as a sort of membership card or identification device.

Wizard: From the Old English “wys-ard,” meaning “wise one.” Originally may have referred to anyone whose wisdom was respected; later came to mean a male witch; now used to mean a powerful and wise magician.

Words of Power, Law of: “There exist certain words that are able to alter the internal and external realities of those uttering them, and their power may rest in the very sounds of the words as much as in their meanings.”

Xenophobia: A morbid fear of that which is new, different or strange; common among professional [debunkers](#) of minority belief systems and other [fundamentalists](#).

Yantra: A Tantric diagram or chart.

Yin-Yang: Chinese symbol for the Laws of Polarity and Synthesis.

Yoga: Literally means “yoke” or discipline. With no qualifying adjective, usually refers to Hatha Yoga (discipline of the body).

Yule: The feast of the Winter Solstice, Birth of the Sun, etc.

Zener Cards: Cards used in most of the early ESP experiments, developed in the Parapsychology Laboratory at Duke University.

Zombie: (1) Someone supposedly raised from the dead by a Vodun magician, possibly never really dead at all but rather drugged, who is used as a slave. (2) Someone who has joined a repressive “cult” movement, lost their own personality and other intellectual faculties, and is used as a slave. Easily identified by the characteristic “glazed eye” look and inability to continue their conversation if interrupted several times in mid-partyline.

Absent Healing [Healing](#) that takes place when the [healer](#) is not in direct contact with the person to be healed.

Absent Sitter A person, not present during a [sitting](#), on whose behalf [readings](#) are given. See also [Proxy Sitting](#).

Acupuncture Traditional Chinese medical practice that involves sticking needles into specific locations on the body. An ancient medical procedure that originated in China more than 2000 years ago. It is based on the theoretical concept of balanced Qi (pronounced 'chee') or vital energy that flows throughout the body via certain pathways that are accessed by puncturing the skin with hair-thin needles at particular locations called acupuncture points. Stimulation of acupuncture points is believed to stimulate the brain and spinal cord to release chemicals that change the experience of pain or cause biochemical changes that may stimulate healing and promote general well-being.

See also [healing](#).

Agent (a) Person who attempts to communicate information to another in an [ESP](#) experiment. Cf. [percipient](#). (b) The [subject](#) in a [psychokinesis](#) experiment. (c) Person who is the focus of [poltergeist](#) activity.

Akashic Records "Memories" of all experiences since the beginning of time, believed by some mystical doctrines to be stored permanently in a spiritual substance (Akasha). [Psychic Dictionary Index](#) The **Akashic Records** (Akasha is a Sanskrit word meaning "sky", "space" or "aether") are said to be a collection of mystical knowledge that is stored in the aether; i.e. on a non-physical plane of existence. The concept is common in some New Age religious groups. The Akashic Records are said to have existed since the beginning of Creation. Just as we have various specialty libraries (e.g., medical, law), there are said to exist various Akashic Records (e.g., human, animal, plant, mineral, etc). Most writings refer to the Akashic Records in the area of human experience. ([Wikipedia](#))

Alchemy [See full article on Alchemy and Alchemists](#)

Alien Abduction Experience Reported experiences of being abducted by alien creatures, often into spacecraft. Abductees often experience lost time and suffer loss of memory. When memories are recovered, often using [hypnotic regression](#), abductees may report that surgical operations were performed on them. See also [temporal lobe activity](#).

Alpha Rhythm Electrical activity in the brain (about 10 cycles per second) associated with a state of mental relaxation. See also [EEG](#).

Altered State of Consciousness (ASC) A term used to refer to any state of consciousness that is different from "normal" states of waking or sleeping. ASCs include [hypnosis](#), [trance](#), [ecstasy](#), [psychedelic](#) and [meditative](#) experience. ASCs do not necessarily have paranormal features.

Ancestor Worship Religious practices involving the veneration of dead ancestors.

Angels Benevolent spiritual beings who help people in need. See also [guardian angel](#).

Animal Magnetism A term coined by F.A. Mesmer to refer to a putative force or fluid capable of being transmitted from one person to another, producing [healing](#) effects. See also [Mesmerism](#).

Animal Mutilation Refers to cases in which animal corpses (often cattle) have been found with bizarre injuries that do not seem to have a normal explanation in terms of illness, accident or action of predators. Cuts and injuries often appear to have been carried out with surgical precision. Typically the corpse is drained of blood. Certain body parts may be absent (e.g., genitals).

Animal Psi Paranormal abilities exhibited by animals. Also known as "Anpsi".

Animism Religious practices based on the belief that all living things and natural objects have their individual spiritual essence or [soul](#).

Announcing Dream A dream believed to announce an individual's [rebirth](#). See also [reincarnation](#).

Anomalous Experience A general term referring to unusual experiences that cannot be explained in terms of current scientific knowledge. Cf. [psi](#).

Anomalous Phenomena Natural phenomena that cannot be explained in terms of current scientific knowledge. See also [Fortean phenomena](#).

Anoxia See [cerebral anoxia](#).

Anpsi See [Animal Psi](#)

Apparition A visual appearance (cf. [hallucination](#)), often of a person or scene, generally experienced in a waking or [hypnagogic](#) / [hypnopompic](#) state. See also [crisis apparition](#), [ghost](#), [haunting](#).

Apport A physical object which appears in a way that cannot be explained (seeming to come from nowhere). Apports are often associated with the [seance](#) room and [physical mediumship](#). Cf. [deport](#). See also [materialization](#), [teleportation](#).

Artefact In parapsychology, false evidence of paranormal phenomena, due to some extraneous normal influence.

ASC See [altered state of consciousness](#).

Astral Body A term used by [occultists](#), [spiritualists](#) and [theosophists](#) to refer to a supposed "double" of the person's physical body. The astral body is believed to be separable from the physical body during [astral projection](#) ([out of body experience](#)) and at [death](#). See also [Ka](#).

Astral Projection A term used by [occultists](#), [spiritualists](#) and [theosophists](#) for the [out of body experience](#). It is believed to result when the [astral body](#) separates from the physical body.

Astrology A theory and practice which attempts to identify the ways in which astronomical events are correlated with events on earth (e.g., with an individual's personality and biography, or with social and political trends). [See also Astrology Directory](#)

Atavism Re-emergence of ancestral characteristics; a genetic throwback.

Augury [Divination](#).

Aura A field of energy believed by some to surround living creatures. Certain [clairvoyants](#) claim to be able to see the aura (generally as a luminous, coloured halo). See also [Kirlian photography](#).

Automatic Art See [automatism](#).

Automatic Writing The ability to write intelligible messages without conscious control or knowledge of what is being written. See also [automatism](#), [dissociation](#).

Automatism Physical activities (e.g., arm movements, writing, drawing, musical performance) that occur without the automatist's conscious control or knowledge. Also known as motor automatism. See also [automatic writing](#), [dissociation](#).

Autoscopy (a) Seeing one's "double". See also [astral body](#). (b) Looking back at one's own body from a position outside of the body. See also [out of body experience](#).

Ba Ancient Egyptian concept of a person's essence, believed to be immortal. Cf. [Ka](#). See also [Soul](#).

Banshee In Gaelic belief, a female entity who heralds a death by groaning and screaming.

Bardo In Tibetan Buddhism, an intermediate state of existence, usually referring to the state between life and [rebirth](#).

Basic Technique Term used in [card-guessing](#) tests of [clairvoyance](#), in which the top card of the deck is placed to one side after each guess.

Billet Reading Procedure in which a question is secretly written on a piece of paper which is folded or sealed in an envelope, and handed to the [psychic](#) who attempts to answer the question. Various trickery can be employed by [fraudulent](#) psychics and [mentalists](#).

Bilocation Being (or appearing to be) in two different places at the same time. See also [autoscopy](#).

Biofeedback A general term for techniques that involve giving a person information about their current physiological state (e.g., heart rate, [EEG](#)). Biofeedback is used to enable people to control consciously their physiological processes.

Bio-PK [Psychokinetic](#) effects on biological processes. See also [DMILS](#).

Black Art [Conjuring](#) technique of concealing objects using black covers against a black background. Also used by [fraudulent mediums](#).

Black Magic [Magical](#) spells or rituals practiced with the intention of harming others. Cf. [white magic](#).

Blind An experimental [control](#) in which [subjects](#) are not informed of certain key features of the experiment. Also used to refer to a procedure where a [judge](#) is asked to compare [targets](#) and [responses](#) without knowing which responses were made to which targets. See also [double blind](#).

Blind Matching (BM) An identical procedure to [open matching](#), except that the [key cards](#) are unseen by the subject.

Book Test (a) A [communication](#) in which the [sitter](#) is asked to look at a specific book and page in order to receive a significant message. (b) An effect in which the [psychic](#) or [mentalists](#) divines the words written on a particular page of a book.

Cabinet A box or curtained enclosure in which a [physical medium](#) is secured and from which various phenomena may manifest (e.g., lights, objects moving, instruments played). Certain stage [magicians](#) can simulate this procedure with great effect.

Call Response made by a [subject](#) in a [card-guessing](#) or other [ESP](#) test.

Candomble A Brazilian [spiritist](#) religion. See also [Umbanda](#), [Voodoo](#).

Card Guessing An experimental test for [ESP](#) in which subjects guess the identity of a set of cards (e.g., playing cards or [Zener cards](#)).

Cartomancy [Fortune telling](#) using cards. See also [tarot](#).

Cerebral Anoxia Lack of oxygen to the brain, often causing sensory distortions and hallucinations. Sometimes used to explain features of the [near-death experience](#).

Chance Random, unpredictable influences on events.

Channeling Receiving messages and inspiration from [discarnate entities](#). See also [medium](#). [See also Medium Directory entry](#)

Charm A [spell](#) or object possessing magic power.

Christian Science A religious [healing](#) movement founded by Mary Baker Eddy. Rejects orthodox medical practice.

Cipher Test A coded message left by a person who intends to [communicate](#) the cipher after death.

Circle A group of people who hold [seances](#). See also [mediumship](#).

Clairaudience The paranormal obtaining of information by hearing sounds or voices. See also [clairvoyance](#), [clairsentience](#).

Clairsentience An archaic term that refers to the paranormal obtaining of information using faculties other than vision or hearing. Cf. [clairaudience](#), [clairvoyance](#), [empathy](#), [intuition](#).

Clairvoyance A general term that refers to the paranormal obtaining of information about an object or event. In modern usage, this does not necessarily refer to obtaining information visually. Cf. [clairaudience](#), [clairsentience](#), [ESP](#), [psi](#). [See Also Clairvoyance Definition](#)

Clairvoyant See [clairvoyant medium](#).

Clairvoyant Medium Or clairvoyant. A person who obtains information paranormally (often by spirit [communication](#)) without the need to enter into a [trance](#) state. Cf. [trance medium](#).

Closed Deck A set of cards used in a [card-guessing](#) test where each card appears a fixed number of times. [Statistical](#) analysis of research data using a closed deck differs from statistical analysis of data using an [open deck](#).

Coincidence The occurrence, within a short space of time, of two or more meaningfully related events and without any apparent [causal](#) connection between them. Coincidences are sometimes bizarre and extraordinarily improbable. See also [synchronicity](#).

Cold Reading A [reading](#) given with no prior knowledge of the [sitter](#). Often a mixture of very general statements which could apply to anyone, together with inferences made from cues presented by the sitter (e.g., physical appearance, clothes, tone of voice, statements made). Cf. [hot reading](#).

Collective Apparition An [apparition](#) seen simultaneously by more than one person.

Collective Unconscious Concept put forward by C.G. Jung to refer to a level of unconscious thought and experience shared collectively by humans.

Communication In [mediumship](#), a message purported to be from a [discarnate entity](#).

Communicator A [discarnate entity](#) from whom the [medium](#) receives messages. See also [drop-in communicator](#).

Confederate A person who secretly provides information to a [fraudulent psychic](#) or [mentalists](#).

Conjuring Using trickery to simulate paranormal effects, generally for the purpose of entertainment.

Contact Mind Reading A technique simulating [telepathy](#), in which the "mind reader" (who generally holds a hand or arm) responds to slight muscle movements produced unconsciously by the person whose mind is apparently being read. Also known as muscle reading, Cumberlandism or Hellstromism.

Control (a) In [experimental parapsychology](#) a procedure undertaken in order to ensure that the experiment is conducted in a standard fashion and so that results are not unduly influenced by extraneous factors. See also [control group](#), [artefact](#). (b) In [spiritualism](#), a [discarnate entity](#) who communicates with a [trance medium](#) and who generally controls the [trance](#) state.

Control Group A group of people whose performance is compared with that of experimental subjects. Cf. [experimental group](#).

Corn Circle Circular (or more elaborate) formations found in growing crops, most commonly in Southern Britain. Sometimes they are associated with [UFO](#) sightings. Many formations appear to have been intelligently created and to have some symbolic meaning. Despite several "confessions" made by various individuals and groups, the crop circle mystery remains unsolved.

Correlation An association between two or more events or variables.

Correlation Coefficient A mathematical Psychic Dictionary Index of the degree of association between two or more measures.

Cosmic Consciousness A blissful experience in which the person becomes aware of the whole universe as a living being. See also [altered state of consciousness](#), [mystical experience](#).

Coven A group of [witches](#)

Crisis Apparition An [apparition](#) in which a person is seen within a few hours of an important crisis such as death, accident or sudden illness.

Cross-correspondence (a) Separate items of information, received independently by two or more [mediums](#), which make sense only when pieced together. (b) THE cross-correspondences is a classic case of highly complex cross-correspondences which continued from 1901 to 1932 among a group of [automatists](#) associated with the Society for Psychical Research.

Cryptomnesia Knowledge (acquired in normal ways) that may be revealed without the person remembering its source. Such memories may falsely appear to be paranormal revelations. Sometimes cryptomnesia is used as an explanation for apparently paranormal experiences such as [xenoglossy](#) or [past-life memories](#).

Crystal Gazing Staring into a reflecting surface (e.g., mirror, glass, crystal, liquid) in order to obtain paranormal information. Also known as scrying. See also [divination](#).

Cumberlandism See [contact mind reading](#).

Curse Words spoken or written in order to influence others paranormally, causing them harm. See also [spell](#), [hex](#).

Daemon (Daimon) A guardian [spirit](#) who communicates inspiration and advice. See also [guardian angel](#).

Death Generally understood to be the extinction of an organism's life. Many doctrines assert some form of mental or spiritual [survival](#) of physical death. See also [deathbed experience](#), [haunting](#), [mediumship](#), [near-death experience](#), [reincarnation](#).

Deathbed Experience A dying person's awareness of the presence of dead friends or relatives. See also [near-death experience](#).

Decline Effect A decrease in performance on a [psi](#) test when the test is repeated. Cf. [incline effect](#).

Deja Experience See [deja vu](#).

Deja Vu A person's feeling that current events have been experienced before.

Delta A term used to refer to any kind of [anomalous experience](#).

Dematerialization The paranormal fading or disappearance of a physical object. See also [deport](#).

Demonic Possession [Possession](#) by [evil spirits](#). See also [exorcism](#).

Deport The paranormal movement of objects out of a secure enclosed space. Cf. [apport](#). See also [dematerialization](#), [teleportation](#).

Dice Test [Experimental](#) techniques for investigating [psychokinesis](#), in which a [subject](#) attempts to influence the fall of dice.

Direct Voice A voice heard in a [seance](#) which does not seem to emanate from any person. The voice may seem to come out of thin air, or from a [trumpet](#) used specifically for this purpose. Cf. [indirect voice](#).

Discarnate Entity A [spirit](#) or non-material entity. Often used to refer to the personality of a deceased individual. See also [channeling](#), [communication](#), [mediumship](#), [possession](#), [survival](#).

Displacement Responses on a [psi](#) test that correspond systematically to [targets](#) other than the intended one (e.g., those before or after).

Dissociation Activity performed outside of normal conscious awareness, or mental processes that suggest the existence of separate centres of consciousness.

Divination Practices involving the interpretation of signs or symbols that seek to obtain [oracular](#) knowledge of events. Examples of divinatory practices are [geomancy](#), [tarot](#), [I Ching](#), [sortilege](#), and reading tea leaves.

Divining Rod A forked rod (or sometimes a pair of L-shaped rods) used in [dowsing](#).

DMILS "Direct Mental Interaction with Living Systems". [Psychokinetic](#) influences on physiological processes. See also [Bio-PK](#).

Doppelganger A mirror image or [double](#) of a person. See also [astral body](#).

Double A duplicate of one's own body. See also [astral body](#)

Double Blind An experimental procedure in which neither the [subject](#) nor [experimenter](#) is aware of key features of the [experiment](#).

Down Through Technique (DT) An experimental test for [clairvoyance](#) in which the person guesses the order of a stacked series of [target](#) symbols (e.g., cards) from top to bottom. Cf. [up through technique](#).

Dowsing The paranormal detection of underground water or mineral deposits (or lost persons and objects) using a [divining rod](#) or [pendulum](#).

Dream See [paranormal dream](#).

Drop-in Communicator An uninvited [communicator](#) who 'drops in' at a [sitting](#).

Earthquake Effect A phenomenon produced by the [physical medium](#) D.D. Home, involving the room shaking as if there was an earthquake.

Ecstasy An [altered state of consciousness](#) in which the person experiences great rapture and loss of self-control. Cf. [trance](#).

Ectoplasm A semi-fluid substance exuded by a [physical medium](#) from which [materializations](#) may form.

EEG (Electro-encephalography) A method of recording variations of electrical activity in the cortex of the brain.

Electronic Voice Phenomena (EVP) See [Raudive voices](#).

Elemental Spirit A [spirit](#) associated with one of the classical four elements (fire, earth, air and water). See also [animism](#).

Elongation Paranormal extension of the physical body, reported in some [mystics](#) and [physical mediums](#).

Empath Someone who shows considerable [empathy](#), especially of the apparently [psychic](#) type.

Empathy The ability to understand the experience or emotional state of another person or animal. Often used to refer to an apparently [psychic](#) ability to experience another person's sensations, pain or emotions. Cf. [clairsentience](#), [intuition](#).

Entity See [discarnate entity](#).

ESP See [Extrasensory Perception](#).

ESP Cards See [Zener Cards](#).

Etheric Body Similar to [astral body](#).

Evil Eye Alleged ability of some people to harm others by looking at them.

EVP Electronic Voice Phenomena. See [Raudive voices](#).

Evocation The summoning of (often evil) spirits using a [magical](#) incantation or ritual. Cf. [invocation](#).

Exorcism A religious or quasi-religious rite to drive out evil spirits. See also [possession](#).

Experiment A test carried out under [controlled](#) conditions.

Experimental Group A group of [subjects](#) who undergo a specific [experimental](#) procedure. Often results from this group are compared with those of a [control group](#).

Experimental Parapsychology Parapsychological research involving [experimental](#) methods rather than [survey](#) techniques or the investigation of [spontaneous cases](#).

Experimenter The person who conducts the [experiment](#).

Experimenter Effect Influence that the [experimenter's](#) personality or behaviour may have on the results of an [experiment](#).

Extradimensional Originating outside our normal space-time reality. Cf. [extraterrestrial](#).

Extrasensory Perception (ESP) Paranormal acquisition of information. Includes [clairvoyance](#), [telepathy](#) and [precognition](#). See also [psi](#).

Extraterrestrial Originating beyond planet Earth. Not normally considered to be [extradimensional](#).

Fairy Small, human-like mythical being. May be benevolent or malevolent.

Faith Healing [Healing](#) that is associated with prayer or belief in Divine power.

False Awakening An experience in which a person believes he or she has woken up, but actually is still dreaming.

Faraday Cage A wire mesh enclosure that provides a shield to radio waves.

Feedback The giving of information to [subjects](#) about their performance on a test. See also [biofeedback](#).

Fire Walking Walking on red-hot coals, without pain or damage to the feet.

Flying Saucer A term, coined in 1947, to refer to unknown disk-like aerial objects, often believed to be [extraterrestrial](#) spacecraft. The term has now been largely superseded by "[UFO](#)".

Focal Person Person who is at the centre of [poltergeist](#) activity.

Forced-Choice Test An [ESP](#) test in which the [subject](#) guesses from a predetermined list of alternative [targets](#).

Fortean Phenomena Strange phenomena, especially those which challenge conventional scientific knowledge. Named after the American researcher and writer Charles Fort. Fortean phenomena include those generally considered [paranormal](#), but also bizarre non-paranormal events such as monsters and prodigies, extraordinary coincidences, and unusual rains.

Fortune Telling Various practices which aim to divine future events. See also [divination](#).

Fraud The deliberate faking of paranormal phenomena, generally for the purpose of financial gain, psychological manipulation, or notoriety. Faking for the purpose of entertainment (e.g., by stage [magicians](#) and [mentalists](#)) is not normally classed as fraud.

Free-Response Test An [ESP](#) test in which the [subject](#) responds freely (does not choose from a fixed list of [targets](#)). For example, the subject may write down or [draw](#) their impressions, or may talk freely into a tape recorder. In order to assess the accuracy of the responses, they are compared with various targets (including the actual target) by a [judge](#). See also [preferential matching](#).

Ganzfeld A technique for investigating [ESP](#) in which the person experiences an absence of patterned stimulation. This generally involves the subject wearing halved table-tennis balls over the eyes while listening to hiss ([white noise](#)) through headphones.

General Extrasensory Perception (GESP) [ESP](#) in which it is unclear whether the results are due to [clairvoyance](#), [telepathy](#), [precognition](#) or [retrocognition](#).

Geomancy A system of [divination](#) involving the interpretation of lines or figures.

GESP See [general extrasensory perception](#)

Ghost Popular term for an experience believed to indicate the presence of the [spirit](#) of a deceased person. See also [apparition](#), [haunting](#), [poltergeist](#). [Full definition](#)

Gimmick In [conjuring](#), any small concealed apparatus that is used to produce a [magical](#) effect. Also used by [fraudulent mediums](#).

Glossolalia Unintelligible speech generally uttered in a [dissociated](#) or [trance](#) state. Also known as "speaking in tongues". See also [xenoglossy](#).

"Goat" Name given to a [subject](#) in a [psi](#) test who does not believe in the phenomenon. See also ["sheep"](#), [sheep-goat effect](#).

Guardian Angel An [angel](#) believed to protect the individual. See also [guide](#).

Guide A [spirit](#) who is believed to assist a person's spiritual journey. See also [angel](#), [guardian angel](#)

Hallucination A sensory experience that does not correspond to physical reality. See also [apparition](#).

Haunting Paranormal phenomena such as [apparitions](#), unexplained sounds, smells or other sensations that are associated over a lengthy period of time with a specific location. Cf. [poltergeist](#).

Healer Someone who claims the power of [healing](#).

Healing Generally indicates cures that cannot be explained in terms of accepted medical principles. See also [faith healing](#), [psychic healing](#), [spirit cures](#).

Hellstromism See [contact mind reading](#).

Hex (a) An evil [spell](#) or [magical curse](#). (b) To practice [witchcraft](#).

Hit A [response](#) that accurately matches the [target](#). Cf. [miss](#).

Hot Reading A [reading](#) given in which prior knowledge of the [sitter](#) has been obtained, often using devious or [fraudulent](#) means. Cf. [cold reading](#).

Huna An Hawaiian religious practice involving [clairvoyance](#), [precognition](#), [healing](#), [miracles](#) and [magic](#).

Hyperacuity See [hyperaesthesia](#).

Hyperaesthesia Exceptionally acute sensory awareness.

Hypnagogic Imagery [Imagery](#) occurring in the hypnagogic state (occurring while dropping off to sleep).

Hypnopompic Imagery [Imagery](#) occurring in the hypnopompic state (occurring while waking up).

Hypnosis An [ASC](#) involving a heightened degree of suggestibility. See also [Mesmerism](#).

Hypnotism See [hypnosis](#).

I Ching Ancient Chinese "Book of Changes". It describes 64 hexagrams (patterns of 6 broken and unbroken lines) which are used in a [divinatory](#) practice involving the throwing of yarrow stalks or coins.

Illusion (a) An appearance that leads the person to draw mistaken conclusions. (b) In [conjuring](#), a perceptual trick.

Imagery The ability to perceive images in the mind. These may be visual, auditory, tactile, etc.

Immortality Various beliefs based on the assumption that some aspect of personal existence [survives death](#).

Incline Effect An increase in performance on a [psi](#) test when the test is repeated. Cf. [decline effect](#).

Incorruptibility Inexplicable lack of decay in a corpse.

Indirect Voice [Mediumistic](#) phenomenon in which the [discarnate entity](#) appears to speak using the vocal apparatus of the medium. Often the voice will sound very different from the medium's normal voice. Cf. [direct voice](#).

Intuition The non-paranormal ability to grasp the elements of a situation or to draw conclusions about complex events in ways that go beyond a purely rational or intellectual analysis. Cf. [clairsentience](#), [empathy](#).

Invocation Summoning benevolent spiritual beings. Cf. [evocation](#).

Judge Person who compares [targets](#) and [responses](#) in an [psi experiment](#).

Ka Ancient Egyptian term for the [double](#) or [astral body](#). See also [Ba](#).

Karma Hindu and Buddhist ethical doctrine of "as one sows, so shall one reap". See also [reincarnation](#).

Key Cards Reference cards used to indicate each [target](#) alternative in a [card-guessing](#) test.

Kirlian Photography A photographic method involving high frequency electric current, discovered by S.D. & V. Kirlian in the Soviet Union. Kirlian photographs often show coloured halos or "[auras](#)" surrounding objects.

Kundalini In [Yogic](#) belief, a source of tremendous vital energy that may be stimulated by various practices. Kundalini, or the "Serpent Power", is believed to provide energy for paranormal phenomena.

Laying on of Hands A [healing](#) practice, in which the [healer](#)'s hands are placed on or near the body of the sick person.

Levitation The paranormal raising or suspension of an object or person.

Life after Death See [survival](#).

Life Review Flashback memories of the whole of a person's life, often associated with the [near-death experience](#).

Lucid Dreaming Dreaming in which the person is aware that the experience is a dream. Often associated with feelings of aliveness and freedom, and with the ability to control dream events.

Lucidity (a) An early term for [clairvoyance](#). (b) [Lucid dreaming](#).

Luminous Phenomena The experience of strange lights or glows, often around objects or people. See also [aura](#).

Lycanthropy The supposed [magical](#) transformation of a person into the form of a wolf. See also [shape-shifting](#), [therianthropy](#), [werewolf](#).

Macro-PK [Psychokinetic](#) effects that can be directly observed rather than only inferred from [statistical](#) analysis. Cf. [micro-PK](#).

Magic (a) Practices that aim to use paranormal or spiritual means to influence events. See also [white magic](#), [black magic](#). (b) The art of [conjuring](#).

Magician A person who practices [magic](#).

Majority Vote Technique An [ESP](#) procedure in which several [subjects](#) guess a [target](#) (or one subject makes several guesses). The most frequent guess is used as the [response](#).

Mantra A sacred sound or sacred syllables used in [meditation](#). See also [transcendental meditation](#).

Match An alternative term for [hit](#).

Matching See [preferential matching](#), [matching tests](#).

Matching Tests [Card guessing](#) tests in which the subject uses [key cards](#) when making guesses. See also [blind matching](#), [open matching](#), [screen touch matching](#).

Materialization The formation of a visible and tangible object or human shape during a [seance](#). Cf. [apport](#).

Mean Chance Expectation (MCE) The most likely [chance](#) score in a [psi](#) test.

Medicine Man / Medicine Woman A witchdoctor or [shaman](#).

Meditation Mental or physical-mental techniques which aim to produce spiritually desirable states of consciousness. See also [ASC](#), [Yoga](#).

Medium A person believed to act as an intermediary between [discarnate entities](#) and the living. See also [clairvoyant medium](#), [trance medium](#), [mental mediumship](#), [physical mediumship](#).

Mediumship Activity of a [medium](#).

Mentalism A branch of [conjuring](#) involving the simulation of [psi](#).

Mental Mediumship The paranormal obtaining of information by a [medium](#). Cf. [physical mediumship](#).

Mesmerism A system of [healing](#) developed by F.A. Mesmer, involving the induction of [trance](#) states and the supposed transfer of [animal magnetism](#). People in Mesmeric trance often showed paranormal abilities such as [clairvoyance](#).

Message See [communication](#).

Metal Bending [Psychokinetic](#) ability to bend metal objects. A phenomenon popularised by Uri Geller.

Metamorphosis See [shape-shifting](#).

Metempsychosis Another term for [reincarnation](#).

Micro-PK [Psychokinetic](#) effects that cannot be directly observed, but only inferred from the [statistical](#) analysis of data. Cf. [macro-PK](#).

Mind Reading See [telepathy](#).

Miracle A beneficial event attributed to [supernatural](#) or divine intervention.

Misdirection Techniques used by [conjurers](#) and [mentalists](#) to distract a person's attention or confuse their thinking.

Miss A mismatch between the [target](#) and [response](#). Cf. [hit](#).

Mnemonist A person who has learned techniques that enable extraordinary feats of memory.

Morphic Resonance A term coined by Rupert Sheldrake to refer to the way in which the "morphogenetic field" (underlying form) of an object or organism may influence distant fields.

Motor Automatism See [Automatism](#)

Multiple Personality A psychiatric condition in which the person manifests two or more distinct and separate personalities at different times. Cf. [possession](#).

Muscle Reading See [contact mind reading](#).

Mystic (a) A person who has [mystical experiences](#). (b) Used loosely to refer to [psychics](#), [mediums](#) or romantics.

Mystical Experience [ASCs](#) involving experiences of [ecstasy](#), unity, timelessness, loss of self, divine revelation, etc.

Mysticism Religious or spiritual doctrines which argue that the human mind or soul can directly experience the divine. See also [mystical experience](#), [transpersonal psychology](#).

NDE See [near-death experience](#).

Near-Death Experience (NDE) Experiences of people after they have been pronounced clinically dead, or been very close to death. Typical features of the NDE are an [OBE](#), [life review](#), a tunnel experience, light, coming to a boundary (marking death), seeing dead friends and relatives, experiencing a loving or divine presence, and making a choice (or being told) to return. Occasionally NDEs can be frightening and distressing. NDEs often have profound effects on the person's later life. See also [cerebral anoxia](#), [survival](#).

Necromancy [Black magic](#) practices involving communicating with the dead.

Newspaper Test (a) A [communication](#) in which the [spirit](#) forecasts an item in a future day's newspaper. (b) An [conjuring](#) effect in which a [magician](#) or [mentalists](#) predicts a future newspaper item.

Null hypothesis The hypothesis that [experimental](#) results are due to [chance](#).

Numerology A system of [divination](#) involving the interpretation of numbers.

OBE See [out of body experience](#).

Object Reading See [psychometry](#).

Occam's Razor The principle that we should always prefer the simplest explanation of events.

Occultism Esoteric systems of belief and practice that assume the existence of mysterious forces and entities.

Omen A sign that foretells events.

One-Ahead Principle In [mentalism](#), a procedure for sequentially revealing information where the revealing of one item gives the mentalist the next answer. Also used by [fraudulent clairvoyants](#).

OOBE See [out of body experience](#).

Open Deck A series of cards used in a [card guessing](#) test where each card is chosen randomly and independently. This enables each [target](#) to be selected any number of times. [Statistical analysis](#) of research data using an open deck differs from statistical analysis of data using a [closed deck](#).

Open Matching (OM) A [card guessing](#) procedure in which [key cards](#) are placed face up on the table. The [subject](#) then places the unseen [target](#) cards in piles in front of each key card, according to their guesses. See also [blind matching](#).

Oracle (a) An answer to a question, believed to come from the gods. (b) a shrine at which these answers are given.

Orgone Energy A term used by Wilhelm Reich to refer to a universal life force, associated with sexuality.

Ouija Board A board with letters and numbers on which messages are spelled out by unconsciously moving (with the fingers) a glass or [planchette](#). See also [automatism](#). See also our full article about **OUIJA BOARDS** Ouija (pronounced wee-juh or wee-jee) refers to the belief that one can receive messages during a séance by the use of a Ouija board (also called a talking board or spirit board) and planchette. The fingers of the participants are placed on the planchette which then moves about a board covered with numbers, letters and symbols so as to spell out messages. ([Wikipedia](#))

Out In [conjuring](#) and [mentalism](#), a convincing explanation for an apparent failure, or a convincing alternative ending to an effect that has not worked as planned. Also used by [fraudulent clairvoyants](#) and [mediums](#).

Out of Body Experience (OBE, OOBE) A fully conscious experience in which the person's centre of awareness appears to be outside of the physical body. See also [autoscopy](#), [near-death experience](#).

Palmistry The art of assessing a person's character and forecasting life events by examining features of the hand. See also [divination](#).

Paranormal Beside or beyond the normal. Inexplicable in terms of our ordinary understanding or current scientific knowledge.

Paranormal Dream Dreams in which the dream imagery provides paranormal knowledge (e.g., [ESP](#) or [precognition](#)). See also [announcing dream](#), [lucid dreaming](#).

Parapsychology Term coined by J.B. Rhine to refer to the experimental and quantitative study of paranormal phenomena. Now generally used instead of "[psychical research](#)" to refer to all scientific investigation of the paranormal. Cf. [transpersonal psychology](#).

Past-Life Memories Mental images that are believed to be memories of previous lives. See also [reincarnation](#), [past-life regression](#).

Past-Life Regression A technique of [hypnosis](#) involving [regressing](#) people to supposed previous lives. See also [reincarnation](#).

Pendulum An object suspended by a thread. Movements of a pendulum are often used by [dowsers](#) to locate objects or answer questions.

Percipient Person who receives impressions in an [ESP](#) test. See also [agent](#), [subject](#).

Phantasm An [apparition](#).

Phenomenology An approach to research that aims to describe and clarify a person's own experience and understanding of an event or phenomenon.

Phrenology The reading of character and mental ability from the shape of a person's skull.

Physical Mediumship The production of paranormal physical phenomena (lights, sounds, [materialization](#), [elongation](#), [levitation](#), etc.) by a [medium](#). Physical mediumship often (but not always) involves a state of [trance](#). See also [mental mediumship](#).

Picture Drawing A [free-response ESP](#) test in which the [subject](#) attempts to draw impressions of the [target](#).

Pilot Study A preliminary study, generally of modest scale.

PK See [psychokinesis](#)

Placebo An inactive treatment often given to a [control group](#).

Placement Test A test for [PK](#) in which the subject attempts to influence the place in which dice or other objects land. See also [dice test](#).

Planchette A small platform on casters generally used with a [ouija board](#). Sometimes used with an attached pencil to produce [automatic writing](#).

Plant Psi [ESP](#) exhibited by plants.

PMIR See [psi-mediated instrumental response](#).

Pocomania A Jamaican [spiritist](#) religion. See also [Voodoo](#).

Poltergeist German word meaning "noisy or troublesome spirit". Poltergeist activity may include unexplained noises, movements of objects, outbreaks of fire, floods, pricks or scratches to a person's body. Unlike [hauntings](#), which are associated with specific locations, poltergeists typically focus on a person (the focal person or poltergeist agent) who is often a young child or adolescent. Many [physical mediums](#) experienced poltergeist activity in their childhood.

Possession Refers to cases in which a person's body is apparently taken over by another personality or entity. Cf. [multiple personality](#). See also [demonic possession](#), [discarnate entity](#).

Prayer A sincere attempt to communicate with a spiritual being or power.

Precognition The paranormal awareness of future events. See also [prediction](#), [premonition](#), [prophecy](#).

Prediction A statement that claims to foretell future events. Cf. [premonition](#), [precognition](#), [prophecy](#).

Preexistence Belief that the personality or [soul](#) exists prior to birth. Cf. [survival](#). See also [reincarnation](#).

Preferential Matching Technique in which a [judge](#) ranks a [subject's](#) [free responses](#) in terms of their similarity to various possible [targets](#).

Premonition An experience believed to foretell future events. See also [prediction](#), [precognition](#), [prophecy](#).

Presence A subjective feeling that a person, animal or [discarnate entity](#) is present.

Probability The likelihood that results in a test were due to [chance](#). See also [significance](#).

Process research Research that aims to investigate factors affecting [psi](#). Cf. [proof research](#).

Proof research Research that aims to demonstrate the existence of [psi](#). Cf. [process research](#).

Prophecy (a) A [prediction](#), usually resulting from a sense of spiritual revelation. (b) The ability to receive prophetic revelations.

Proxy Sitting A [seance](#) in which another person sits in on behalf of the person receiving a [communication](#).

Pseudo-Random Numbers Numbers generated by an electronic calculator or computer using a complex mathematical algorithm that simulates a random process. Although the numbers generated are essentially unpredictable, they are not strictly random. See also [random numbers](#), [random event generator](#).

Psi A term used to encompass all paranormal abilities. Includes both [ESP](#) and [PK](#) abilities.

Psi-Hitting [Significantly](#) better than [chance](#) performance on a [psi](#) test.

Psi-Mediated Instrumental Response (PMIR) Theory put forward by Rex Stanford that [psi](#) activity is used to serve an organism's needs.

Psi-Missing [Significantly](#) worse than [chance](#) performance on a [psi](#) test. Psi-missing is also evidence for psi, because a [target](#) can only be missed consistently if the person "knows" what it is.

Psyche Generally refers to the mind.

Psychedelic Literally "revealing mind". A class of plants and drugs (e.g., peyote, psilocybin, LSD) that can produce florid [ASCs](#).

Psychic A person who exhibits [psi](#) ability (also used as an adjective).

Psychical Research Term coined in the late 19th century to refer to the scientific study of the [paranormal](#). Now largely superseded by "[parapsychology](#)".

Psychic Healing Forms of [healing](#) using [psychic powers](#). See also [laying on of hands](#), [psychic surgery](#).

Psychic Photography General term used to refer to paranormal photographic images. See also [Kirlian photography](#), [spirit photography](#), [thoughtography](#).

Psychic Surgery Actual or simulated surgical procedures carried out by [healers](#).

Psychokinesis (PK) The paranormal influence of the mind on physical events and processes.

Psychometry Obtaining paranormal knowledge using a physical object as a focus. Also known as object reading.

Pyramid Power Belief that pyramid shapes can produce paranormal effects.

Qualitative Method A research method involving the collection of non-quantitative data (e.g., observations, interviews, subjective reports, case studies). Cf. [quantitative method](#).

Quantitative Method A research method involving the collection and [statistical](#) analysis of numerical data. Cf. [qualitative method](#).

Radiesthesia Theories based on the assumption that living organisms emit some kind of radiation or emanation that is capable of being detected using instruments or by [dowsing](#). See also [aura](#), [radionics](#).

Radionics Use of instruments to detect radiation from living organisms. See also [radiesthesia](#).

Random Refers to events that are, in principle, haphazard and unpredictable. See also [chance](#).

Random Event Generator (REG) An electronic device which uses a random physical process (e.g., radioactive decay) to generate [random](#) events or [random numbers](#).

Random Number Generator (RNG) See [random event generator](#).

Random Numbers Numbers generated in an unpredictable, haphazard sequence.

Random Number Tables A printed table of [random](#) numbers, usually made up of several rows and columns of computer-generated numbers. To use the table a starting value is chosen by randomly selecting a row and column (e.g., by throwing a dice). Successive numbers are then chosen by working through the table using any previously chosen systematic rule. Suitable rules might be (1) moving horizontally to the right, skipping alternate numbers, or (2) moving vertically down, selecting every fifth number. The selected random numbers may then be used, for example, to determine [target](#) sequences.

Raps The name given to unexplained knocking sounds associated with [physical mediumship](#) and [poltergeist](#) activity.

Raudive Voices Intelligible voices recorded on magnetic tape under conditions of silence or [white noise](#) which are heard only when the tape is played. A phenomenon discovered by Konstantin Raudive.

Real Psychics - find out what makes for a real psychic and medium. Real psychic readings and how to spot a fake.

Reading Information given by a [psychic](#) or [medium](#) to a [sitter](#). See also [cold reading](#), [hot reading](#).

Rebirth In Buddhism, the belief that there is some continuity of mind from one life to the next. Buddhism, however, does not accept the existence of the individual [soul](#) and therefore does not view rebirth as the soul's literal re-incarnation. Cf. [reincarnation](#). See also [bardo](#).

Receiver See [percipient](#).

Recurrent Spontaneous Psychokinesis (RSPK) A technical term for [poltergeist](#) activity.

Regression (a) a [statistical](#) technique that enables predictions to be made from a set of data. (b) a technique used in [hypnosis](#), involving suggesting to hypnotized persons that they are returning to an earlier time. Sometimes the regression occurs spontaneously, without suggestion. See also [past-life regression](#).

Reincarnation The belief that some aspect of a person's being (e.g., consciousness, personality, or [soul](#)) survives [death](#) and can be reborn in a new body at some future date. Reincarnation is often seen as a repeating cycle of death and rebirth in which future lives are influenced by past and present actions through the law of [karma](#). Cf. [rebirth](#).

Remote Viewing (RV) An [ESP](#) procedure in which a [percipient](#) attempts to become aware psychically of the experience of an [agent](#) who is at a distant, unknown [target](#) location.

Response An action made by a [subject](#) in an [experiment](#).

Response Bias Tendency of a [subject](#) to prefer particular [responses](#).

Retroactive Psychokinesis Paranormal influence that an [agent](#) can have on an [experiment](#) after it has been completed.

Retrocognition Paranormal knowledge of past events.

Ritual Magic [Magical](#) activity involving rites and ceremonies.

RSPK See [recurrent spontaneous psychokinesis](#).

Run A set of [trials](#) in a [psi](#) test.

Santeria A Cuban [spiritist](#) religion. See also [Voodoo](#).

Sceptic A person inclined to discount the reality of the [paranormal](#) and to be critical of [parapsychological](#) research. Generally seeks rational or scientific explanations for the phenomena studied by parapsychologists.

Score Number of [hits](#) obtained by a [subject](#) in a [psi](#) test.

Scoring The process of determining a [subject's](#) [score](#).

Screen Touch Matching (STM) A [card-guessing](#) procedure in which the [subject](#) and [experimenter](#) sit on opposite sides of a screen which has a small gap at the bottom. [Key cards](#) are hung on the screen in front of the subject (the faces may be seen or unseen). Underneath each

key card is a blank card that can be seen by both subject and experimenter. The experimenter holds the [target](#) cards and the subject indicates the guess on each [trial](#) by pointing to the corresponding blank card. The experimenter then places the card in a pile on his or her side of the screen in a position corresponding to that of the indicated blank card. See also [blind matching](#), [open matching](#).

Scrying See [crystal gazing](#).

Seance A [mediumistic](#) session.

Second Sight Another name for [clairvoyance](#).

Sender Another name for [agent](#).

Sensitive Another name for a [psychic](#).

Sensory deprivation Conditions of greatly restricted sensory input. See also [ganzfeld](#).

Series A sequence of [runs](#) in a [psi experiment](#).

Serpent Power See [Kundalini](#).

Shaman A witchdoctor or medicine (wo)man who [communicates](#) with spirits while in [trance](#) and who has the power of [healing](#). May also show other paranormal abilities.

Shape-Shifting Paranormal ability to assume the form of another person, an animal or other entity. See also [lycanthropy](#), [therianthropy](#), [werewolf](#).

"Sheep" Name given to a [subject](#) in a [psi](#) test who believes in the phenomenon. See also ["goat"](#), [sheep-goat effect](#).

Sheep-Goat Effect Effect, discovered by the parapsychologist Gertrude Schmeidler, in which ["sheep"](#) score higher than [mean chance expectation \(MCE\)](#) on [psi](#) tests, while ["goats"](#) score lower than MCE.

Siddhis Name given to paranormal powers associated with the practice of [Yoga](#).

Significance Results of an experiment are said to be [statistically](#) significant when they are very unlikely to be due to [chance](#) (and hence, in a [psi](#) test, are more likely to be due to psi). The chance probability is reported as the "significance level". To be considered significant, the chance probability must generally be less than 1 in 20 (5%, or 0.05).

Simultaneous Dream A dream whose elements correspond closely with those in the dream of another person.

Sitter A person who has a session with a [medium](#).

Sitting A [seance](#).

Sixth sense Popular term for [ESP](#).

Skeptic See [sceptic](#).

Slate-Writing Writing that appears on a slate during a [seance](#). Often produced by [fraudulent mediums](#) and [mentalists](#).

Sleep Paralysis An (often frightening) state of seeming to be awake but unable to move. See also [false awakening](#).

Somnambule (a) a person who performs physical activity while asleep (e.g., sleep-walking). (b) a person in a deep [hypnotic](#) state.

Sorcery [Black magic](#)

Sortilege [Divination](#) by lots.

Soul The spiritual element of a person, generally believed to be immortal. See also [Ba](#), [spirit](#), [survival](#).

Space Brothers [Extraterrestrial](#) entities, [channeled](#) by some [mediums](#). See also [discarnate entity](#).

Speaking in Tongues See [glossolalia](#)

SPE See [subjective paranormal experience](#).

Spectre A [ghost](#) or [apparition](#).

Spell Written or spoken words believed to have [magical](#) power.

Spirit (a) a [discarnate entity](#). (b) [soul](#) (c) Divine essence.

Spirit Communication See [communication](#).

Spirit Cure [Healing](#) that is believed to result from the intervention of [spirits](#).

Spiritism See [spiritualism](#).

Spirit Photography Photographs of figures or faces, believed by some to be those of deceased persons. These photographs are generally revealed as [fraudulent](#).

Spiritualism (Spiritism) Religious doctrines that advocate [communication](#) between the living and the spirits of the dead using a [medium](#) as intermediary.

Spontaneous Cases Paranormal phenomena that occur in everyday life, unsought and unexpected.

Spontaneous Human Combustion (SHC) Refers to cases in which a badly burned human body has been discovered in circumstances suggesting that the fire originated spontaneously in or on the body of the victim.

Statistics Mathematical techniques for analysing and interpreting numerical data.

Stigmata Unexplained markings on a person's body that correspond to the wounds of Christ.

Stimulus See [target](#).

Subject A person whose [psi](#) ability is being investigated.

Subjective Paranormal Experience (SPE) Or Subjective Psi Experience. An experience that the person who has it believes to be paranormal.

Subjective Psi Experience (SPE) See [subjective paranormal experience](#).

Subliminal Perception Perceiving without conscious awareness.

Super-ESP Hypothesis The suggestion that people are capable of unlimited [ESP](#). The super-ESP hypothesis is often presented as an alternative to the [survival](#) hypothesis in explaining [mediumistic](#) phenomena (the medium is believed to obtain information using super-ESP powers and not directly from the [spirit](#) of a deceased person).

Supernatural Paranormal

Survey A method of data collection that involves interviewing (or giving questionnaires to) a representative and often large group of people.

Survival The belief that some aspect of the person (e.g., consciousness, mind, personality, [soul](#)) lives on after death of the body.

Synchronicity A term used by C.G. Jung to refer to coincidental events that are meaningfully but not [causally](#) connected. The great Swiss psychologist, C. G. Jung, defines "synchronicity" as a meaningful coincidence. A classic example of synchronicity, told by Jung himself, concerns a crisis that occurred during therapy. Jung's patient was a woman whose highly rational approach to life made any form of treatment particularly difficult. On one occasion, the woman related a dream in which a golden scarab appeared. Jung knew that such a beetle was of great significance to the ancient Egyptians, for it was taken as a symbol of rebirth. As the woman was talking, the psychiatrist in his darkened office heard a tapping at the window behind him. He drew the curtain, opened the window, and in flew a gold-green scarab—called a rose chafer, or *Cetonia aureate*. Jung showed the woman "her" scarab and from that moment the patient's excessive rationality was pierced and their sessions together became more profitable. ([Coming to terms](#))

Table-Tilting Mysterious movements of a table, usually occurring in a [seance](#) when a group of people place their hands on the surface of the table. Often the movements are interpreted as [spirit communications](#). Also known as table-turning or table-tipping.

Table-Turning See [table-tilting](#).

Target The object or event which the subject attempts to perceive ([ESP](#) tests) or influence ([PK](#) tests).

Tarot A special deck of cards (usually 78) used in [fortune telling](#).

Telekinesis Paranormal movement of objects.

Telepathy Paranormal awareness of another person's experience (thoughts, feelings, etc.). In practice it is difficult to distinguish between telepathy and [clairvoyance](#). See also [ESP](#).

Teleportation Paranormal transportation of objects to a distant place. See also [apport](#), [deport](#).

Temporal Lobe Activity Electrical activity in the temporal lobes of the brain. Often associated with strange sensations, time distortions and hallucinations. Sometimes used as an explanation for seemingly paranormal experiences such as [apparitions](#) and [alien abduction experiences](#).

Theosophy Quasi-religious and philosophical system of the Theosophical Society, founded in 1875 by Madame Blavatsky. Its paranormal claims were controversially and damningly reported upon by the Society for Psychical Research in 1885.

Therianthropy The supposed ability to change from human to animal form and back. See also [lycanthropy](#), [shape-shifting](#), [werewolf](#).

Theurgy [Magical](#) practices which aim to contact and communicate with the gods.

Thoughtography Paranormal ability to produce images on photographic film (e.g., by concentrating on a mental image). Most famously demonstrated by Ted Serios. See also [psychic photography](#).

Thought Transference See [telepathy](#)

Trance A [dissociated state of consciousness](#), generally involving reduced awareness of surroundings and external events.

Trance Medium A person who enters a state of [trance](#) in order to produce [mediumistic](#) phenomena.

Transcendental Meditation A technique of [meditation](#) taught by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, involving the repetition of a sound ([mantra](#)).

Transmigration of Souls See [reincarnation](#).

Transpersonal Psychology The study of experiences, beliefs and practices that suggest that the sense of self can extend beyond our personal or individual reality. The subject matter of transpersonal psychology overlaps to some extent with [parapsychology](#), but the two disciplines tend to have different approaches and emphases. Parapsychology is primarily concerned to investigate evidence for and against the reality of [paranormal](#) phenomena. Transpersonal psychology, on the other hand, is more interested in investigating the transpersonal significance of such phenomena (i.e., the ways in which they may give people a sense of connectedness with a larger, more universal or spiritual reality). See also [mysticism](#).

Travelling Clairvoyance (a) An early term for the [out of body experience](#). (b) [Clairvoyance](#) exhibited when a [subject](#) travels in imagination to another location.

Trial In [psi](#) tests, a single attempt to demonstrate paranormal ability (e.g., one attempt to guess a [card](#) or one attempt to influence the fall of the [dice](#)).

Trumpet A conical tube (often luminous) used in [seances](#) to produce [direct voice](#) communication.

Ufology The study of [UFOs](#).

Umbanda A Brazilian [spiritist](#) religion. See also [Candomble](#), [Voodoo](#).

Unidentified Flying Object (UFO) Unexplained sightings of lights or objects in the sky, often taken to be evidence of [extraterrestrial](#) visitations.

Up Through Technique An [experimental](#) test for [clairvoyance](#) in which the [subject](#) guesses the order of a stacked series of [target](#) symbols (e.g., [cards](#)) from bottom to top. Cf. [down through technique](#).

Veridical Information or experience that is confirmed by facts and events.

Veridical Dream A dream that corresponds to real events (past, present or future) that are unknown to the dreamer.

Vision A religious [apparition](#).

Voodoo A [spiritist](#) and [ancestor](#) religion, originating in Africa, and now found predominantly in Haiti, Jamaica and Cuba. [Magical](#) rites, [trance](#) states and [possession](#) all play a major role in Voodoo. See also [Candomble](#), [Pocomania](#), [Santeria](#), [Umbanda](#), [zombie](#).

Werewolf A person who has been [magically](#) transformed into a wolf or other dangerous beast. See also [lycanthropy](#), [therianthropy](#), [shape-shifting](#).

White Magic [Magical](#) spells or rituals to produce beneficial effects. Cf. [black magic](#).

White Noise A hiss-like sound, formed by combining all audible frequencies. See also [ganzfeld](#).

Wicca System of [witchcraft](#), especially as practiced today in western countries.

Witch Someone who practices [witchcraft](#).

Witchcraft Folk [magic](#). See also [wicca](#).

Witchdoctor A medicine wo(man) or [shaman](#).

Xenoglossy The ability to speak or write in a language that has not been learned. See also [glossolalia](#).

Yoga Religious philosophy originating in India. It advocates the use of physical and psycho-spiritual techniques to lead the person to higher consciousness. See also [meditation](#), [siddhis](#).

Zener Cards Set of 25 cards (5 each of circle, square, Greek cross, five-pointed star, three wavy lines) designed by the perceptual psychologist Karl Zener for use in [card-guessing](#) tests of [ESP](#). Also known as ESP cards.

Zombie A corpse that has been partly brought back to ([soul](#)-less) life by [magic](#). See also [Voodoo](#).

Absent Healing: Healing that takes place when the healer is not in direct contact with the person to be healed.

Absent Sitter: A person, not present during a sitting, on whose behalf readings is given.

Acupuncture: Traditional Chinese medical practice that involves sticking needles into specific locations on the body.

Agent: a human being, typically a teenage female, who unknowing directs poltergeist energy.

Altered State of Consciousness (A.S.C.): Any state of consciousness that is different from "normal" states of waking or sleeping.

Akashic Records: "Memories" of all experiences since the beginning of time, believed by some mystical doctrines to be stored permanently in a spiritual substance (Akasha). Index

Alien Abduction: Experience Reported experiences of being abducted by alien creatures, often into spacecraft. Abductees often experience lost time and suffer loss of memory. When memories are recovered, often using hypnotic regression, abductees may report that surgical operations were performed on them. See also temporal lobe activity.

Alpha Rhythm: Electrical activity in the brain (about 10 cycles per second) associated with a state of mental relaxation.

Amulet: an object that has the power to ward off ghosts and evil spirits.

Animal Magnetism: A term coined by F.A. Mesmer to refer to a putative force or fluid capable of being transmitted from one person to another, producing healing effects.

Animal Mutilation: Refers to cases in which animal corpses (often cattle) have been found with bizarre injuries that do not seem to have a normal explanation in terms of illness, accident or action of predators. Cuts and injuries often appear to have been carried out with surgical precision. Typically the corpse is drained of blood. Certain body parts may be absent (e.g., genitals).

Animal Psi: Paranormal abilities exhibited by animals. Also known as "Anpsi".

Animism: Religious practices based on the belief that all living things and natural objects have their individual spiritual essence or soul.

Announcing Dream: a dream believed to announce an individual's rebirth. See also reincarnation.

Anomalous Experience: A general term referring to unusual experiences that cannot be explained in terms of current scientific knowledge.

Anomalous Phenomena: Natural phenomena that cannot be explained in terms of current scientific knowledge.

Ancestor Worship: Religious practices involving the veneration of dead ancestors.

Angel: Benevolent spiritual beings who help and watch over people.

Apparition: The disembodied soul or spirit that can be seen visually.

Asport: When a solid object seemingly appears from out of nowhere, with the help of the spirits in the presence of a medium.

Asport: When a solid object is teleported to a different location with the help of the spirits in the presence of a medium.

Artefact: In parapsychology, false evidence of paranormal phenomena, due to some extraneous normal influence.

Astral Body: The soul of an individual projected outside of their bodies.
Astral Projection See Out-Of-Body (OBE).

Astrology: A theory and practice which attempts to identify the ways in which astronomical events are correlated with events on earth (e.g., with an individual's personality and biography, or with social and political trends)

Atmospheric Apparition: Not actually a ghost or spirit, but instead a "visual imprint" of people and events that was left behind in the environment that continues to replay.

Aura: a field of energy believed by some to surround living creatures.

Automatic Writing: A type of communication with ghosts or spirits where they take control over the writer's hand and write out a message.

Automatism: an unconscious or spontaneous muscular movement caused by ghosts or the spirits. Automatic Writing is one form of Automatism.

Banshee: Omen spirits of Scotland and Ireland.

Channeling: A form of spirit communication where an unseen entity possesses a medium in a controlled environment to impart guidance, wisdom or future events. The channeled entity could be a deceased human being, an Angel, Demon, Elemental or other higher plain spirit.

Charms: A spell or object possessing magic power.

Clairaudience: A person's ability to hear spirits.

Clairvoyance: Either an internal or external vision of present or future events, spirits, objects, places, and people.

Cold Reading: A psychic reading given with no prior knowledge of the sitter.

Collective Apparition: A ghost or spirit sighting simultaneously by more than one living person.

Collect Unconscious: Form of analytical psychology developed by Carl Jung. It is the collective memory of all the humanity's past and is held somewhere inside the unconscious mind.

Crisis Apparition: Ghosts that appear to loved ones and close friends just before or soon after their death.

Cross Correspondence: Information received from the spirit world.

Crossroads Point: where two roads intersect. Said to be a focus point of supernatural energy. **Death:** The grim reaper perhaps the spirit that is behind your fate or guides your soul after death to where it's going.

Death Bed Apparitions: See Crisis Apparition.

Demon: Fallen angels associated with evil.

Direct Voice Phenomenon (DVP): The voice of a ghost or spirit being spoken to the sitters of a séance. The voice usually comes from some point near the medium, but not through the medium. Sometimes a spirit horn or trumpet is used.

Direct Writing: When ghost or spirit's handwriting appears directly on a previously unmarked, unwritten surface.

Drop-In Communicator: A ghost, spirit or entity that makes its presence known at a séance.

Dowsing: The paranormal detection of underground water or mineral deposits (or lost persons and objects) using a divining rod or pendulum.

Dybbuk: A Jewish legend. The restless soul of a deceased human being that enters the body of a living person and takes possession.

Earth Lights: Luminous phenomena typically shaped in ball form or irregular patches of light appearing randomly and defying explanation.

Ectoplasm: Ectoplasm can be either a solid, liquid or vaporous substance produced by ghosts or spirits; it is usually a milky white color and has an ozone smell. Some forms of ectoplasm are known to move in lifelike patterns.

Electronic Voice Phenomena (EVP): EVP is the attempt to capture a ghost or spirits voice on audio recording tapes. Typically there is no voice heard to the people present in the recording but after reviewing the tapes there are strange voices recorded.

Electro-Magnetic Field (EMF) Detectors: Handheld scientific instruments that can pick up electronic and magnetic fields over different frequencies. They can read changes and distortions in the normal electro-magnetic fields.

Elemental Spirit: A spirit associated with one of the classical four elements (fire, earth, air and water).

Energy Vortex: see Ectoplasm.

Extrasensory Perception (ESP): The acquisition of information by means beyond the five human senses.

Exorcism: A religious rite used to cast out a ghost, spirit or entity from a living persons body or a particular location.

Exorcist: A religious "holy man" who conducts an exorcism within the paranormal realm.

Fairy: Small, human-like mythical being. May be benevolent or malevolent.

False Awakening: An experience in which a person believes he or she has woken up, but actually is still dreaming.

Family Apparitions: Ghosts that haunt one particular family. Their appearance usually means that someone within the family is about to die.

Focal Person: Person who is at the center of poltergeist activity.

Ghost: The visual appearance of a spirit or soul of a deceased being, human or animal. The disembodied soul or life-force.

Ghost Catcher: A wind chime like device that makes noise as a ghost or spirit passes by it.

Ghost Hunt: An attempt made by the living to find and see a ghost or spirit.

Ghost Hunter: A living individual who searches out and sometime finds and identifies ghosts and spirits.

Ghost Investigation: A scientific endeavor, in a controlled environment, set up to communicate, record, and capture visual evidence of the existence of ghosts.

Ghost Lights: See Earth Lights.

Ghost buster: A living person who can remove an unwanted ghost, spirit, entity or poltergeist activity from a particular location.

Ghoul: Evil spirit or monster that robs graves and feeds off of the flesh of the dead.

Gray Lady: The ghost of a woman who has died at the hands of a lover or waits for the return of a loved one.

Guardian Angel: An angel believed to protect the individual.

Halloween: All Hallows Eve, is the night of October 31st when the spirit and nor- mal world allegedly become one.

Hallucination: A false and distorted perception of reality.

Haunt: A place where a ghost or ghosts frequently return.

Haunting: The continuous manifestation of inexplicable phenomena associated with the presence of ghosts or spirits attached to a particular location.

Haunted Objects: Jewelry, furniture, clothing, etc, that seems to be haunted by a past owner or have been cursed.

Hypnotism: An induced trance or sleep state.

Ley Lines: Invisible lines that run between sacred objects or locations.

Levitation: The paranormal raising or suspension of an object or person.

Lucid Dreams: A dream where the dreamer does not know that they are dreaming.

Luminous Phenomena: The experience of strange lights or glows, often around objects or people.

Magnetometer: A technical device used to study the strength, direction and fluctuation or magnetic fields.

Marian Apparition: The appearance of the Virgin Mary.

Materialization: The paranormal manifestation of physical objects, animals or people.

Medium: A person with a gift to communicate with ghosts and spirits on behalf of the living.

Modern Apparitions: "New" Ghosts of deceased individuals. They appear in fashion from the current time.

Near-Death Experience (NDE): A paranormal phenomenon in which a person clinically dies or comes very close to death only to be revived and then can recall in great detail stories of spiritual worlds and other supernatural events.

Necromancer: A person usually considered a wizard or sorcerer, who can raise the dead and command the spirits to obtain information about the future.

Necromancy: A form of prophecy performed by a necromancer.

Omen: A foretelling of a future event.

Oracle: A seer who can communicate with ghosts, spirits and Gods to obtain information.

Orb: A mass of energy in the shape of a ball, there are several classifications depending on size, ghostly apparitions are usually always associated with an orb and are present.

Ouija Board: A board with letters and numbers used by people who are attempting to communicate with ghosts or spirits.

Out-Of-Body (OBE): Also called Astral Projection. The phenomenon in which a living person's spirit can exit their body, travel the earth and other spiritual worlds and then return back to their bodies.

Paranormal: Beyond the normal.

Parapsychology: The scientific study of unusual events associated with the paranormal human experience and PSI subjects.

Percipient: A living person who sees a ghost, spirit or paranormal event.

Phantom Animals: Ghosts of deceased animals.

Phantom Hitchhiker or Traveler: A ghost or spirit that haunts a particular stretch of road or route. Phantom Hitchhikers ask for rides only to suddenly disappear when they reach their destination.

Photographic Apparitions: Ghosts and spirits that you can't see, but appear in photographs after they are developed.

Planchette: A pointer used with an Ouija Board to communicate with ghosts, spirits or higher plane entities.

Poltergeist: "Noisy Ghost." Poltergeists are invisible masses of spirit energy that may or may not be connected to a living human Agent. Some of the most common poltergeist activities include loud unexplained noise, levitations, the moving of objects, and electrical problems.

Possession: When a person's mind and body are taken over by ghosts, spirits or other supernatural entities such as demons.

Precognition: The paranormal awareness of future events.

PSI: A general term used to denote the unknown factors responsible for a variety of paranormal phenomena.

Psychic: Popular term used to denote a person who regularly uses, or who appears to be especially gifted with, psi abilities.

Psychic Echo: When sounds from the past have mysteriously recorded themselves into the natural environment.

Psycho Kinesis (PK): Mind Movement. Psycho kinesis (PK) is the apparent ability to influence the environment by intention alone.

Purgatory: The place where the souls of those who have died must go to be cleansed of all their sin before they can be admitted to Heaven.

Radio Voice Phenomenon (RVP): The voice of a ghost or spirit communicating through a regular radio.

Reciprocal Apparition: An experience where both the agent and the ghost or spirit see and react to each other.

Recurring Apparitions: Ghosts or spirits that appear in regular cycles, usually once a year, on the anniversary of their dead for example.

Reincarnation: The belief that a soul can be reborn into a new body after death

Repressed Psychokinetic Energy: A theoretical psychic force unconsciously produced by an individual while undergoing a physical or mental trauma.

Retrocognition: Paranormal knowledge of past events.

Scrying: A type of prophecy where an individual can see future events by staring into a shiny or reflective surface, such as a mirror or crystal ball.

Séance: The gathering of a group of individuals for the purpose of communicating for the ghost of the dead.

Sensitive: Someone who is aware or can detect paranormal events beyond the range of their five human senses.

Screaming Skulls: Human skulls that protest with poltergeist activity when their final wishes are not fulfilled.

Shaman: A witch doctor or medicine man who communicates with spirits while in a trance and who has the power of healing.

Sixth Sense: Popular term for ESP.

Sleep Paralysis: A frightening state of seeming to be awake but unable to move.

Soul: The spiritual life force or essence, carrying an individual's personality and consciousness of all actions.

Spectre: A ghost or apparition.

Spirit: Often used to define the soul of a person, but it can also be used to represent places such as sacred lakes or objects, shrines, and elemental entities.

Spirit Detection: The reading made by scientific equipment (EMF Detectors, Temperature changes, etc.) when a ghost or spirit is present.

Spirit Photography: Photographs of figures or faces, believed by some to be those of deceased persons.

Spirit Profile: Researching the background and history of the ghost or spirit, and then determining its consistent patterns as a result of the findings.

Spiritualism: Belief systems that ghosts and spirits can and do communicate with the living.

Spook Lights: See Earth Lights.

Stigmata: Unexplained markings on a person's body that correspond to the wounds of Christ.

Super-ESP: A more powerful form of telepathy that allow certain individuals to pick up information about a deceased person from other living people.

Supernatural: Something that exists or occurs through some means other than any known force in nature or science.

Time-Slips: Moments where the past and present collide at one point.

Telepathy: Mind-to-mind communication.

Telephone Calls from the Dead: When a person receives a telephone call from someone who is dead. The person may or may not know that the caller is deceased. Absent Healing- Healing that takes place when the healer is not in direct contact with the person to be healed.

Teleportation: Paranormal transportation of an object from one location to another, even through solid objects.

Transportation Apparitions: The appearance of ghostly cars, trucks, ships, bicycles, carriages, trains, airplanes and anything else that carry people. They haunt their old routes.

Vampire: A supernatural creature (undead) that can only come out at night and lives by drinking the blood of the living. There are psychic vampires as well.

Vortex: An opening or doorway between our world and the spirit world, in paranormal terms.

Wild Hunt: A group of ghost horsemen or packs of ghostly dogs seen at night.

Witch: A woman with supernatural powers.

Apparition A spectre, ghostly figure or even a sudden or unusual sight. The term apparition is usually another name for ghost. The visible form of a ghost.

Automatic Art A form of both automatism and dissociation, whereby a person can often produce works of art without them being consciously aware that they had done it. In certain cases clairvoyants sometimes claim to be able to produce pictures of people's deceased loved ones in a similar manner.

Automatic Writing Very similar to and is, like the latter, a form of both automatism and dissociation. Often a subject can produce writing that is not in their own writing style, which

sometimes conveys messages that appear to have originated from deceased persons. Alternatively they can gain insights from their writings to things that they may not have consciously known beforehand. Clairvoyants are usually associated with this type of activity.

Banshee A name given to a female spirit, which can be found in Irish and Scottish folklore. The wail of a banshee is associated with the foretelling of an imminent death in the house, outside of which the banshee has previously visited. An omen of impending death in a house, a banshee is a female entity said to herald death by groaning and screaming.

Clairvoyance The ability to obtain knowledge based on unexplainable intuition, vision, or various psychic senses.

Cold Spots Self-contained patches of cool air in and around haunted locations. They may be

ghosts that cannot fully materialize. **Crisis Apparition** These are visions of persons, who at the time of their appearance are undergoing some form of crisis. For example a severe illness, an injury or even death.

The theory behind this phenomenon is that the afflicted person (the sender or agent), who is either ill or dying, sends out telepathically an image of themselves to someone who has a close relationship with them. It is thought that in general the sender or agent is unconscious or unaware of sending any message. However in the case of a death crisis, where the sender/agent actually dies, this is clearly difficult to verify.

Daemon A guardian spirit or guardian angel often associated with the communication of advice and inspiration.

Death Normally understood to be the cessation of all vital phenomena without capability of resuscitation, either in animals or plants. It is the extinction of an organism's life. However there are many doctrines and religions that do believe there is some form of spiritual or mental survival of physical death.

Death Clicks A strange phenomenon that has its origins in Samoa. Like the wailing of Ireland, believed to predict the imminent death of someone in the household; death clicks are the sudden onset of persistent and loud clicking that sounds throughout the house of someone who is going to die soon.

Ectoplasm A strange, visible, semi-fluid substance, that is believed to emanate from the body of a physical medium/spiritualistic medium. The ectoplasm may or may not go on to form materialisations. The phenomenon usually occurs while mediums are either in communication with the dead or in a trance. In relation to the transparent corporeal presence of a spirit or ghost, ectoplasm is the immaterial or ethereal substance defining its shape.

Electromagnetic Field The field of force associated with electric charge in motion. It has both electric and magnetic components and contains a definite amount of electromagnetic energy.

EVP (Electronic Voice Phenomena) A phenomenon when a recording of a quiet room or a break in conversation records an unknown voice either answering a question you have asked it or it making themselves known to us.

Entity A conscious, interactive ghost.

False Arrival Apparition A phenomenon whereby the percipient hears and sometimes less frequently sees another person arrive. This usually occurs half an hour or an hour or so before the person actually arrives.

Ghosts Believed to be the spirits of dead people. When they appear, they are said to appear in bodily likeness to living persons and often haunt their former habitats. Some believe that ghosts are the souls of the deceased, demons or spirits.

Ghost Busting A term that is associated with getting rid of unwanted ghosts or entities from places where they are not desirable. The term has possibly been popularised by a Film called 'Ghost Busters'. Although this film had quite a humorous slant to it, in real life, it would appear, that ghost busting services are sometimes required to get rid of unwanted 'visitors'. The Internet has a number of organisations that claim to offer help with these unwanted 'visitors' and other

things that go 'bump in the night'. Some people actually make a hobby out of ghost hunting, which, unlike ghost busting, is less about trying to rid oneself of ghosts; but is more about trying to observe and capture the phenomenon on film. Traditionally, if someone felt that they or their property were under threat by a ghostly presence; they would typically call for a priest or someone from the church to bless them or their property. In the event that this did not succeed they would possibly then ask a clergyman to perform, what is commonly referred to as an exorcism. This is an act or process of invoking supernatural aid by the use of a magical form of words. The dictionary defines the term exorcism as: 'The act of exorcising; the driving out of evil spirits from persons or places by conjuration; also, the form of conjuration used.' The act or process of invoking supernatural aid by the use of a magical form of words.

Ghost hunting Means literally what it says i.e. hunting for ghosts. Various research groups have been set up to investigate the phenomenon of ghosts; some do it as a hobby and some take the subject much more seriously. Ghosts are known to frequent certain places more often than others, graveyards seem to be an obvious common starting point.

Haunted If something is haunted it is usually said to be a place, object or an area that is much visited by ghosts or spirits etc.

Haunting Ghosts Are considered by psychical researchers to be different in kind to apparitions. Generally apparitions only tend to appear once, sometimes in a place unknown to the agent and usually to someone with whom the apparition has some relationship. Often the apparition will seem to communicate with the percipient in some way, by means of a look, touch or even speech. A haunting ghost however almost always appears to be unaware of the people around it and also it appears to be more connected with a place as opposed to a human. Although there are exceptions to the rule the majority of haunting ghosts haunt alone. Occasionally groups of phantoms are seen, for example processions of chanting monks or spectral armies, but these do tend to be the exception. There have been many theories put forward to explain haunting ghosts. Some evidence suggests that 'one's ability to see a phantom or sense a presence depends partly on some lingering aspect of the person seen or sensed'.

Levitation The phenomenon or ability of a person or thing to rise into the air and float in apparent defiance of gravity by apparently supernatural means.

Life After Death The question of life after death has puzzled mankind since the dawn of time. However the Lancet, one of Britain's leading medical journals has published a study which shows that a large number of people believe they have already experienced their souls leaving their bodies while they were supposed to have been clinically dead after a heart attack in intensive care.

Materialization The process by which a spirit creates a physical representation of itself in the physical world.

Near Death Experiences This phenomenon is usually experienced when someone is really close to death. Often persons who have experienced a near death experience report a feeling of having left their physical body, moving through a darkness or tunnel, encountering the presences of deceased loved ones, and sometimes other entities which have been likened to both God and the Devil. Often an all embracing and describable light or menacing darkness is reported. After regaining consciousness and the ability to communicate, most persons who have encountered a near death experience often say that the event was totally life changing. They often report that they have glimpsed the whole meaning of life or have been imparted with information far beyond ordinary human capabilities.

Poltergeist German for "noisy ghost". An entity or energy that displays sensational interaction with the physical environment.

Psychometry The practice of gaining paranormal insights or knowledge from a physical object which is used as a focus.

Table-Tilting These are the movements which tend to come from the table which is used during a séance. It normally occurs when there are a group of people with their hands on the surface of the table used in the séance. Some believe that these movements constitute spirit communications and others believe that it is simply the participants moving the table themselves. The phenomenon is also known as table-tipping or table-turning.

After-Death World - Umbrella term, any level of the etheric world that is alive, vibrating and full of soul-minds without physical bodies.

Agent - means by which something is done or caused. A force or substance that causes a change. An agent in paranormal research is usually a person who unknowingly causes poltergeist activity (poltergeist activity seems to be between the categories of ghost and PSI. An agent in paranormal research is usually a person who unknowingly causes poltergeist activity (poltergeist activity seems to be between the categories of ghost and PSI (the term applied to unusual abilities of human origin such as ESP/psychokinesis/etc.. and investigating "exceptional human experiences" such as out of body and apparitional experiences).

Alchemy - The Science of turning the baser metals into gold or silver by chemical means. The byproduct, "Quicksilver," was thought to have magical powers. This was a very perfected science in Egyptian times and lasted all the way up into the 14th-16th Century A.D. when some of the alchemy methods were lost due to wars and fires that were amid in those times.

Alchemist - A scientist who studies how to transmute anything from a lower form to a higher form using both a chemical process and a spiritual process.

All Hallows Eve (Halloween) - The night of October 31st. Halloween actually comes from the ancient Celtic festival 'Samhain', the feast of the dead in Pagan and Christian times, signaling the close of harvest and the initiation of the winter season. The practice of 'Trick or Treating' originally involved people imitating 'fairies' by going from home to home begging for treats. Practical jokes would be played on the owner of the house if treats were denied. Halloween was believed to be the one time of year when the souls of the dead revisited their former homes. The modern use of wearing costumes originated from the use of scary masks worn to scare the roaming souls away.

Alpha Rhythm - Electrical activity in the brain (about 10 cycles per second) associated with a state of mental relaxation.

All Soul's Day - All Soul's Day is a Roman Catholic day of remembrance for friends and loved ones who have passed away. This comes from the ancient Pagan Festival of the Dead, which celebrated the Pagan belief that the souls of the dead would return for a meal with the family.

Altered State of Consciousness (ASC) - This is a term referring to any state of consciousness that is different from "normal" states of waking/sleeping. This include hypnosis, trance, ecstasy, psychedelic and meditative experience.

Amethyst - A jewel that has the vibrational frequency to protect the wearer from external negative activity.

Amorphous - Having no definite form or shape, spirits often appear in mist-like forms.

Amulet - A charm worn around the neck in order to bring good luck or ward off evil.

Angel - Supernatural being, from the Hebrew for "one going" or "one sent"; messenger, an instrument of divine justice.

Angelic Host - A group or large number of angels desiring to offer assistance to civilization, name for hierarchy or order of angels; group of angels with specific task or duty as Attendants at God's throne.

Animism - The belief in the existence of individual spirits that inhabit natural objects and phenomena.

Anniversary Imprint - An imprint that usually manifests around the same time every year.

Announcing Dream - A dream believed to announce an individual's rebirth. (Also see "reincarnation")

Anomaly - An irregular or unusual event which does not fit a standard rule or law. An anomaly is something which cannot be explained by currently accepted scientific theories. Anything weird, abnormal, strange, odd, or difficult to classify is considered an anomaly.

Anomalous Experience - A term referring to unusual experiences that cannot be explained in terms of current scientific knowledge.

Anomalous Phenomena - Natural phenomena that cannot be explained in terms of current scientific knowledge.

Anti-Christ - One who resembles God or Christ in power and beauty but with a negative or evil agenda; Satan unleashed who will establish a reign of evil on Earth which will last fifty years before being overthrown by the second coming of Christ.

Apparition - An unusual appearing ghostly figure. A ghostly figure; a specter. Spirit energy that is usually seen in the form of the entity that has passed. Some psychics and mediums see them on a regular basis. Catching an apparition on film is what every ghost hunter aspires to do. They show up in a transparent human form and usually wear the clothing of their period. Also note that people have been known to see animal apparitions also.

Apport - Arrival of objects, either animate or inanimate during a séance or a haunting.

Arch-Angels - Prince of the Angels, generally taken to mean "chief or leading angel.

Artifact - In parapsychology, this is false evidence of paranormal phenomena, due to some extraneous normal influence.

Astral Body - The "body" a person seems to occupy during an out-of-body experience (OBE).

Astral Plane - The level of existence through which spirits of the dead first pass. The level in which an Astrally projected spirit travels.

Astral Projection - The separation of the astral body (or spirit) from the physical body. The astral body travels in the astral plane to locations near or far.

Astrology - A science and art that brings guidance and counsel to mankind based on one's birth date.

Aura - An invisible electromagnetic energy field completely surrounding a living being. It's believed that everything and everyone has an auric field around them. These can often be seen by those who are clairvoyant. In Kirlian photography when the film is developed, an aura like a halo of colors can be seen around the object or person. The colors in the photographs believe to show several factors such as stress, ill health in living organisms, and the state of your soul. It is analogous to Spiritual Healing which can also be felt but not seen.

Automatic Writing - The production of written material by a spirit through a person but without conscious control of that person. Often, a person may write pages and pages of words that, upon "awakening", they do not remember writing.

Autoscopy - This is when someone sees their 'double', or when they're looking back at their self from a position outside their body (Out-of-body Experience (OBE)).

Beelzebub - One of Satan's chief Lieutenants, considered Satan's "left hand man".

Bilocation - Appearing to be in two different places at the same time. (Also see "Autoscopy")

Benign Spirit - A spirit that is not evil or harmful and are thought to come back to reveal something that would be beneficial or helpful.

Bio-PK - Psychokinetic effects on biological processes. [Also see "Psychokinesis" for more info.]

Black Art - To deliberately use psychic energy for evil intent.

Black Magic - The practice of conjuring preternatural forces for a specific evil purpose.

Black Mass - The mass said in honor of Satan at the black witches Sabbath and by Satanists.

Black Shuck - A large spectral death omen demon dog in British folklore, especially in Norfolk and other parts of East Anglia. Black Shuck is all black and is huge, about the size of a calf. He has large eyes that glow yellow, red, or green as if on fire. Often, he is headless, yet his eyes -where eyes should be- glow in the dark. The dog is often thought to be an omen of death.

Born with a Veil - A baby born with a thin membrane that envelopes the fetus, it is believed that this child is psychic.

Brimstone - an element that has the properties to burn away negative vibrations and evil spirits.

Cartomancy - The art of telling fortunes with cards. [Also see "Tarot" and "Fortune Telling"]

Channeling - To allow an spirit to enter one's mind and impress thoughts upon the consciousness to be spoken aloud.

Cherub - A member of the second order of etheric world angels, known for their knowledge and help in carrying out the Divine plan.

Circumambulism - Ceremonial walking around an object or person to secure protection.

Clairaudience - The psychic ability to hear sounds or voices normally not audible within normal hearing ranges. It includes the audible perception of ghosts, spirits, and those who are on the astral realm. Clairaudience is essentially the ability of hearing the paranormal as opposed to seeing it.

Clairvoyance - The psychic ability to see objects, persons, places or events regardless of time or distance.

Clearing - Ridding a location of ghostly activity.

Cold Spot - A small, defined area of intense cold (at least 10 degrees colder than the surrounding area) that can not readily be explained by other natural or mechanical causes. In paranormal research the prevailing theory is that when an entity is trying to manifest itself it draws on many sources of energy.

Collective Apparition - This is when more than one person sees a phenomenon at the same time & location. Collective apparitions are good in proving that what was seen was really there, and wasn't just the person's mind playing tricks on them, since more than one person saw it.

Collective Unconscious - Concept put forward by C.G. Jung to refer to a level of unconscious thought and experience shared collectively by humans.

Conjuring - The process of calling preternatural forces into aid or action through the use of sorcery or ceremonial black magic.

Contact Mind Reading - A technique simulating telepathy, in which the "mind reader" (who generally holds a hand or arm) responds to slight muscle movements produced unconsciously by the person whose mind is apparently being read. Also known as muscle reading, Cumberlandism or Hellstromism.

Crisis Apparition - An apparition that's usually seen by a person when he/she is at the point of death or is the victim of a serious illness or injury. Also apparitions that are seen in places of traumatic events (Like battlefields) are known to be called Crisis Apparitions.

Cross-Correspondences - Interrelated bits of information received from 'the spirit world' by different mediums at different times and locations. The communications must be joined together to form a complete message from Spirit.

Cross-Species Communication - To have a special rapport and understanding with animals, plants or alien beings.

Cryptomnesia - Knowledge (acquired in normal ways) that may be revealed without the person remembering its source. Such memories may falsely appear to be paranormal revelations.

Crystal Gazing - Staring into a reflecting surface (e.g., mirror, glass, crystal, liquid) in order to obtain paranormal information. Also known as scrying.

Crystalomancy - The art of gazing into a crystal globe, a pool of water, a mirror, or any transparent object. The person may put him/her self into a hypnotic state to see visions or to summon forth spirits or demons.

Curse - To invoke preternatural forces to cause harm or injury to a person, place or object.

Crisis Apparition - The appearance of the spirit of an individual who is gravely ill and close to death, has just died or is in perilous danger. This ghost appears to relatives and/or loved ones and is often mistaken for the actual person.

Dead Sea Scrolls - a number of leather, papyrus and copper scrolls collaborating on the books in the Old Testament of the Bible, found in 1948 in caves on the northwest coast of the Dead Sea, believed to have been written between 168 B.C. and A.D. 233.

Deathbed Experience - A dying person's awareness of the presence of dead friends or relatives. (Also see "Near-Death Experience" and "Crisis Apparition").

Déjà vu - Certain events and experiences seem as if you are re-experiencing the event or situation that has happened at another time. As familiar as the experiences are, you cannot recall nor figure out when they happened.

Dematerialize - To deprive of or lose apparent physical substance; make or become immaterial, to suddenly disappear.

Demon - An evil entity hostile to humans which is said to have not ever lived on earth in human form.

Demonic - Pertaining to or caused by demons.

Demonic Haunting - A haunting by a nonhuman entity which can be very dramatic, even violent. Often start out with subtle and relatively simple paranormal activity, then quickly increase to stronger activity. Most often effects people or families that are already under great personal stress from conditions such as alcohol or drug use, psychological or emotional problems, family or marital problems, etc. It is believed the nonhuman entity takes advantage of people in such weakened psychological and emotional condition.

Demonologist - Involved in the study of Demonology.

Demonology - The study of demons, including their characteristics, classification, and effect on mankind.

Deport - The paranormal movement of objects out of a secure enclosed space.

Devil - An upper level evil spirit working for Lucifer. (Beelzebub, among many)

Diabolical - Pertaining to or caused by a devil.

Direct Voice Phenomenon (DVP) - A Spirit voice, spoken directly to sitters at a séance. The sound usually seems to come from a point near the medium, or through a spirit horn or trumpet, but not from the mouth of the medium.

Discarnate - Existing outside a physical body.

Discarnate Entity - A spirit or non-material entity, often used to refer to the personality of a deceased individual.

Disembodied - A spirit functioning without a body.

Divination - The obtain unknown knowledge or future events from omens. Astrology may be considered divination.

Direct Mental Interaction with Living Systems (DMILS) - Used to denote instances where one person is attempting to influence a distant biological system, usually the physiology of another person. As it is unclear whether this represents an influence (see psychokinesis), a case of ESP on the part of the influence (see ESP) or an opportunistic selection process, the term 'interaction' has been adopted.

Dissociation - The act of removing from association; the state of being separate and unconnected. Activity performed outside of normal conscious awareness, or mental processes that suggest the existence of separate centers of consciousness.

Divining Rod - A forked rod from a tree said to indicate the presence of water or minerals underground. (Also see "Dowsing Rod").

Doppelganger (*Doubleganger*) - A spirit of a living person outside of the physical body.

Dowser - A psychic with radiesthetic sense; detects oil, water, or anything underground by means of the reaction of his or her dowsing rods.

Dowsing - Interpreting the motions of rods, sticks, pendulums, or other instruments to obtain information, including searching for water, or checking energy fields. (Also see "Divining").

Dowsing Rod - A "Y" shaped rod (sometimes made from a tree branch)

Dwarf - An nature spirit that is short, dark, ranging in height from two inches to two feet.

Earthbound - A spirit being trapped on or remaining on the earthly plane.

Echolalia - When a ghost or spirit repeats back something you have just said in order to show they are there and are trying to communicate with you. The words repeated back could be EVP questions or just casual conversation. It is not clear why an entity might repeat back your words rather than respond on their own, perhaps it is easier/simple for an entity to repeat what it has heard rather than form new words.

Ectoplasm - An immaterial or ethereal substance, especially the transparent corporeal presence of a spirit or ghost.

Electro Magnetic Field Meter/Detector - Also called a gauss or magnetometer, these let you know the Electro Magnetic Field readings in an area. The presence of spirit has been known to often produce/disturb electro magnetic energy in the area.

Elemental - A lesser spirit associated to the fundamentals of nature (fire, earth, wind and water).

Empathic Abilities - Those sensitive to the typically stronger emotions a paranormal entity gives off. They may also be able to see people and events that have occurred years in the past at a given locations and may also be able to "broadcast" emotions to others.

Entity - A interactive disembodied or preternatural spirit.

Electronic Voice Phenomena (EVP) - Voices of spirits captured using audio and/or video recording.

Ethereal - Heavenly; Not of this world; Spiritual.

Exorcism - The process of expelling or removing an evil spirit by religious ceremony.

Exorcist - One who conducts the rites of exorcism.

Experimental Parapsychology - Parapsychological research involving experimental methods rather than survey techniques or the investigation of spontaneous cases.

Extra dimensional - Originating outside our normal space-time reality.

Extra Sensory Perception (ESP) - Communication or perception by means other than the physical senses. The ability to gain knowledge through means other than the five physical senses or logical inference.

Fairy - An elemental spirit considered benign but inclined to mischief.

Faith Healing - To expect that one will get better is one of the necessary factors in every type of cure, this confidence that one will be cured comes from a desire to live.

Fallen Angels - Discarnate entities who live close to earth and are desirous and capable of haunting earthlings.

False Awakening - When a person believes he or she has woken up, but actually is still dreaming.

Familiar - A live cat or other animal owned by a witch upon which she transfers psychic energy in cases of evil-oriented activities.

Focal Person - Person who is at the center of poltergeist activity. (Also see "Poltergeist").

Fortean Phenomena - Strange phenomena, especially those which challenge conventional scientific knowledge. Named after the American researcher and writer Charles Fort. Fortean phenomena include those generally considered paranormal, but also bizarre non-paranormal events such as monsters and prodigies, extraordinary coincidences, and unusual rains.

Fortune Telling - The practice or art of professing to reveal future events in the life of another.

Gabriel - The planetary archangel in charge of the moon, a genius of mysteries, who has worked psychically through the great masters during their earthly incarnations.

Ganzfield - A state of mild sensory deprivation, characterized by the presentation of homogenous sensory fields. Its use in parapsychology is based on a noise-reduction model.

General Extra Sensory Perception (GESP) - ESP in which it is unclear whether the results are due to clairvoyance, telepathy, precognition or retro-cognition.

Ghost - Refers to a residual energy of a person, animal, or even an inanimate object that has been imprinted in the location, only to be played over and over again like a recording in time.

Glossolalia - Fabricated and nonmeaningful speech, especially such speech associated with a trance state or certain schizophrenic syndromes. Also known as "speaking in tongues".

Grounded - Spirits that for one reason or another have not passed on to the other side (into the light) and continue to stay in this level of existence.

Guardian Angel - An angel believed to have special affection and protection for a particular individual. (Also see "Spirit Guide".)

Guide - See "Spirit Guide".

Harbinger - A ghost, believed to be of the future, that brings warning of impending events.

Haunting - The presence and appearance of a ghost or spirit often with unexplained activity over a long period of time and are thought to be connected to a particular location.

Herbalist - A practitioner who understands plants for their medicinal use. knows where they grow, how to prepare them for healing various kinds of diseases, and how to use them in everyday life.

Hex - To use BLACK MAGIC to harm another person's body, family or property by means of deep concentration.

Hexagram - Two interlaced equilateral triangles, one apex pointing up and one apex pointing down.

Hinduism - Ageless religion of India.

Holy Grail - The holy cup used in Jesus Christ's last supper.

Hot Spot - A site within a haunted location where activity is prominent.

House Blessing - A minor exorcism of a home performed by a priest.

Human Energy Field - The composite structure that contains the energy of physical existence, sometimes considered to be the same as an aura.

Human Sacrifice - The ceremonial killing of a person as an offering to an evil spirit for magical purposes.

Human Spirit - The (earthbound) spirit of a deceased person.

Hyperaesthesia - An abnormal or pathological increase in sensitivity to sensory stimuli, as of the skin to touch or the ear to sound. Exceptionally acute sensory awareness. (Also see "Extra Sensory Perception".)

Hypnosis - Represents the alpha and theta levels of consciousness that one also reaches during sleep.

Hypnotism - The act of inducing hypnosis. (Also see "Hypnosis".)

I Ching - A divination process where one uses the patterns of three tossed objects to receive an answer to one's psychological, business, or social problem from the BOOK OF CHANGES.

Imagery - The ability to perceive images in the mind. These may be visual, auditory, tactile, etc.

Immortality - Endless life or existence.

Imprint - Theory that events and strong feelings/emotions can leave a copy or record of themselves on places and objects. The energy that is left can result in a non-intelligent haunting, usually a residual haunting. Imprinting on an object the haunting can follow the object through several owners, often reported with items purchased at a yard sale or flea market.

Incantation - To sing and chant formulaic words, phrases or sounds to special rhythm and tonation.

Incarnate - Living in a physical body.

Incubus - A demon which seeks sexual intercourse with a living woman.

Indirect Voice Phenomena (IVP) - Phenomenon in which an entity appears to speak using the vocal apparatus of a living person. Often the voice will sound very different from the person's normal voice. (Also see "Direct Voice Phenomena (DVP)".)

Infestation - First of three stages of demonic activity that generates negative psychic energy by generating fear to begin breaking down human will.

Inhuman spirit - An entity or spirit of a being that has never lived in the earthly realm.

Inner Voice - Receiving guidance and assistance from inside of you.

Intuition - Act of knowing without the use of usual rational processes. Based partly on subconscious pattern association of known information, and partly on subconscious psi impressions.

Invocation - The act or an instance of invoking, especially an appeal to a higher power for assistance. The act of summoning spiritual beings.

Judaism - A religion which holds the belief that every human being has a right to justice, purity, and truth which even the power of kings cannot erase.

Ka - Ancient Egyptian term for the astral body.

Kami - The spirit of a departed family member that remains among the family and the community.

Karma - The total effect of a person's actions and conduct during the successive phases of the person's existence, regarded as determining the person's destiny.

Kia - A trancelike state of emotional ECSTASY wherein the SHAMAN has enhanced awareness.

Kabbalah - Doctrines received from tradition, a Jewish doctrine or system of theosophy tells the importance of humanity's role in God's universe.

Karma - Sanskrit, Buddhism, Hinduism, Theosophy, the principle that makes every man or woman the cause of their present global location, lifestyle, intelligence, relatives and physical body condition.

Kirlian Photography - A photographic method involving high frequency electric current, discovered by S.D. & V. Kirlian in the Soviet Union. Kirlian photographs often show colored halos or "auras" surrounding objects. The colors in the photographs believe to show several factors such as stress, ill health in living organisms, and the state of your soul. It is analogous to Spiritual Healing which can also be felt but not seen. (Also see "Aura".)

Kundalini - In Yogic belief, a source of tremendous vital energy that may be stimulated by various practices. Kundalini, or the "Serpent Power", is believed to provide energy for paranormal phenomena.

Law of Attraction - Attention to the positive attracts positive, negative attracts negative. Committing negative actions or unnatural acts can attract negative spirits.

Law of Invitation - Deliberately summoning spirits through rituals or via some channel of sincere communication; ceremonial magic, secret profane rituals, incantations, séances, Quija boards.

Legion - The term used to describe the multitude and myriad of evil spirits.

Levitation - The raising of a body or object without any physical or visible means through spirit energy.

Limbo - A level of consciousness which comprises one of the seven planes in the density in the etheric world.

Living Ghost - The manifestation of a ghost or entity that appears a long distance (sometimes hundreds or even thousands of miles away!). This event usually coincides when the other person (the one manifesting) is facing an immediate great stress or life-threatening danger.

Low Magic - To use amulets, talismans, handed down rituals, chants and incantations as an aid to help the magician perform his or her psychic feats.

Lost Time - With paranormal ghost/spirit activity it is possible that a small concentrated area of high paranormal activity may briefly alter the physical environment such that time slows down or stops altogether.

Lucid Dreaming - Dreaming in which the person is aware that the experience is a dream.

Lucidity - An early term for clairvoyance. (Also see "Clairvoyance" and "Lucid Dreaming")

Lucifer - Satan, leader of the rebellious angels.

Luminous Phenomena - The experience of strange lights or glows, often around objects or people. (Also see "Aura".)

Macro-PK - Psychokinetic effects that can be directly observed rather than only inferred from statistical analysis. [Also see "Psychokinesis"]

Magic - The art of producing illusions. (See conjuring, Black magic)

Magic Circle - An imaginary circle drawn with a pointed finger or magical item or a real circle made with substance.

Mantra - A sacred sound or sacred syllables used in meditation.

Materialization - To cause to become real or actual; To cause to become materialistic.

Meditation - A disciplined mind technique for a set time to achieve a high state of consciousness.

Medium - A person who makes contact with discarnate or inhuman spirits on the astral plane.

Mediumship - Activity of a medium.

Mentalism - A branch of conjuring involving the simulation of psi.

Mental Mediumship - The paranormal obtaining of information by a medium. (Also see "Physical Mediumship".)

Mesmerism - The induction of a sleep or trance state, discovered during the work of Friedrich Anton Mesmer, from whose name the word is derived. Also known as hypnotism.

Metal Bending - Psychokinetic ability to bend metal objects. (Also see "Psychokinesis".)

Metamorphosis - A transformation.

Metempsychosis - Another term for reincarnation. (Also see "Reincarnation".)

Micro-PK - Psychokinetic effects that cannot be directly observed, but only inferred from the statistical analysis of data. (Also see "Psychokinesis".)

Miracle - An occurrence caused by supernatural causes, that excites wonder, an effect or extraordinary event which surpasses all known human or natural causes.

Mist - An anomaly (not usually seen at the time with the naked eye) that appears on photos/videos as a "cloud of smoke" thought to be Spirit energy, also called Ectoplasm.

Moment of Mortality - A ghostly manifestation that occurs when someone is at the exact moment of their death and can happen over great distances. This phenomena is similar to the living ghost and Death Bed Visions phenomena.

Mystic - One who brings new knowledge of spiritual truths (proven or not) incorporates psychic skills and psychic healings with religion.

Mystical Experience - Altered State of Consciousness involving experiences of ecstasy, unity, timelessness, loss of self, divine revelation, etc. (Also see "Altered State of Consciousness (ASC)".)

Mysticism - Religious or spiritual doctrines which argue that the human mind or soul can directly experience the divine. (Also see "Mystical Experience".)

NDE - Near-Death Experience.

Necromancy - The practice of conjuring evil spirits.

Necronomicon - The book of the dead.

Noise-Reduction Model - The idea that psi information may be more accessible if normal sensory information (sight, smell, etc..) is reduced to a minimum.

Non-Human Spirit - An entity that is not the result of a human person that once lived on Earth. Sometimes referred to as angels, demons, devils etc. Extra care should always be used if dealing with a potential inhuman spirit!

OBE - Out-of-Body Experience.

Occult - Pertaining to the supernatural influences, agencies, or phenomena which is beyond the range of natural knowledge.

Occultism - A belief in occult powers and the possibility of bringing them under human control. (Also see "Occult".)

Old Soul - One who has been incarnated innumerable times.

Omen - A sign that foretells events

Oppression - Second of three stages of demonic activity where the attacking spirits are attempting to control their victims lives in order to cause lapse of free will to open door for the third stage; demonic possession

Oracle - Any person or thing that serves as an agent of divine communication.

Orb - A sphere of energy looking like "balls of light" on film, thought to be Spirit energy. Some people have been known to see them with their naked eye, but most are captured on film (photos and video). Can actually be dust and/or moisture which will come out to look like spirit orbs on film.

Ouija board - A board consisting of the letters of the alphabet, numbers 1-0, and words "yes", "no" and "goodbye" which is used as a tool for communicating with spirits.

Out of Body Experience (OBE) - Can be done purposefully or unconsciously by a person. (Also see "Astral Projection".)

Palmistry - Encompasses all phases of analyzing one's hands to tune into one's past and future.

Paranormal - Beyond the range of normal experience or scientific explanation and above or outside the natural order of things as presently understood.

Paranormal Dream - Dreams in which the dream imagery provides paranormal knowledge (e.g., ESP or precognition). (Also see "Announcing dream" and "Lucid Dreaming".)

Parapsychology - The branch of science that studies psychic phenomena, such as telepathy, clairvoyance, and psychokinesis, that are inexplicable by science. (term coined by J.B. Rhine.)

Past-Life Memories - Mental images that are believed to be memories of previous lives. (Also see "Reincarnation" and "Past-life Regression".)

Past-Life Regression - A technique of hypnosis involving regressing people to supposed previous lives. (Also see "Reincarnation" and "Past-life Memories".)

Pentagram - The magical diagram consisting of a five pointed star which is a representation of man. Considered by occultists to be the most potent means of conjuring spirits.

Percipient - A person with the power of perceiving, especially perceiving an apparition or ghost.

Phantomania - An occurrence in which the victim is held paralyzed while being subjected to preternatural attack.

Phasmophobia - The fear of ghosts.

PK - See "Psychokinesis".

Place Memory - Information about past events that apparently is stored in the physical environment.

Plant PSI - Extra Sensory Perception exhibited by plants. [Also see "Extra Sensory Perception" and "Psi"]

Planchette - The indicator or pointer used in association with a Ouija board.

Poltergeist - From the German, meaning "noisy spirit". Term for a spirit which is associated with the movement of objects and general mischievous haunting activity.

Portal - Theoretical doorway of energy, through which spirits may be able to enter or exit a location.

Possession - Third stage of demonic activity in which the victims body and will are taken over and controlled.

Precognition - Knowledge of future events.

Prediction - A statement that foretells future events. (Also see "Premonition", "Precognition" and "Prophecy".)

Preexistence - Belief that the personality or soul exists prior to birth. (Also see "Reincarnation".)

Premonition - A vision or warning of future events.

Presence - A supernatural/paranormal influence felt when an unseen person, spirit or being is nearby.

Preternatural - Associated with inhuman, demonic or diabolical spirits or forces. Existing outside of nature, exceeding what is natural or regular; inexplicable by ordinary means: preternatural phenomena.

Process Research - Research that aims to investigate factors affecting psi. (Also see "Proof Research".)

Proof Research - Research that aims to demonstrate the existence of psi. (Also see "Process Research".)

Prophet - A human spokesman for an etheric world.

Pseudo-skeptic - A person who already believes to know the "truth" of a situation, and does not attempt to read or evaluate presented evidence objectively and scientifically.

PSI - Parapsychological phenomena or abilities considered as a group.

Psychic - Dealing with the ability to see, hear, feel and sense beyond the average human ability; A medium.

Psychic Attack - The transference of negative energy into a person to deliberately harm.

Psychic Cold - The cold sensation received when a spirit is present, usually having defined boundaries.

Psychic Impression - Energy left in an area that can later be "played back" like a recording in time and are not interactive and are often associated with a haunting, called "Residual Hauntings".

Psychic Photograph - Supernatural or preternatural Images appearing on a photograph.

Psychic Photography - General term used to refer to paranormal photographic images. (Also see "Kirlian Photography", "Spirit Photography".)

Psychic Research - The study of psychic phenomena.

Psychokinesis (PK) - The movement of objects without the use of physical means, such as using the mind.

Psychometry - The ability to acquire knowledge of people, places or object by touching an object associated with it.

Pyramid Power - Belief that pyramid shapes can produce paranormal effects

Qualitative Method - A research method involving the collection of non-quantitative data (Example: observations, interviews, subjective reports, case studies). (Also see "Quantitative Method".)

Quantitative Method - A research method involving the collection and statistical analysis of numerical data. (Also see "Qualitative Method".)

Radio Voice Phenomenon (RVP) - Receiving the voice of a deceased human over a regular radio. (Also see "Electronic Voice Phenomenon (EVP)".)

Raps - The name given to unexplained knocking sounds associated with physical mediumship and poltergeist activity.

Raudive Voices - Intelligible voices recorded on magnetic tape under conditions of silence or white noise which are heard only when the tape is played. A phenomenon discovered by Konstantin Raudive. (Also see "Electronic Voice Phenomena".)

Recurrent Spontaneous Psychokinesis (RSPK) - A technical term for poltergeist activity. (Also see "Repressed psychokinetic energy" and "Poltergeist".)

Regression - The activation of the subconscious mind to recall parts of the past.

Reike - A type of healing in which the healer is a channel for universal force and energy.

Reincarnation - The belief that each person possesses a soul which is independent of the body and can be reborn into another body.

Relic - An item closely associated with a holy person or saint, usually a part of that persons body or clothing.

Religion - A belief in powers higher than one's self backed by faith rather than logic.

Remote Viewing - The term used when a person is able to "see" a remote object and explain its characteristics and location without ever physically being to the particular location. Used heavily by the US Government, during the height of the Cold War, for spying.

Repressed Psychokinetic Energy - A psychic force produced, usually unconsciously, by an individual undergoing physical or mental trauma. When released, the power causes paranormal occurrences, which often are thought to be poltergeist activity. (Also see "Poltergeist".)

Residual Haunting - Non-conscious and unintelligent usually appear as person but can sometimes be a group of people, and animal or any non-living thing. They stay in same location replaying the same event over and over usually on some rhythmic cycle or pattern (though what the pattern is can be hard to determine). Sometimes causing electrical environment interference to occur. Often compared to a video recording that automatically plays itself over and over.

Retrocognition - When a person finds themselves in a 'time warp' of the past, seeing or experiencing events of which they had no prior knowledge.

Revenant - An entity that comes back only a few times after death.

Ritual - A prescribed event or a particular form or ceremony that is built up by tradition, and with it, a great amount of energy.

Ritual Magic - Proven processes and ceremonies used repeatedly.

RSPK - Recurrent Spontaneous Psychokinesis.

Salt - Symbol of the element EARTH because it's a crystalline substance it can receive and hold etheric magnetism better than other substances. Has properties to ward off evil vibrations.

Santeria - A Cuban spiritualist religion.

Satan - God's adversary, expelled from Heaven for rebelling against God.

Satanic - Pertaining to Satan.

Satanism - The worship of Satan.

Scrying - To perceive psychic visions on clear, shiny surfaces that relate to the masses or to individual questions, surfaces from clear crystal, clear water, polished mirrors, are effective, Crystal Ball is most commonly used.

Séance - A group of dedicated persons and at least one well-grounded medium who sit in a blacked-out room to produce physical phenomena. Groups sit in a circular formation to keep psychic energy concentrated in the center for easier manipulation by the etheric world intelligences.

Second Sight - Another name for clairvoyance.

Sect - A group of people who all believe, or who profess to believe, in the same basic principles of a religious nature.

Sender - Another name for agent

Sensitive - A person who possesses psychic powers.

Sensory Deprivation - Conditions of greatly restricted sensory input. (Also see "Ganzfeld Experiments".)

Seth - A very highly evolved Etheric world intelligence who spoke through Jane Roberts, bringing her new scientific knowledge about the reality of man and the universe. An energy personality essence no longer focused in physical reality.

Shadow People - Spirits or ghosts which are usually black in appearance and have no discernible features. People usually see them out of the corner of their eye, and have also been known to be captured on film.

Shaman - An individual capable of many psychic and mediumship skills, either a natural born characteristic or can be earned through many difficult initiations.

Shape-Shifting - Paranormal ability to assume the form of another person, an animal or other entity.

Simultaneous Dream - A dream whose elements correspond closely with those in the dream of another person.

Sixth Sense - An ability of perception seemingly independent of the five senses (touch, smell, sight, feeling, taste); keen intuition. [Also see "Extra Sensory Perception (ESP)."]

Skeptic - One who instinctively or habitually doubts, questions, or disagrees with assertions or generally accepted conclusions.

Smudging - To burn a special plant (usually Sage) in an area before a ceremony, a healing, or a lecture, which cleanses the atmosphere of any negativity.

Solar Plexus - Believed to be the Soul of man, the center of the body where one feels the emotions of the universe.

Sorcerer - A male who has made a pact with the devil in exchange for magic powers.

Sorceress - A female who has made a pact with the devil in exchange for magic powers.

Sorcery - The practice of black magic.

Spectre - An unusual appearing ghostly figure or image. A ghostly apparition; a phantom. A haunting or disturbing image or prospect.

Spell - A magical command or incantation during which period of time a person or object is held captive by a psychic for the benefit of the psychic.

Spirit - Refers to an actual living essence, or soul, of a person that has remained after their physical body has died which usually still retains the entities traits and personality and can communicate with the living.

Spirit Guide - A spiritual being who is assigned to a particular person to assist them in their spiritual or life journey. It is said that each person can have more than one spirit guide. These guides can be highly evolved spirits of people who have lived before.

Spirit Photography - Capturing evidence of spirit on film. Spirit photographs, when developed, show anomalies that were not seen at the time the photo was taken. Examples include orbs, vortexes, ecto/mists and, on a more rare scale, apparitions.

Spiritualism - A science, philosophy, and religion using the doctrine of metaphysics, belief in the continuity of life after death and communication with this life for the advancement of civilization and personal growth.

Spiritualist - One who believes in the communication between this world and the invisible world, and who endeavors to mold his or her character and conduct in accordance with the highest teachings derived from such communion.

ST. Michael - A lofty etheric world Angel who communicated with earthlings during the time of the Old Testament, his function was to be guardian over Israel. In the New Testament, he was the first of the seven Archangels and led the host against the Devil.

Stigmata - Marks on one's body resembling crucifixion wounds, bleeding from these points simulating the wounds of Jesus the Christ.

Subjective Paranormal Experience (SPE) - An experience that the person who has it believes to be paranormal.

Subliminal Perception - Perceiving without conscious awareness.

Succubus - A demon which seeks sexual intercourse with living men.

Supercharged Orb - These are orbs that tend to leave long streaks behind them, probably from them moving so fast.

Supernatural - Activity caused by God or His angels, commonly referred to as to anything outside the bounds of natural laws.

Superstition - The unfounded believe that certain object, activities or rituals can be helpful or harmful.

Synchronicity - Meaningful coincidences that often are mediated by subconscious psi activity. Our intuitive/psi faculty nudges our paths into meaningful intersections in times of need.

Table-Tilting - Mysterious movements of a table, usually occurring in a séance when a group of people place their hands on the surface of the table. Often the movements are interpreted as spirit communications. Also known as table-turning or table-tipping.

Tarot Cards - A pack of cards for the purpose of divination using symbolism contains seventy-eight cards forming a system of communication.

Telekinesis - The ability to move something by thinking about it without the application of physical force.

Telepathy - Psychic communication between individuals.

Teleportation - A hypothetical method of transportation in which matter or information is dematerialized, usually instantaneously, at one point and recreated at another.

Therianthropy - The supposed ability to change from human to animal form and back.

Thought Form - An apparition produced by the power of the human mind.

Thoughtography - Paranormal ability to produce images on photographic film.

Tone Healing - Your tone of voice affects others by disturbing, catalyzing, soothing, lulling, inspiring and quite often healing them.

Torah - A sacred book of teachings, an inclusive term that refers to all that God has revealed about Himself, history of the Jewish people, and the conduct that is required of them.

Touch Healing - To impart through your hands soothing and healing vibrations of energy.

Trance - An altered state of consciousness brought about by the willing collaboration between the medium and the etheric world intelligence for the purpose of physical phenomena.

Trance Medium - A person who enters a state of trance in order to produce mediumistic phenomena.

Transcendence - A temporary, spontaneous experience in which the life force leaves the physical body to bypass the experience of physical pain, the life force hovers close to the physical body.

Transpersonal Psychology - The study of experiences, beliefs and practices that suggest that the sense of self can extend beyond our personal or individual reality.

Traveling Clairvoyance - An early term for the out of body experience.

Trumpet - A conical tube (often luminous) used in séances to produce direct voice communication.

Veridical Dream - A dream that corresponds to real events (past, present or future) that are unknown to the dreamer.

Visitation - When spirits that have passed over to the other side return because of unfinished business, to watch over a loved one or during extreme crisis.

Voodoo - Magical practice considered to be a form of black magic but also is considered as a religion to some.

Vortex - A place or situation regarded as drawing into its center all that surrounds it.

Walk-In - Coined by Ruth Montgomery, a superior spirit from the sixth plane who enters an adult physical body on earth and uses it while helping the planet in trying times.

Warm Spot - An area or place that for an unknown reason seems to be warmer than the surrounding areas. Paranormal investigators usually use thermometers to detect the fluctuations of temperature in a location.

Whammy - Casting a spell on another by staring intently, using direct eye contact, and influencing thoughts and behavior.

White Noise - Acoustical or electrical noise of which the intensity is the same at all frequencies within a given band.

Warlock - A male witch.

White Witch - A witch whose practice in witchcraft is solely for the purpose of good.

Wicca - An ancient witchcraft religion which honor the gods of nature. Wicca means "wise one".

Witch - A woman who practices witchcraft.

Witchcraft - The practice of performing acts with the aid of a spirit.

Wraith - An apparition of a living person that appears as a portent just before that person's death.

Xenoglossy - The ability to speak or write in a language that has not been learned. See also "Speaking In Tongues.")

A binding spell is a magical formula intended to "bind" a person's will or behavior. Examples of binding spells include love spells, attempts to silence enemies, or any other magic intended to force or restrain the action of another. As a form of sympathetic magic, many binding spells involve the use of knots, pins, or other symbolic restraints. In older spells, it is spirits or ghosts who are symbolically "bind" until they fulfill the demands of the spell caster. The binding spell is probably one of the oldest types of magic known to man. Examples have been found all over the globe, and were especially popular in classical Greece and Rome. Other versions have been found in such diverse cultures as Celtic Europe and ancient Egypt. Most called on various deities or spirits to enforce the supplicant's requests. The example illustrated below was created in Egypt around the fourth century, and is of a very common type. The little figurine is pierced with pins and accompanied by a lengthy Greek spell requesting the aid of numerous chthonic deities and spirits of the dead to compel fidelity and love: "I entrust this binding spell to you chthonic gods, Pluto and Kore Persephone Ereschigal and Adonis also called Barbaritha and Hermes chthonian Thoth Phokensepseu Erektathou Misonktaik and Anoubis the powerful Pseriphtha, who holds the keys of Hades, and to you chthonic divine demons, the boys and girls prematurely dead, the

young men and women, year after year, month after month, day after day, hour after hour, night after night; I conjure all the demons in this place to assist this demon Antinous. Rouse yourself for me and go to each place, to each neighbourhood, to each house and bind Ptolemais whom Aias bore, the daughter of Horigenes, so that she should not be [redacted, nsfw] or should not give any pleasure to another man, except to me alone Sarapammon, whom Area bore; and do not let her eat nor drink nor resist nor go out nor find sleep except with me Sarapammon, whom Area bore. I conjure you, Antinous spirit of the dead, in the name of the Terrible and the Fearsome, the name at whose sound the earth opens up, the name at whose sound the demons tremble in fear, the name at whose sound rivers and rocks burst asunder. I conjure you, Antinous spirit of the dead, by Barbaratham Cheloumbra Barouch Adonai and by Abrasax and by Iao Pakeptoth Pakebraoth Sabarbaphaei and by Marmaraouoth and by Marmarachtha Mamazagar. Do not disregard me, Antinous spirit of the dead, but rouse yourself for me and go to each place, to each neighbourhood, to each house and bring me Ptolemais, whom Aias bore, the daughter of Horigenes; prevent her from eating, from drinking, until she comes to me, Sarapammon, whom Area bore, and do not allow her to accept the advances of any man other than me alone Sarapammon. Drag her by the hair, the guts, until she does not reject me, Sarapammon, whom Area bore, and I have her, Ptolemais, whom Aias bore, the daughter of Horigenes, subject to me for the entire extent of my life, loving me, desiring me, telling me what she thinks. If you do this, I will release you."

Jizo, Jizou (Ksitigarbha) A fairly typical image of Jizo, a Japanese form of the Buddhist Bodhisattva* (Bosatsu) Ksitigarbha. He is depicted throughout Asia as a simple, childlike monk, but he is especially venerated in Japan as a protector of the souls of children and the unborn. It is common to see Jizo figures all over Japan, especially along roadsides and paths. Offerings are left with the icons, most commonly caps or bibs, flowers, and stones, often pleas to reduce the suffering of children.

Jizo's staff (shakujo) is a traditional monk's walking stick, hung with metal rings, ostensibly to warn away animals on the road for the mutual protection of man and creature alike. *A Bodhisattva (*Sanskrit*, "essence of enlightenment") is a highly spiritually developed being who stops short of Buddhahood in order to aid others in attaining enlightenment

Omamori (O-mamori, lucky charm) **Omamori** (Japanese, 'blessed protector') are the ubiquitous amulets one receives in exchange for a donation to one of Japan's Shinto or Buddhist temples. Omamori are usually small, folded paper or fabric packets* ritually consecrated in the temple. They are typically made with the name of the originating temple on the front and a charm on the back for prosperity, health, travel, or a multitude of other purposes. Amulets do not expire, but it is common practice to replace them, usually once a year. Old omamori are usually returned to the temple to be burned. * Some omamori can be quite complex, or made of fancier materials such as wood, bone, or metals.

Kapala (Skull Cup, thod-pa) The **kapala** or thod-pa is a highly decorated cup or bowl made from a human skull for use in Tibetan Buddhism, and represents the symbolic destruction of evil entities. The cup is used to hold offerings of bread or wine, symbolizing blood and flesh, to "wrathful" deities. The kapala may be a carryover from ancient practices of human sacrifice. When creating a kapala, a skull is specially collected, prepared, and elaborately anointed and consecrated before use. Many are decorated with carvings, jewels, or silverwork. The kapala is one of several "charnel ground" implements made from human bone.

Orans Gesture (Orant Posture) The **orans** (latin, *prayer*) gesture is an ancient mode of prayer common to many ancient religions. It is performed standing, elbows bent or at the side, with arms uplifted and palms upward- a gesture of supplication or pleading. The orans position was widely used in early Christian prayer, but was gradually replaced by the submissive gesture in the laity, although it has been in continual use by priests of the Roman Catholic faith during the celebration of the Mass and other priestly offices. It has been in continual use by both clergy and laity in the Eastern Orthodox Church. The gesture is also gaining new popularity in many charismatic evangelical churches, where it considered more joyful and uplifting.

Corn Dolly The **corn dolly** is an ancient harvest custom, still widely practiced throughout Europe. In ancient Europe it was customary at harvest time to leave a small portion of the grain in the field, often twisted or tied into the shape of a man or the symbol of a god or goddess. Sometimes, it was even dressed in men's or women's clothes, kept in a cradle, or hung atop a pole. This bundle or effigy (immortalized in Burns' ballad of [John Barleycorn](#)) was believed to contain the essence of the spirit of the grains- a representation of the solar deity who would be burned and 'reborn' as the spring grain. At the end of the season (usually at the winter solstice), the bundle would be ritually sacrificed, burnt, or plowed under to ensure the year's crops. In later times, corn dollies evolved into a household tradition, with elaborate symbolic figures crafted from straw, which were usually hung over doors or in barns and burnt at Christmastime; sometimes small grain dolls were kept in cradles or given 'pride of place' in the home through the winter. Today the corn dollie is little more than a craft tradition, with each region 'specializing' with a particular design.

Yab-Yum (Father-Mother) The traditional Tibetan Buddhist **Yab-yum** (literally, "father-mother") image of two deities in an overtly sexual posture is meant to be shocking, but not in the way one might suppose. A yab-yum icon is a meditational tool, one of many seemingly contradictory images of sex or death used to achieve the insight that leads to spiritual liberation. There are several types of yab-yum, each depicting a tantric deity (compassion) in sexual union with his consort. (wisdom), each with its own layers of additional symbolism. Like the Hindu [Shatkona](#) or the Taoist [yin-yang](#), the image represents dual forces in union, which united, create a transcendent unity. Despite appearances, the yab-yum is not related in any way to sexual practices.

Web of Wyrd (Skuld's net) A modern representation of the **Web of Wyrd**, the matrix of fate (wyrd) as woven by the Nornir, the fates of Norse legend. The emblem, nine staves arranged in an angular grid, contains all of the shapes of the [runes](#) and therefore all of the past, present, and future possibilities they represent. The web serves as a reminder that the actions of the past affect the present and that present actions affect the future; all timelines are inextricably interconnected- in a sense, it is a representation of the tree of life.

Chai (Life) **Chai** in Hebrew means *living* or *alive*. The image represents the word as written in Hebrew (right to left): Cheth Yod. In Judaism, the word is used an emblem of charity, longevity, and good fortune. Gematrically, Ch'ai enumerates to eighteen; therefore, the number is associated with the life-force and the immanent presence of God. It is entirely due to this symbolism that Jewish charitable giving is traditionally ? in multiples of 18.

In Kabbalah, the letter Chet corresponds to the eighteenth 'path' on the [Tree of Life](#), between [Binah](#) and [Geburah](#). In esoteric (Non-Judaic) kabbalah, this path is associated with the 7th card of the tarot, the Chariot, which is itself associated with generative forces, and the Merkabah- the "throne chariot" or divine vehicle of God as described in the visions of the prophet Ezekiel.

Peace Sign (Peace Symbol) The **peace sign** is not a religious symbol, but is included here as it is so often misinterpreted as a such. It is a common conceit in some evangelical Christian circles to refer to the symbol as anti-Christian, and they refer to it as a 'broken cross' or 'Nero's cross,' referring back to the story of the upside-down crucifixion, supposedly at the hands of Emperor Nero. Thus, it is supposed to be a Satanic emblem- somehow, Satanists at the beginning of Christianity are supposed to have adopted the emblem of a Saint to somehow signify the defeat of Christianity. It makes no sense, but little in these convoluted conspiracy theories ever does. (It is also fashionable to compare the symbol to the letter algiz in the Norse runic alphabet, and thus extract a further connection to the Nazi and Neonazi groups who use such symbolism. To make it work, they have to take the runic letter algiz, call it 'life' when in fact it means 'elk,' and then flip it over and call it 'death'. Make sense?) The truth, as usual, is much more interesting, if less dramatic. The creator of the peace sign is Gerald Holtom, a leader in the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. Holtom, a Christian, originally used a Christian cross in his design, an idea that was rejected by religious leaders. He relates that he settled on the final design, a combination of the semaphore letters ND (for Nuclear Disarmament) as an emblem of the despair that he felt, a representation of a gesture of pleading: "I drew myself: the representative of an individual in despair, with hands palm outstretched outwards and downwards in the manner of Goya's peasant before the firing squad. I formalised the drawing into a line and put a circle round it." The design was a popular success, and almost transcended its original intent, first adopted by the American Civil rights movement, then the anti-war movement, eventually becoming the ubiquitous emblem of peace.

Dearinth The **Dearinth** symbol was designed by Oberon Zell (Then known as Otter Zell) as an emblem to represent his "Church of All Worlds," a Neopagan religious group based on the spiritual themes in Robert Heinlein's novel *Stranger in a Strange Land*. The symbol is based on ancient labyrinth designs, and incorporates the images of the [Goddess](#) and the [Horned God](#). The nine concentric rings symbolize the nine levels of initiation in the Church.

Miraculous Medal (Marian Monogram) The emblem at right is one of many examples of "Marian Monograms" employed by devotees of the Virgin Mary within the Catholic Church. This particular example appears on the reverse of the "**miraculous medal**," based on a design received in a vision of the Virgin by St. Catherine Labouré in 1830. According to the legend, Theresa was directed by Mary to fashion the medal as a symbol of charity. The intertwined cross and initial "M" are meant to illustrate the scene of Jesus' crucifixion described in the Gospel of John, and represents Mary at the foot of the cross. The twelve stars depicted represent the twelve tribes of Israel. The two hearts are, respectively, the [Sacred Heart of Jesus](#) and the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Blue Oyster Cult ("Cross of questioning") This symbol, sometimes referred to as the "Cross of questioning," is little more than a logo for the rock band **Blue Oyster Cult**. Created by artist Bill Gawlick for the band's first album, the symbol is patterned after the astrological symbol of Saturn/Cronos, in the shape of a sickle. (it is the image of the God of time with his sickle that gives us the modern concept of the Grim reaper) It is not a question mark, an upside down cross, or a Satanic symbol. Contrary to Urban Legend and tract writers, there is no corresponding "anti-Christian" symbol.

"The Artist" (TAFKAP) This ostentatious symbol served as a name for the musician **Prince** for more than five years After a publishing dispute with his recording company (Warner Brothers). Adapted from the alchemical symbol for soapstone (by the addition of a circle) as illustrated in a Dover Clip Art Book, the symbol was most likely chosen for its resemblance to the planetary symbols of Mars and Venus, making it a particularly fitting symbol for the

androgynous artist. The glyph was unpronounceable and caused much consternation amongst members of the media, who took to calling him "The Artist formerly known as Prince," a mouthful eventually shortened to the acronym "TAFKAP."

Heartagram The **Heartagram** was originally created as a logo by the self described "Love Metal" band [HIM](#). It combines a heart with a [pentagram](#), and according to band members, represents the juxtaposition of love and hate/anger, or life and death. The symbol is sported as a tattoo by many HIM fans, including professional skater and "Jackass" stuntman Bam Margera.

Note: A similar-looking symbol, with heart and triangle interlaced, is sometimes worn as a decorative embellishment of the [Star of David](#).

Zoso (Jimmy Page's Emblem) Called "**Zoso**" because it resembles a word, this glyph is one of four enigmatic symbols appearing on the cover of rock group Led Zeppelin's album *Four*. Each member of the band chose a personal emblem for the cover; this symbol was chosen by guitarist Jimmy Page as a personal emblem. The symbol is probably derived from a sixteenth century treatise by mathematician and occultist Girolamo Cardano, where it is used to represent the planet Saturn for purposes of magick. Page is a Capricorn, a sign ruled by Saturn, and Saturn, of course, is the planetary ruler of lead. The symbol also bears a strong resemblance to characters of the "alphabet of the Magi," a seventeenth century text used exclusively for fashioning magical talismans. What it means personally to Page is unknown, as he has never publically revealed its meaning, but his interest in magick and Crowleyana is well known. (He even operated an occult bookshop called "Equinox" for a time.) Page's symbol appears among symbols of the [OTO](#) in ephemera related to Kenneth Anger's film "Lucifer Rising."

Sigil of Lucifer ("Seal of Satan") The **Sigil of Lucifer** is a lesser known historical magical sigil used occasionally as an emblem by modern Satanists. The image originates in the sixteenth century Italian *Grimoirium Verum*, or "Grimoire of Truth." Used in conjunction with other symbols, its original purpose of the sigil was to aid in a visual invocation of the angel Lucifer. The figure is probably derived from an earlier work, most likely drawn from a magic square whose origins are now lost. The emblem is sometimes referred to as the "Seal of satan," although this is not a historical usage.

Triquetra (Triqueta) The **triquetra** (often, triqueta) is a tripartate symbol composed of three interlocked [vesica piscis](#), marking the intersection of three circles. It is most commonly a symbol of the Holy Trinity (Father, son, Holy spirit) used by the Celtic Christian Church, sometimes stylized as three interlaced fish: The triqueta symbol predates Christianity and was likely a Celtic symbol of the Goddess, and in the North, a symbol of the god Odin. Although it is often asserted that the triquetra is a symbol of a tripartite goddess, no such goddess has been identified with the symbol. Similar symbols do occur in some [Norse](#) and Celtic goddess imagery, but most likely represents the divisions of the animal kingdom and the three domains of earth mentioned above. Triplicities were common symbols in Celtic myth and legend, one of the possible reasons Christian beliefs were so easily adopted by the Celtic people. The triqueta makes an ideal Christian symbol. It is a perfect representation of the concept of "three in one" in Christian trinity beliefs, and incorporates another popular Christian symbol, the fish, in its original form of the [vesica piscis](#). It is sometimes enclosed within a circle to emphasize the unity aspect. In Wiccan and Neopagan belief, the triqueta symbolizes the triple aspected goddess (maid, mother, and crone). Some Christians have protested this "appropriation" of the symbol...however, ironically enough, the original Christian fish symbol was derived from an early symbol of venus, one representing female generative organs- making the triquetra perfectly

appropriate symbol for a Goddess revival. The triquetra is also considered to represent the triplicities of mind, body, and soul, as well as the three domains of earth according to Celtic legend- earth, sea, and sky. The triquetra also appears on the television series *Charmed*, probably as a less threatening alternative to the pentacle (the preferred emblem of witches real and imaginary). In the show, it represents the "power of three, acting as one " which in turn represents the three sisters. Evangelical tract writers and conspiracy theorists like to label the triquetra a 'satanic' symbol, claiming it is a 'stylized' 666, an allusion to the 'number of the beast' in the Book of Revelation. This, however, is simply wishful thinking. The triquetra of interlaced fishes is one of the very earliest of Christian symbols, predating the crucifix by hundreds of years. The purported 'satanic' meaning of the symbol is a modern evangelical interpolation.

Spiral The spiral is probably the oldest symbol of human spirituality. It has been found scratched into rocks from thousands of years ago, on every continent in the world. The religious significance can only be guessed, but it has been found on tombs, and possibly has a connection with the sun- the sun makes a spiral shape every three months in its travels. A [triple spiral](#) motif found on Celtic tombs is drawn unicursally (that is, in one continuous line), suggesting a cycle of rebirth or resurrection. (this hypothesis is bolstered by the fact that many of these appear to be deliberately placed where they catch the first rays of the sun on the solstice). In modern times, the spiral is still spiritually significant. It is the symbol of spirit in Wicca, an emblem of the Goddess.

Sheela-na-gig (Síla na Géige) The **Sheela-na-gig** is a shocking, immediately noticeable figure found in Celtic and medieval stonework. Sheela is most commonly depicted as a squat, ugly female creature using her hands to display grotesquely large genitals. Sheelas of various ages adorn stone steles all over the Irish countryside ; they are also found in the intricate carvings in cathedrals and stone churches in Ireland, England, and throughout Europe, often in tandem with the [Green man](#). Sheela is very likely related to the ancient Celtic Goddess; her images are much older than the churches they often appear in, suggesting they are elements of much older religious sites. Many closely resemble ancient Viking figures of a creator goddess [Ormgudinna](#).

Cernunnos (Herne the Hunter) **Cernunnos** is the mysterious horned deity worshipped by Iron Age Celts across Europe until the end of the first century. Very little is known about Cernunnos except his name and his image, which appears on numerous stonecarvings and other artifacts throughout Europe. He appears crowned with stag's antlers, is often seated in a meditative position, and is almost always depicted with images of wild animals. His Celtic name is unknown, although he may be associated with Derg Corra, the early Celtic "Man in the Tree." Cernunnos is a Roman name meaning "horned one." He is often associated with *Herne the hunter*, a character of British folk myth, and the "Green man" of European architecture. Roman invaders associated Cernunnos with the god Mercury. He is later associated with "Herne the hunter," of European legend, and his appearance was eventually adapted as the Christian Devil's. The image which appears above is from the "Gundestrup Cauldron," a ritual object of unknown use discovered in pieces in a peat bog in Denmark.

Celtic Knots (knotwork, Celtic interlace) The **Celtic Knot** is one of the best known motifs in Celtic jewelry and art. The delicate twists and turns are found in ancient stone art and tattoos, in illuminated manuscripts- in fact, just about anywhere the Celtic people have travelled. Similar designs exist in Norse culture, and as far as China. While there are many Celtic symbol guides available, especially those that list every variation of Celtic knot, many of the purported meanings of the symbols are usually simply made up (most often to sell trinkets and jewelry).

There are no known authentic knotwork designs meaning love or loyalty or many of the other common meanings ascribed to the designs. While many of the ancient designs certainly had some spiritually significant meaning, these have been lost to the ages. The continual looping of the designs suggests themes of eternity and interconnectedness, and knots may have been made at one time to foil evil spirits. Interwoven figures of people and animals may have represented the interdependent nature of life-two or more knots laced together symbolize lovers, hunters and their prey, God and man, etc. Some knots were used as magical talismans for protection. The more modern designs, such as those found in decorated Christian scriptures, were mainly decorative designs used for ornamentation. Other relatively modern designs include linked hearts and other "love knots," Christian crosses, harps, shamrocks, and other folk symbols, and so on. The Celts themselves left very little in the way of records, and most symbols are interpreted by archaeologists and other scholars who study the symbols in context. Some ancient Celtic symbols have changed in meaning over time, having been influenced by the introduction of Christianity and the influence of other cultures. A general rule of thumb is: the shape of the design often determines the "meaning" of a knotwork design- triskele and trefoil shapes should be regarded as [triskeles](#), bird, fish, and animal designs represent the attributes of the animal, etc. Circles represent unity or eternity, spirals reincarnation or cycles of life and rebirth, triangles and trefoils the threefold dominions of earth, sea, and sky. Squares or four-fold shapes are [shield knots](#), symbols of protection from spirits or malevolent influence. Interlaced animals and men usually represent relationships, or emphasize the interdependence of mankind and nature.

Celtic Tree of Life (Crann Bethadh) The image shown here is one of many representations of the **Celtic Tree of Life**. The Tree was a central part of early Celtic spirituality. To the Celts, the tree was a source of basic sustenance- a bearer of food, a provider of shelter and fuel for cooking and warmth. Without trees, life would have been extraordinarily difficult. Wood from sacred trees had magickal properties, which was reflected in the Celtic [Ogham](#) alphabet, wherein each letter represents a particular sacred tree (modern Ogham divination is based on the uses and importance of these sacred trees to the Celtic people). Some trees provided food, some wood for making hunting weapons; others were sacred to the fairy-folk or to the Gods. In Celtic creation stories, trees were the ancestors of mankind, elder beings of wisdom who provided the alphabet, the calendar, and entrance to the realms of the Gods. Trees were also associated in the Shamanic beliefs of the Druids and other Celtic peoples with the supernatural world. Trees were a connection to the world of the spirits and the ancestors, living entities, and doorways into other worlds. The most sacred tree of all was the Oak tree, which represented the *axis mundi*, the center of the world. The Celtic name for oak, *daur*, is the origin of the word *door*- the root of the oak was literally the doorway to the Otherworld, the realm of Fairy. The word *Druid*, the name of the Celtic Priestly class, is compounded from the words for *oak* and *wise*- a Druid was one who was "Oak Wise," meaning learned in Tree magick and guardian of the doorway. Long after the Druids of old have vanished into the mists of time, the lore of trees continues as a vital part of Celtic myth and folklore. Countless Irish legends revolve around trees. One could fall asleep next to a particular tree and awake in the fairy realm. In Celtic legends of the Gods, trees guard sacred wells and provide healing, shelter, and wisdom. Trees carried messages to the other realm, and conferred blessings- to this day, trees can be seen in the Irish countryside festooned with ribbons and pleas for favors, love, healing, and prosperity. The interlaced figures known popularly as [Celtic knots](#) represent sacred trees and plants, and the sacred animals of the forest. The [Green Man](#) or foliate god is the animus of nature; the spirit of the forest and of the hunt, and is pictured as a spirit face in the form of gathered leaves and sprouting tendrils.

nastavak na sajtu <http://altreligion.about.com/library/glossary/blsymbols.htm>

Advaita Vedanta: (pronounced as "ədvaitə ve:dāntə") Probably the best known of all [Vedanta](#) schools of philosophy of [Hinduism](#), the others being *Dvaita* and *Vishishtadvaita* (total six). "Advaita" literally means "not two", and is often called a [monistic](#) or non-dualistic system which essentially refers to the indivisibility of the Self ([Atman](#)) from the Whole ([Brahman](#)). The key texts from which all Vedanta (lit., end or the goal of the Vedas) texts draw are the [Upanishads](#) (twelve or thirteen in particular), which are usually at the end of the [Vedas](#), and the [Brahma Sutras](#) (also known as [Vedanta Sutras](#)), which in turn discuss the essence of the [Upanishads](#).

Afterlife: (or life after death) A generic term referring to a continuation of [existence](#), typically [spiritual](#) and experiential, beyond this world, or after death. This article is about current generic and widely held or reported concepts of afterlife.

Ahimsa: A [religious](#) concept which advocates [non-violence](#) and a respect for all [life](#). *Ahimsa* (ahimṣā) is [Sanskrit](#) for avoidance of *himsa*, or injury. It is interpreted most often as meaning peace and reverence toward all [sentient](#) beings. Ahimsa is the core of [Hinduism](#), [Jainism](#), and [Buddhism](#). Its first mention in Indian philosophy is found in the Hindu scriptures called the [Upanishads](#), the oldest dating about 800 BC. Those who practice Ahimsa are often [vegetarians](#) or [vegans](#).

Aikido: (*Aikidō*, using an older style of [kanji](#)) Literally meaning "harmony energy way", or with some poetic license, "way of the harmonious spirit", is a [gendai budo](#) — a modern [Japanese martial art](#). Practitioners of aikido are known as aikidoka. It was developed by [Morihei Ueshiba](#) (also known by aikidoka as [o-sensei](#) over the period of the 1930s to the 1960s. Technically, the major parts of aikido are derived from [Daitō-ryū Aiki-jūjutsu](#), a form of jujutsu with many joint techniques, and [kenjutsu](#), or Japanese sword technique (some believe the tactics in Aikido are especially influenced by [Yagyū Shinkage-ryū](#)). Aikido is also considered to contain a significant spiritual component.

Akashic Records: ([Akasha](#) is a [Sanskrit](#) word meaning "sky", "space" or "[aether](#)") Said to be a collection of mystical knowledge that is stored in the aether; i.e. on a non-physical plane of existence. The concept is common in some [New Age](#) religious groups. The Akashic Records are said to have existed since the beginning of the planet. Just as we have various specialty [libraries](#) (e.g., medical, law), there are said to exist various Akashic Records (e.g., human, animal, plant, mineral, etc). Most writings refer to the Akashic Records in the area of [human](#) experience.

Altruism: Either a practice or habit (in the view of many, a [virtue](#)) as well as an [ethical doctrine](#). In Buddhism it can also be seen as a fundamental property of (human) nature. *Altruism* can refer to: being helpful to other people with little or no interest in being rewarded for one's efforts (the colloquial definition). This is distinct from merely helping others. Actions that benefit others with a net detrimental or neutral effect on the actor, regardless of the actor's own psychology, motivation, or the cause of her actions. This type of altruistic behavior is referred to in [ecology](#) as *Commensalism*. An ethical doctrine that holds that individuals have a moral obligation to help others, if necessary to the exclusion of one's own interest or benefit. One who holds such a doctrine is known as an "altruist." The concepts have a long history in [philosophical](#) and [ethical](#) thought, and have more recently become a topic for [psychologists](#), [sociologists](#), [evolutionary biologists](#), and [ethologists](#). While ideas about altruism from one field can have an impact on the other fields, the different methods and focuses of these fields lead to different perspectives on altruism.

Anatta: The [Buddhist](#) doctrine of Anatta ([Pāli](#)) or Anātman ([Sanskrit](#)) specifies the absence of a supposedly permanent and unchanging self or [soul](#) ([ātman](#)). What is normally thought of as the "self" is in fact an agglomeration of constantly changing physical and mental constituents ("[skandhas](#)") which give rise to unhappiness if clung to as though this temporary assemblage formed some kind of immutable and enduring [Soul](#) ("[atman](#)"). The "anatta" doctrine attempts to encourage the Buddhist practitioner to detach him/herself from this misplaced clinging to what is mistakenly regarded as his or her Self, and from such detachment (aided by moral living and meditation) the way to [Nirvana](#) is able successfully to be traversed. Anatta is one of the [Three Seals](#) of Buddhist [doctrines](#) and is an important element of wisdom through the apophatic technique used to experience [Nirvana](#), the other two being *dukkha* and *Anicca*.

Ancestor worship: also ancestor veneration A [religious practice](#) based on the belief that one's [ancestors](#) possess [supernatural](#) powers. All [cultures](#) attach [ritual](#) significance to the passing of loved ones, but this is not equivalent to ancestor worship. Rather, ancestor [worship](#) involves the same sort of religious practices one sees when people appease or [supplicate](#) other entities thought to exist and possess supernatural powers, such as [gods](#), [angels](#), [saints](#), or [demons](#). While far from universal, ancestor worship or ancestor veneration occurs in societies with every degree of social, political, and technological complexity, and it remains an important component of various religious practices in modern times.

Anomalous phenomenon: An observed [phenomenon](#) for which there is no suitable explanation in the context of a specific body of scientific knowledge (e.g. [astronomy](#) or [biology](#)).

Asceticism: Denotes a life which is characterised by refraining from worldly pleasures ([austerity](#)). Those who practice ascetic lifestyles often perceive their practices as [virtuous](#) and pursue them to achieve greater [spirituality](#). In a more cynical context, ascetic may connote some form of self-mortification, ritual punishment of the body or harsh renunciation of pleasure. However the word certainly does not necessarily imply a negative connotation.

Atman (Buddhism): A Sanskrit word, normally translated as 'soul' or 'self' (also [ego](#)). In Buddhism, the concept of *Atman* is the prime consequence of ignorance, – itself the cause of all misery - the foundation of [Samsara](#) itself. In a number of sutras of Mahayana Buddhism, as well as in certain Buddhist Tantras, however, the term "Atman" is used in a dual sense, in some instances denoting the impermanent, mundane ego (attachment to which needs to be overcome), and on other occasions explicitly referring to the ultimately real, pure, blissful Self of the Buddha in the state of Nirvana, a Selfhood stated to be unchanging, unshakeably firm, and eternal within all beings (see [Mahayana Mahaparinirvana Sutra](#)).

Atman (Hinduism): Beginning with [Vedantic Hindu](#) philosophy, the Ātman — [Sanskrit](#) (masculine nominative singular: Ātmā) is regarded as an underlying metaphysical self. It is first seen in its current Hindu usage in the [Upanishads](#), some of which date back to 1000 BC. The word "Atman" is interpreted by some schools as the "Main Essence" of man, as his Highest Self. "A" in this word is a negative particle. One popular, albeit apocryphal, etymology has it that the 'tma' of "atma" "Tma" means "darkness" in light of the word "tamas" – "darkness, ignorance or inertia", "spiritual darkness" – has the same root. Therefore "A-tma" or "Atman" means "opposite to darkness", "shining". [Advaita](#) philosophers believe that individual "personal" [souls](#) exist as [Maya](#) only. [Dvaita](#) philosophy claims that there is an eternal plurality of souls as per [Bhagavad Gita 2.12](#).

Awareness: In [biological psychology](#), awareness describes an animal's [perception](#) and [cognitive](#) reaction to a condition or event. Awareness does not necessarily imply [understanding](#).

Awareness is a relative [concept](#). An [animal](#) may be partially aware, may be [subconsciously](#) aware or may be acutely aware of an event. Awareness may be focused on an internal state, such as a visceral feeling, or on external events by way of sensory perception. Awareness provides the raw material from which animals develop [qualia](#), or [subjective ideas](#) about their [experience](#)... Neural systems that regulate [attention](#) serve to attenuate awareness among complex animals whose [central](#) and [peripheral nervous system](#) provides more information than [cognitive](#) areas of the brain can assimilate. Within an attenuated system of awareness, a [mind](#) might be aware of much more than is being contemplated in a focused [extended consciousness](#).

Azeemi: People belong to the Spiritual order of Silsila-e-Azeemia currently headed by [Khawaja Shamsuddin Azeemi](#). These people, while following their religion, do some mental exercises to boost their self-awareness and try to able to enter the spiritual world.

Bagua (concept): ([Chinese](#);: [pinyin](#): bā guà; [Wade-Giles](#): pa kua; literally "eight trigrams", [Korean](#)) A fundamental philosophical concept in ancient China. It is an [octagonal](#) diagram with eight trigrams on each side. The concept of *bagua* is applied not only to [Chinese Taoist](#) thought and the *I Ching*, but is also used in other domains of Chinese culture, such as [fengshui](#), [martial arts](#) , [navigation](#), etc.

Bahá'í Faith: An emerging global religion founded by [Bahá'u'lláh](#), a nineteenth-century [Iranian](#) exile. "Bahá'í" is either an adjective referring to this religion, or the term for a follower of Bahá'u'lláh. Bahá'í theology speaks of unity: the [oneness of God](#); the [oneness of religion](#); and the [oneness of humanity](#). These three principles have a profound impact on the theological and social teachings of this religion. Religion is seen as a progressively unfolding process of education, by God, through his messengers, to a constantly evolving human family. [Bahá'u'lláh](#) is seen as the most recent, pivotal, but not final of God's messengers. He announced that his major purpose is to lay the spiritual foundations for a new global civilization of peace and harmony, which Bahá'ís expect to gradually arise.

Bhajan: (or kirtan) A [Hindu devotional song](#), often but not necessarily of ancient origin. Great importance is attributed to the singing of bhajans within the [Bhakti](#) movement. It is also one of the pillars of Sikhism and in that context refers to the singing of the Sacred Hymns from the *[Sri Guru Granth Sahib](#)*, or "SGGS". The Sikhs place huge value on this type of singing and a Sikh is duty bound to listen to and/or sing Guru-Kirtan as frequently as possible. In [Surat Shabd Yoga](#), bhajan means listening to the inner sounds of the [Shabd](#) or the Shabd Master.

Bhakti: A [Tamil](#) or [Sanskrit](#) term from Hinduism that means intense devotion expressed by action (service). A person who practices bhakti is called bhakta. The concept of devotion is more or less the same in all religions. But in [Hinduism](#) there are certain extra subtleties which make it comparatively more complicated. These are : the One Reality versus many 'Gods' of worship; deity worship through 'idols', 'icons' and 'images'; the freedom to choose one's own 'favourite deity', at the same time not being exclusive; and the interactive ramifications of God's grace, fate and free will. Although some element of Bhakti was present even in the Vedic times, it is over the last six or seven centuries that Bhakti has taken the modern shape. The [Bhakti movement](#) started in [Tamil Nadu](#) and spread slowly northwards, becoming eventually a pervasive feature of Hinduism. The [Alvars](#) and [Nayanars](#) initiated the concept of Bhakti as a means of attaining salvation. Bhakti is considered the easiest and the fastest spiritual path in [Kali Yuga](#).

Bharatanatyam: (also spelled Bharathanatyam, Bharatnatyam or Bharata Natyam) A classical [dance](#) form originating in the [South Indian](#) state of [Tamil Nadu](#). Originally known as *sadir*, it owes its current name to Krishna Iyer and later, [Rukmini Devi Arundale](#). *Bharata* could refer to either the author of the [Natya Shastra](#) or to a legendary king after whom the country of [India](#) was supposedly named [Bharata](#) and *natyam* is [Sanskrit](#) for the art of dance-drama. It was brought to the stage at the beginning of the 20th century by Krishna Iyer.

Bible: (sometimes *The Book, Good Book, Word of God, The Word, or Scripture*) From [Greek](#) (τα) βιβλία, (*ta biblia*, "(the) books", plural of βιβλιον, *biblion*, "book", originally a diminutive of βιβλος, *biblos*, which in turn is derived from βυβλος—*byblos*, meaning "papyrus", from the ancient [Phoenician](#) city of [Byblos](#) which exported this [writing material](#)), is the classical name for the [Hebrew Bible](#) of [Judaism](#) or the combination of the [Old Testament](#) and [New Testament](#) of [Christianity](#) ("The Bible" therefore actually refers to at least two different Bibles). It is thus applied to [sacred scriptures](#). Many Christian English speakers refer to the Christian Bible as "the good book" (*Gospel* itself means "good news"). For many people, their Bible is the revealed word of [God](#) or an authoritative record of the relationship between God, the world, and humankind.

Blessing: (from to *bless*, [Old English](#) *bleodsian* or *bletsian*) Originally meant "sprinkling with [blood](#)" during the pagan sacrifices, the [Blóts](#) (reference: [AHD](#)). A blessing, (also used to refer to bestowing of such) is the infusion of something with [holiness](#), divine will, or one's hopes. Within [Roman Catholicism](#), [Eastern Orthodoxy](#), and similar traditions, formal blessings of the church are performed by [bishops](#), [priests](#), and sometimes [deacons](#), but as in many other religions, anyone may formally bless another.

Bodhi: ([Pali](#) and [Sanskrit](#). Lit. *awakening*) A title given in [Buddhism](#) to the specific awakening experience attained by the [Indian](#) spiritual teacher [Gautama Buddha](#) and his disciples. It is sometimes described as complete and perfect sanity, or awareness of the true nature of the [universe](#). After attainment, it is believed one is freed from the cycle of [Samsāra](#): birth, suffering, death and rebirth. Bodhi is most commonly translated into English as *enlightenment*, though this translation is problematic, since [enlightenment](#) (the soul being "lit" by a higher power) is originally a concept from [Christian mysticism](#) or conversely evokes notions of the 18th century European [Age of Enlightenment](#) that are not identical with the Buddhist concept of Bodhi. There is no image of "light" contained in the term, "Bodhi" - rather, it expresses the notion of awakening from a dream and of being aware and Knowing (Reality). It is thus preferable to think of Bodhi as spiritual "Awake-ness" or "Awakening", rather than "enlightenment" (although it is true that imagery of light is extraordinarily prevalent in many of the Buddhist scriptures).

Born again: A term used primarily in [Evangelical Protestant Christianity](#), where it is associated with salvation, conversion and spiritual rebirth. By extension it is applied in other areas, including a *transcending personal experience* — or the experience of *being spiritually reborn* as a "new" human being.

Buddhism: A [religion](#) based on the teachings of the [Buddha](#), [Siddhārtha Gautama](#), a prince of the [Shakyas](#), whose lifetime is traditionally given as 566 to 486 BC. Buddhism gradually spread from [India](#) throughout Asia to [Central Asia](#), [Sri Lanka](#), [Tibet](#), [Southeast Asia](#), as well as to East Asian countries such as [China](#), [Korea](#), and [Japan](#). It is classified as an Ārya dharma or a *noble religion*. With approximately 350 million followers, Buddhism is considered a [major world religion](#). The aim of Buddhist practice is to end the suffering of cyclic existence, [samsara](#) (Pāli, Sanskrit), by awakening the practitioner to the realization of true reality, the achievement of

liberation ([nirvana](#)). To achieve this, one should purify and train the mind and act according to the laws of [karma](#), of cause and effect: perform positive actions, and positive results will follow, and vice versa. Buddhist morality is underpinned by the principles of harmlessness and moderation. Mental training focuses on moral discipline (*sila*), meditative concentration (*samadhi*), and wisdom (*prajñā*). While Buddhism does not deny the existence of supernatural beings (indeed, many are discussed in [Buddhist scripture](#)), it does not ascribe power for creation, salvation or judgment to them. Like humans, they are regarded as having the power to affect worldly events, and so some Buddhist schools associate with them via ritual.

Cao Dai: (Cao Đài) A relatively new, [syncretist](#), [monotheistic religion](#), officially established in [Tay Ninh](#), southern Vietnam, in 1926. Đạo Cao Đài is the religion's shortened name, the full name is Đại Đạo Tam Kỳ Phổ Độ. The term *Cao Đài* literally means "high place." Figuratively, it means that highest place where God reigns. It is also the abbreviated name for [God](#), the creator of the universe, whose full title is *Cao Đài Tiên Ông Đại Bồ Tát Ma-ha-tát*. Caodaiists credit God as the religion's founder. They believe the teachings, symbolism and organization were communicated directly from Đức (means venerable) Cao Đài. Even the construction of the Tay Ninh Holy See had divine guidance.

Celibacy: May refer either to being unmarried or to [sexual abstinence](#). An [oath](#) of celibacy is a promise not to enter into [marriage](#). Some writers prefer this usage of "celibacy", while others use it interchangeably as a synonym for abstinence. Some writers on sexuality draw a distinction between abstinence and celibacy, stating that celibacy means refraining from any sexual activity with a partner. They argue that this can be empowering, as it still allows that person to be "sexual" (through, for example, [masturbation](#)).

Chakra: In [Hinduism](#) and its spiritual systems of [yoga](#) and in some related eastern cultures, as well as in some segments of the [New Age](#) movement -- and to some degree the distinctly different [New Thought](#) movement -- a chakra is thought to be an energy node in the [human body](#). The word comes from the [Sanskrit](#) *cakra* चक्र meaning "[wheel](#), circle", and sometimes also referring to the "wheel of life". The pronunciation of this word can be approximated in English by *chuhkruh*, with *ch* as in *chart* and both instances of *a* as in *yoga* (the commonly found pronunciation *shockrah* is incorrect). The seven main chakras are described as being aligned in an ascending column from the base of the [spine](#) to the top of the head. Each chakra is associated with a certain [color](#), multiple specific functions, an aspect of [consciousness](#), a [classical element](#), and other distinguishing characteristics.

Chant: The [rhythmic](#) speaking or [singing](#) of [words](#) or [sounds](#), either on a single [pitch](#) or with a simple [melody](#) involving a limited set of [notes](#) and often including a great deal of [repetition](#) or stasis. Chant may be considered speech, music, or a heightened form of speech which is more effective in conveying emotion or expressing ones spiritual side. Chants are used in a variety of settings from ritual to recreation. Supporters or players in [sports](#) contests may use them (see [football chant](#)). Warriors in ancient times would chant battle cries. Chants form part of many religious [rituals](#). Some examples include chant in [African](#) and [Native American tribal](#) cultures, [Gregorian chant](#), [Qur'an reading](#), various [Buddhist chants](#), various [mantras](#), and the chanting of [psalms](#) and prayers especially in [Roman Catholic](#), [Eastern Orthodox](#), and [Anglican](#) churches. [Tibetan Buddhist](#) chant involves [throat singing](#), where multiple pitches are produced by each performer. Japanese *Shigin* (詩吟), or 'chanted poetry', mirrors [Zen](#) principles, and is sung from the [gut](#) - the locus of power in Zen [Buddhism](#).

Channelling: The act of having spirits enter or possess one's body in order to speak and act through one as practised in many cultures and religions.

Charity: A term that refers to giving. In [Christian theology](#) it is one of the [three theological virtues](#), meaning loving kindness towards others; it is held to be the ultimate perfection of the human spirit, because it is said to both glorify and reflect the nature of God. In its most extreme form charity can be self-sacrificial. Charity is one conventional English translation of the Greek term *agapē*.

Chinese folk religion: A loosely-connected system of practices and beliefs that has been practiced by large segments of the [Han Chinese](#) population of [China](#) from the early period of Chinese continuing to the present. With the influx of [Western cultural](#) influences for several centuries and the complex developments and modernization of the 20th century, the prevalence of Chinese traditional beliefs has declined, but still remain strong, many or most gradually transforming into elements of culture and social behavior while retaining little spiritual or religious significance. It is composed of a combination of [religious](#) practices, including [ancestor worship or veneration](#), [Buddhism](#) and [Taoism](#).

Christianity: A [monotheistic religion](#) recognizing [Jesus Christ](#) as its founder and central figure. With more than two billion adherents, or about one-third of the total world population, it is the largest world religion. Its origins are intertwined with [Judaism](#), with which it shares much sacred lore, including the [Old Testament](#) (the [Tanakh](#) or Hebrew Bible). Christianity is sometimes termed an [Abrahamic religion](#), along with Judaism and [Islam](#). The names "Christian" and hence "Christianity" are first attested in [Acts 11:26](#), "For a whole year they met with the church and taught a great many people. And in Antioch Jesus' disciples were first called **Christians**" (Gr. [χριστιανους](#), from *Christ* Gr. [Χριστός](#), which means "the anointed"). Christianity encompasses numerous religious traditions that widely vary by culture and place, as well as many diverse beliefs and sects. Since the [Reformation](#), Christianity is usually represented as being divided into three main branches: [Catholicism](#), [Eastern Christianity](#) and [Protestantism](#).

Creation myth: The term creation myth refers to myths that describe the beginnings of [humanity](#), [earth](#), [life](#), and the [universe](#) ([cosmogony](#)). Creation myths may explain that the beginnings of the universe were a deliberate act of "creation" by a [supreme being](#). As with any set of [beliefs](#), opinions regarding the validity of particular creation myths differ—[points of view](#) on these subjects vary widely.

Compassion: (in [Pali](#): [Karuna](#)) A sense of shared [suffering](#), most often combined with a desire to alleviate or reduce such suffering; to show special kindness to those who suffer. Compassionate acts are generally considered those which take into account the suffering of others and attempt to alleviate that suffering as if it were one's own. In this sense, the various forms of the [Golden Rule](#) are clearly based on the concept of compassion. Compassion differs from other forms of helpful or humane behavior in that its focus is primarily on the alleviation of suffering. Acts of kindness which seek primarily to confer benefit rather than relieve existing suffering are better classified as acts of [altruism](#), although, in this sense, compassion itself can be seen as a subset of altruism, it being defined as the type of behavior which seeks to benefit others by reducing their suffering.

Consciousness: A quality of the [mind](#) generally regarded to comprise qualities such as [subjectivity](#), [self-awareness](#), [sentience](#), [sapience](#), and the ability to [perceive](#) the relationship between [oneself](#) and one's [environment](#). Many philosophers divide consciousness into

phenomenal consciousness which is experience itself and access consciousness which is the processing of the things in experience. Many cultures and religious traditions place the seat of consciousness in a [soul](#) separate from the body. Conversely, many scientists and philosophers consider consciousness to be intimately linked to the neural functioning of the [brain](#) dictating the way in which the world is experienced. This aspect of consciousness is the subject of much debate and research in [philosophy of mind](#), [psychology](#), [brain biology](#), [neurology](#), and [cognitive science](#).

Contemplation: A type of [prayer](#) or [meditation](#) in the [Christian](#), especially [Catholic](#), tradition. It is an attempt to [experience God](#) directly. It is connected to Christian [mysticism](#), and authors such as [Teresa of Avila](#), [Margery Kempe](#), [Augustine Baker](#) and [Thomas Merton](#) have written about it extensively. It is briefly described in the [Catechism of the Catholic Church](#), paragraphs 2709 onwards, where the [Song of Songs](#) is quoted.

Cosmogony: [Gr. *Kosmogonia* from *Kosmos* the world and root of *gignesthai* to be born] The coming into [existence](#), the creation and origination of the [universe](#). It is also the *study* of these aspects. So *a cosmogony* describes how the [Universe](#) came to be; hence, the creation myth in the book of [Genesis](#) is one such cosmogony, and there are many others, both [scientific](#) and [mythological](#). This contrasts with [cosmology](#), which studies the Universe at large, throughout its existence.

Cosmology: (from the [Greek](#): κοσμολογία (cosmologia, κόσμος (cosmos) world + λογία (logia) discourse) The study of the [universe](#) in its totality and by extension man's place in it. Though the word *cosmology* is itself of fairly recent origin, first used in [Christian Wolff's](#) *Cosmologia Generalis* (1730), the study of the universe has a long history involving [science](#), [philosophy](#), [esotericism](#), and [religion](#).

Deism: Historical and modern deism is defined by the view that [reason](#), rather than [revelation](#) or [tradition](#), should be the basis of belief in God. Deists reject organized religion and promote reason as the essential element in making moral decisions. This "rational" basis was usually founded upon the [cosmological argument](#) (first cause argument), the [teleological argument](#) (argument from design), and other aspects of what was called *natural religion*. Deism has become identified with the classical belief that God created but does not intervene in the world, though this is not a necessary component of deism.

Deity: (or a god) A postulated [preternatural](#) being, usually, but not always, of significant power, [worshipped](#), thought [holy](#), [divine](#), or [sacred](#), held in high regard, or respected by [human](#) beings. They assume a variety of forms, but are frequently depicted as having human or animal form. Sometimes it is considered [blasphemous](#) to imagine the deity as having any concrete form. They are usually [immortal](#). They are commonly assumed to have personalities and to possess consciousness, intellects, desires, and emotions much like humans. Such natural phenomena as lightning, floods, storms, other "acts of God", and [miracles](#) are attributed to them, and they may be thought to be the authorities or controllers of every aspect of human life (such as birth or the [afterlife](#)). Some deities are asserted to be the directors of time and fate itself, to be the givers of human law and morality, to be the ultimate judges of human worth and behavior, and to be the designers and creators of the [Earth](#) or the [universe](#). Some of these "gods" have no power at all—they are simply worshipped.

Devotion: In [Christianity](#) has come to mean time spent alone or in a small group of people reading and studying the Bible in a way as it relates to one's spiritual health and well being. It

can also mean setting oneself apart in worship and solitude whether in [Church](#) settings or in one's lifestyle to become more committed to and focused on God.

Dhammapada: ([Pali](#), translates as *Path of the Dharma*. Also [Prakrit Dhamapada](#), [Sanskrit Dharmapada](#)) A [Buddhist religious scripture](#), containing 423 [verses](#) in 26 categories. According to tradition, these are answers to questions put to [the Buddha](#) on various occasions, most of which deal with [ethics](#).

Dharma: ([sanskrit](#), roughly *law* or *way*) The way of the higher Truths. Beings that live in harmony with Dharma proceed quicker towards *moksha*, [nirvana](#), or personal [liberation](#), a concept first taught in [Indian](#) religions ([Hinduism](#), [Buddhism](#), [Jainism](#) and [Sikhism](#)).

Dhikr: Arabic. ("pronouncement", "[invocation](#)" or "[remembrance](#)") also spelled *zikr* based on its pronunciation in [Turkish](#) and [Persian](#). Dhikr is the remembrance of God commanded in the [Qur'an](#) for all [Muslims](#). To engage in dhikr is to have awareness of God according to [Islam](#). Dhikr as a devotional act includes the repetition of divine names, supplications and aphorisms from [hadith](#) literature, and sections of the Qur'an. More generally, any activity in which the Muslim maintains awareness of God is considered dhikr.

Emanationism: Technically is a [henotheism](#) component in the [cosmology](#) of certain [religious](#) or philosophical systems that argue a Supreme Being did not directly create the physical [universe](#), but instead *emanated* lower spiritual beings who created the world. According to this paradigm, Creation proceeds as an outpouring or even a transformation in the original [Absolute](#) or [Godhead](#). The Supreme Light or Consciousness descends through a series of stages, gradations, worlds or [hypostases](#), becoming progressively more material and embodied, before finally turning around to return to the One, retracing its steps through spiritual knowledge, contemplation and ascent.

Enlightenment: As a concept is related to the [Buddhist Bodhi](#) but is a cornerstone of religious and [spiritual](#) understanding in practically all [religions](#). It literally means being illuminated by acquiring new wisdom or understanding. Historically [Judaism](#) and [Christianity](#) referred to spiritual enlightenment as *divine illumination*. The systematic search for enlightenment was a goal of truth *seekers* after they found a master teacher or *guru*, who could guide them. However, this formulation was not necessarily spiritual. In earlier times, such as during the [Bon](#) period of Tibetan religion, it was essentially magical, which is a pre-scientific stage. After the systematic methods were learned in India, the nations of Asia made pilgrimages to learn them. The relationship between seeker and guru was and remains, in most cases, an essential point for Enlightenment. There are practical signs of such a state, which can be recognized by a guru. Thus there is a practical, even secular component to Enlightenment, which differs from the requirement of [Christian divine grace](#) from [God](#), which was essentially [mystical](#) or sacred.

Entheogen: A modern term derived from two Ancient Greek words, ἔνθεος (*entheos*) and γενέσθαι (*genesthai*). *Entheos* means literally "in God", more freely translated "inspired". The Greeks used it as a term of praise for poets and other artists. *Genesthai* means "to cause to be". So an entheogen is "that which causes (a person) to be in God". The translation "creating the divine within" that is sometimes given is not quite correct -- *entheogen* implies neither that something is created (as opposed to just perceiving something that is already there) nor that that which is experienced is *within* the user (as opposed to having independent existence). In its strictest sense the term refers to a [psychoactive](#) substance (most often some [plant](#) matter) that occasions enlightening [spiritual](#) or [mystical](#) experience, within the parameters of a [cult](#), in the

original non-pejorative sense of *cultus*. In a broader sense, the word "entheogen" refers to artificial as well as natural substances that induce [alterations of consciousness](#) similar to those documented for [ritual](#) ingestion of traditional [shamanic](#) inebriants, even if it is used in a secular context.

Epigenesis: The [philosophical/theological/esoteric](#) idea that since the [mind](#) was given to the human being, it is this original creative impulse, epigenesis, which has been the cause of all of [mankind](#)'s development. According to [spiritual evolution](#), human beings build upon that which has been already created, but there is also something new due to the activity of the spirit and thus it is that humans become creative intelligences — creators. In order that human being may become an independent, original Creator, it is necessary that his training should include sufficient latitude for the exercise of the individual originality which distinguishes [creation](#) from [imitation](#). When Epigenesis becomes inactive, in the individual or even in a race, [evolution](#) ceases and [degeneration](#) commences.

Epiphany: ([Greek](#): *επιφάνεια*, "the appearance; miraculous phenomenon") A [Christian](#) feast intended to celebrate the 'shining forth' or revelation of God to mankind in human form, in the person of [Jesus](#). The observance had its origins in the eastern Christian churches, and included the birth of Jesus; the visit of the three [Magi](#) (Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar) who arrived in [Bethlehem](#); and all of Jesus' childhood events, up to his [baptism](#) in the Jordan by [John the Baptist](#). The feast was initially based on, and viewed as a fulfillment of, the Jewish [Feast of Lights](#). This was fixed on [January 6](#).

Eschatology: (from the [Greek](#) *eschatos* meaning "last" + *-logy*) A part of [theology](#) concerned with the final events in the [history of the world](#) or the ultimate [fate](#) of [human kind](#), commonly phrased as the end of the world. In many [religions](#), the end of the world is a future event [prophesied](#) in [sacred texts](#) or [folklore](#). More broadly, eschatology may encompass related concepts such as the [messiah](#) or messianic era, the [afterlife](#), and the [soul](#).

Esotericism: Refers to knowledge suitable only for the advanced, privileged, or initiated, as opposed to [exoteric knowledge](#), which is public. It is used especially for [mystical](#), [occult](#) and [spiritual](#) viewpoints.

Eternal return: (or sometimes eternal recurrence) A concept originating from ancient Egypt and developed in the teachings of [Pythagoras](#). The basic theory is that [time](#) is not [infinite](#), but is occupied by the [finite](#) set of actions possible in the universe, with all of these actions and events recurring indefinitely, again and again. A large part of eternal recurrence is the idea that the universe has no final [state](#), but rather, merely cycles destinationlessly through the same states of matter and time. Time is perceived as circular and cyclical: this is in contrast the Western notion of rectilinear time, such as was developed by [Aristotle](#) and by [Judeo-Christian](#) doctrine.

Eternity: While in the popular mind, eternity often simply means existing for an [infinite](#), i.e., limitless, amount of [time](#), many have used it to refer to a timeless existence altogether outside of time. There are a number of [arguments for eternity](#), by which proponents of the concept, principally, [Aristotle](#), purported to prove that matter, motion, and time must have existed eternally.

Eutheism, dystheism, and maltheism: Eutheism and dystheism are [dialectic](#) opposites within the spectrum of [theistic](#) religious beliefs. Eutheism is the belief that [God](#) exists and is [good](#). Dystheism is the belief that God exists but is *not* good. Both dystheism and eutheism are forms

of [theism](#), in that they are belief systems that assert the existence of God or gods in some form. (The opposing viewpoint to theism, of course, is [atheism](#)) Most theistic belief systems that posit a [Singular God](#) ([monotheism](#)) are eutheistic, but by no means all of them. [Gnosticism](#), [Satanism](#), and [Malthusism](#) are examples of belief systems with dystheistic tenets. Many [polytheistic](#) belief systems assert the existence of a variety of both 'good' and 'bad' deities, but the strict dichotomy of eutheism vs. dystheism is usually (though not always) framed in [monotheistic](#) terms.

Existence: There is no universally accepted theory of what the word existence means. The dominant (though by no means universal) view in twentieth-century and contemporary Anglo-American philosophy is that existence is what is asserted by statements of [first-order logic](#) of the form "for some x Fx". This agrees with the simple and commonsensical view that, in uttering "There is a bridge across the Thames at Hammersmith", or "A bridge crosses the Thames at Hammersmith", we are asserting the *existence* of a bridge across the Thames at Hammersmith. The word "existence", on this view, is simply a way of describing the logical form of ordinary subject-predicate sentence. Unfortunately, this simple view is vulnerable to a number of philosophical objections, and the so-called problem of existence is one that still exercises the minds of contemporary philosophers. This article is a brief overview of those problems, of the solutions that certain philosophers have offered, and suggestions for further reading.

Exorcism: The practice of evicting [demons](#) or other evil [spiritual entities](#) which are supposed to have [possessed](#) (taken control of) a person or object. The practice, though ancient in roots, is still part of the belief system of many [religions](#). The word "exorcism" means "I cause [someone] to swear," referring to the exorcist forcing the spirit to obey a higher power. The person performing the exorcism, known as an [exorcist](#), is often a [priest](#), or an individual thought to be graced with special powers or skills. The exorcist may use a combination of [magical](#) and religious, such as prayers and set formulas, gestures, icons and amulets. The exorcist's goal is to force the evil spirit to vacate.

Faith healing: The use of solely [spiritual](#) means in treating [disease](#), sometimes accompanied with the refusal of modern [medical](#) techniques. Another term for this is spiritual healing. Faith healing is a form of [alternative medicine](#).

Fasting: The act of willingly abstaining from all [food](#) and in some cases [drink](#), for a period of time. Depending on the tradition, fasting practices may forbid [sexual intercourse](#), (or any sexual desire), [masturbation](#), as well as refraining from eating certain types or groups of food (e.g. [meat](#)). Fasting for religious and spiritual reasons has been a part of human custom since pre-history. It is mentioned in the [Qur'an](#), in the [Mahabharata](#), in the [Upanishads](#), and in the [Bible](#), in both the [Old](#) and [New Testament](#).

Forgiveness: A choice the forgiver makes to let go of [resentment](#) held in the forgiver's mind of a perceived wrong or difference, either actual or imagined. As the choice of forgiveness is made in the mind of the forgiver, it can be made about any resentment, whether toward another, oneself, a group, a situation or even one's God. Forgiveness of another can be granted with or without the other asking for forgiveness. Some believe the choice of forgiveness is only properly exercised if forgiveness is requested. Another view is that forgiveness is a gift the forgiver gives to oneself to free their mind of resentment. Forgiveness does not entail condoning the wrong or difference that occasioned the resentment. Forgiveness can be seen as a religious value. However, belief in a [deity](#) is not necessary for forgiveness. It can be motivated by [love](#), [philosophy](#), appreciation for the forgiveness of others, [empathy](#), or personal [temperament](#). Even pure [pragmatism](#) can lead to

forgiveness, as it is well documented that people who forgive are [happier](#) than those who hold grudges.

Glossolalia: (from the Greek, "γλώσσα" (glossa), tongue and "λαλώ" (lalô), to speak) Comprises the utterance of what appears (to the casual listener) either as an unknown foreign language (xenoglossia), simply nonsense syllables, or utterance of an unknown [mystical language](#); the utterances sometimes occur as part of religious worship (religious glossolalia). Certain [Christians](#) (see below) regard the act of speaking in tongues, as a gift of [God](#) through the [Holy Spirit](#); one of the [Gifts of the Spirit](#). Other religions also use glossolalia as a component of worship.

Gnosticism: A blanket term for various mystical initiatory [religions](#), [sects](#) and knowledge schools, which were most prominent in the first few centuries AD. It is also applied to modern revivals of these groups and, sometimes, by analogy to all religious movements based on secret knowledge gnosis, thus can lead to confusion.

God: The term God is capitalized in the [English language](#) as a [proper noun](#) when used to refer to a specific [monotheistic](#) concept of a [supernatural](#) Supreme Being in accordance with [Christian](#), [Jewish](#) (sometimes as "G-d" - cf. [Names of God in Judaism](#)), and more recently (in the U.S.A) [Muslim](#) and some [Hindu](#) traditions.

Great Awakenings: Commonly said to be periods of religious revival in Anglo-American religious history. They have also been described as periodic revolutions in American religious thought. The Great Awakenings appear to form a cycle, with a period of roughly 80 years. There are three generally accepted Great Awakenings in American history: The [First Great Awakening](#) (1730s - 1740s); The [Second Great Awakening](#) (1820s - 1830s); The [Third Great Awakening](#) (1880s - 1900s).

Guru Granth Sahib Ji ([Punjabi](#): ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ): *Granth* is [Punjabi](#) for book; *Sahib* is [Hindi](#) meaning master, from [Arabic](#), meaning companion, friend, owner, or master — is more than a holy book of the [Sikhs](#). The Sikhs treat this [Granth](#) (*holy book*) as a living [Guru](#). The holy text spans 1430 pages and contains the actual words spoken by [the founders of the Sikh religion](#) and various other [Saints](#) from other religions including [Hinduism](#) and [Islam](#). The [Adi Granth](#) is often — incorrectly — used to refer to the Guru Granth Sahib. The Adi Granth only forms the portion of the Guru Granth Sahib which [Guru Arjan](#) compiled in 1604. The Granth was made a guru by the last of the living Sikh Masters, [Guru Gobind Singh](#) in 1708. Guru Gobind Singh said before his demise that the Sikhs were to treat the Granth as their next Guru: [Transliteration](#): Sab sikhan kō hukam hai gurū mānyō granth. [English](#): All Sikhs are commanded to take the Granth as Guru

Guru: ([Sanskrit](#)) A teacher in [Hinduism](#), [Buddhism](#) or [Sikhism](#). Based on a long line of [philosophical](#) understanding as to the importance of knowledge, the guru is seen in these religions as a sacred conduit, or a way to [self-realization](#). In [India](#) and among people of [Hindu](#), [Buddhist](#), or [Sikh](#) belief, the title retains a hallowed meaning. Guru also refers in Sanskrit to *Brihaspati*, a Hindu figure analogous to the Roman planet/god [Jupiter](#). In [Vedic astrology](#), Jupiter/Guru/Brihaspati is believed to exert teaching influences. Indeed, in many [Indian languages](#), such as [Hindi](#), the occidental Thursday is called either *Brihaspativaar* or *Guruvaar* (*vaar* meaning period or day). In contemporary India and [Indonesia](#), guru is widely used within the general meaning of "teacher". In Western usage, the original meaning of guru has been extended to cover anyone who acquires followers, and not necessarily in an established school of philosophy or religion. In a further metaphorical extension, guru is used of a person who has

authority because of his or her perceived knowledge or skills in a domain of expertise. The importance of discerning between a true guru and a false one is explored in scriptures and teachings of religions in which a guru plays a role. The assessment and criticism of gurus and the [Guru-shishya tradition](#) are espoused in the discourse about [cults](#) and [new religious movements](#) by Western secular scholars, [theologians](#), [anti-cultists](#), and by [skeptics](#) both in the West and in India.

Hindu scripture: Overwhelmingly written in [Sanskrit](#). Indeed, much of the [morphology](#) and [linguistic](#) philosophy inherent in the learning of Sanskrit is inextricably linked to study of the [Vedas](#) and relevant Hindu texts. Hindu scripture is divided into two categories: *Śruti* – that which is heard (i.e. revelation) and *Smṛiti* – that which is remembered (i.e. tradition, not revelation). The Vedas constituting the former category are considered scripture by all Hindus. The post-Vedic Hindu scriptures form the latter category; the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana* are notable [epics](#) considered scripture by many [sects](#). A sort of cross-over between the religious epics and Upanishads of the Vedas is the [Bhagavad Gita](#), considered to be revealed scripture by almost all Hindus today. Hindu texts are typically seen to revolve around many levels of reading, namely the [gross](#) or [physical](#), the [subtle](#), and the supramental. This allows for many levels of understanding as well, implying that the truth of the texts can only be realized with the spiritual advancement of the reader.

Hinduism: (also known as *Sanātana Dharma* -, and *Vaidika-Dharma* -) A worldwide religious tradition that is based on the [Vedas](#) and is the direct descendent of the [Vedic Indo-Iranian](#) religion. It encompasses many religious traditions that widely vary in practice, as well as many diverse sects and philosophies. The modern estimates of Hinduism's origin vary from 3102 BCE to 1300 BCE. It is also the third largest [religion](#) in the world with a following of approximately 1 billion people. Ninety-eight percent of Hindus can be found on the [Indian subcontinent](#), chiefly in [India](#). It is noteworthy however that the relatively small Himalayan kingdom of [Nepal](#) is the only nation in the world with Hinduism as its state religion.

Hymn: A song specifically written as a [song](#) of praise, adoration or [prayer](#), typically addressed to a [god](#). A writer of hymns is known as a hymnist or hymnodist, and the process of singing a hymn is called *hymnody*; the same word is used for the collectivity of hymns belonging to a particular denomination or period (e.g. "nineteenth century Methodist hymnody" would mean the body of hymns written and/or used by Methodists in the nineteenth century). Books called [hymnals](#) are collections of hymns, which may or may not include music. Ancient hymns include the *Great Hymn to the Aten*, composed by the [pharaoh Akhenaten](#), and the [Vedas](#), a collection of hymns in the tradition of [Hinduism](#). The Western tradition of hymnody begins with the [Homeric Hymns](#), a collection of ancient Greek hymns, the oldest of which were written in the 7th century BCE in praise of the gods of [Greek mythology](#).

I Ching: The oldest of the [Chinese classic texts](#). It describes an ancient system of [cosmology](#) and [philosophy](#) which is at the heart of Chinese cultural beliefs. The philosophy centers on the ideas of *the dynamic balance of opposites, the evolution of events as a process, and acceptance of the inevitability of change* (see *Philosophy*, below). In [Western](#) cultures, the *I Ching* is regarded by some as simply a system of [divination](#); others believe it expresses the wisdom and philosophy of [ancient China](#).

Iconolatry: (from the two [Greek](#) terms *eikon* denoting simply a picture or image, and *latreia* to adore or worship) [Icon](#) in Greek simply denotes a picture but has now come to be closely associated with religious art used by the [Orthodox](#) and the [Roman Catholic Churches](#). Icons are

used by Orthodox Churches to assist in [prayer](#) and [worship](#) of God. Icon (image) is the same word used in the [Bible](#) in Genesis 1:27, Colossians 1:15. Iconolatry is the worship of images (mainly in two-dimensional form) and often referred to in relation to the [Iconoclastic](#) period where there was a "cleansing" and destruction by the Church of all religious art. The reasons for this were that the Christians would worship images of [Saints](#), the [Son of God](#) and even pictures of God and scrape parts of the icons into [Holy Communion](#).

Inner peace: (or peace of mind) A [colloquialism](#) that refers to a state of [being mentally](#) or [spiritually](#) at [peace](#), with enough [knowledge](#) and [understanding](#) to keep oneself strong in the face of discord or [stress](#). Being "at peace" is considered by many to be healthy ([homeostasis](#)) and the opposite of being stressed or anxious. Peace of mind is generally associated with bliss and [happiness](#). Most religious people believe that it is only truly possible to achieve inner peace with [divine intervention](#) of some form or another. Peace of mind, serenity, and calmness are descriptions of a disposition free from the effects of stress. In some cultures, inner peace is considered a state of [consciousness](#) or [enlightenment](#) that may be cultivated by various forms of training, such as [prayer](#), [meditation](#), [T'ai Chi Ch'uan](#) or [yoga](#), for example. Many spiritual practices refer to this peace as an experience of [knowing oneself](#).

Integrity: Comprises the personal inner sense of "wholeness" deriving from [honesty](#) and consistent uprightness of [character](#). The etymology of the word relates it to the Latin adjective *integer* (whole, complete). Evaluators, of course, usually assess integrity from some [point of view](#), such as that of a given [ethical tradition](#) or in the context of an [ethical relationship](#).

Involution: In [integral theory](#), the process by which the Divine manifests the [cosmos](#) is called involution. The process by which the creation rises to higher states and states of [consciousness](#) is the [evolution](#). Involution prepares the [universe](#) for the [Big Bang](#); evolution continues from that point forward. The term *involution* comes from the idea that the divine *involves* itself in creation. After the creation, the Divine (i.e. [the Absolute](#), [Brahman](#), [God](#); all these essentially mean the same thing) is both the [One](#) (the Creator) and the [Many](#) (that which was created).

Islam: ([Arabic](#): الإسلام *al-islām*) "The submission to [God](#)" is a [monotheistic](#) faith, one of the [Abrahamic religions](#) and the world's second largest [religion](#). Followers of Islam, known as [Muslims](#), believe that [God](#) (or, in [Arabic](#), *Allāh*; also in [Aramaic](#) *Alaha*) revealed his direct word for mankind to [Muhammad](#) (c. 570–632) and other [prophets](#), including [Adam](#), [Noah](#), [Abraham](#), [Moses](#), and [Jesus](#). Muslims assert that the main written record of revelation to humankind is the [Qur'an](#), which they believe to be flawless, immutable, and the final revelation of God to humanity. Muslims believe that parts of the Gospels, [Torah](#) and Jewish prophetic books (though originally divine in their nature) have been forgotten, misinterpreted, incorrectly edited by humans, or distorted by their followers and thus their original message has been corrupted over time. With that perspective, Muslims view the Qur'an as a correction of Jewish and Christian scriptures, and a final revelation.

Jainism: (pronounced in English as /ˈdʒeɪ.nɪzəm/), traditionally known as Jain [Dharma](#) A classical religion with its origins in the prehistory of [India](#). The Jains, although a small minority in India now, have continued to sustain the [shraman](#) tradition. Jainism is significantly influential in both the ethical and economic spheres in India. Jainism places great stress on compassion to all living beings. Self-control (*vrata* in Sanskrit) forms a central part of being a Jain. A lay Jain is termed a [shravaka](#) i.e. a listener. The Jain [Sangha](#) has four components: monks, nuns, lay men and women.

Japa: (or Japam) A spiritual discipline in which a devotee repeats a [mantra](#) or the name of the [God](#). The repetition can be aloud or just the movement of lips or in the mind. This [spiritual practice](#) is present in the major [religions](#) of world. This is considered as one of the most effective spiritual practices.

Jihad: ([Arabic](#): جهاد *jihād*) An [Islamic term](#), from the Arabic root *jhd* ("to exert utmost effort, to strive, struggle"), which connotes a wide range of meanings: anything from an inward spiritual struggle to attain perfect [faith](#) to a political or military struggle to further the Islamic cause. The meaning of "Islamic cause" is of course open to interpretation. The term is frequently mistranslated into English as "[holy war](#)", although jihad can apply to warfare. Mainstream Muslims consider jihad to be the most misunderstood aspect of their religion by non-Muslims. The Islamic religious legitimacy of the goals or methods of various [Islamist](#) movements who adopt the terminology of jihad is often brought into question, usually by moderate and [liberal Muslims](#). A person who engages in any form of jihad is called a "[mujahid](#)", meaning "striver" or "struggler". This term is most often used to mean a person who engages in fighting, but, for example a Muslim struggling to memorize the [Qur'an](#) is a called a mujahid. The [neologism](#) jihadist is sometimes used to describe [militant Islamic](#) groups, including but not restricted to [Islamist terrorism](#) (c. f. [Jihadist organizations](#) and [Rules of war in Islam](#)).

Judaism: The [religion](#) of the [Jewish](#) people. It is one of the first recorded [monotheistic](#) faiths and one of the oldest religious [traditions](#) still practiced today. The tenets and history of Judaism are the major part of the foundation of other [Abrahamic religions](#), including [Christianity](#) and [Islam](#). Over at least the last two thousand years, Judaism has not been monolithic in practice, and has not had any centralized authority or binding [dogma](#). Despite this, Judaism in all its variations has remained tightly bound to a number of [religious principles](#), the most important of which is the belief in a single, [omniscient](#), transcendent [God](#) who created the [universe](#), and continues to be involved in its governance. According to Jewish thought, the God who created the world established a [covenant](#) with the Jewish people, and revealed his laws and [commandments](#) to them in the form of the [Torah](#). Jewish practice is devoted to the study and observance of these laws and commandments, as they are interpreted according to various ancient and modern authorities.

Karma: ([Sanskrit](#): from the root kri, "to do", meaning *deed*) or Kamma ([Pali](#): meaning *action, effect, destiny*) A term in several [Indian](#) religions that comprises the entire cycle of [cause and effect](#). Karma is a sum of all that an individual has done and is currently doing. The effects of those deeds actively create present and future experiences, thus making one responsible for one's own life. In religions that incorporate [reincarnation](#), karma extends through one's present life and all past and future lives as well. The law of Karma is central in [Hinduism](#), Sikhism, [Buddhism](#), & [Jainism](#). (These religions were formed in [India](#)). All living creatures are responsible for their karma and for their salvation (or release from [samsara](#)). As a term, it can be traced back to the early [Upanishads](#).

Koan: A [story](#), [dialog](#), question, or statement in the history and lore of [Chan \(Zen\) Buddhism](#), generally containing aspects that are inaccessible to [rational](#) understanding, yet that may be accessible to [Intuition](#). Koans are often used by Zen practitioners as objects of [meditation](#) to induce an experience of [enlightenment](#) or [realization](#), and by Zen teachers as *testing questions* when a student wishes to validate their experience of enlightenment. A famous koan is, "Two hands clap and there is a sound; what is the sound of one hand?" (oral tradition, attributed to [Hakuin Ekaku](#) (1686-1769), considered a reviver of the koan tradition in [Japan](#)). Koans are said to reflect the [enlightened or awakened](#) state of historical sages and legendary figures who uttered

them, and sometimes said to confound the habit of discursive thought or shock the mind into awareness or an experience of [metanoia](#) or radical change of consciousness and perspective, from the point of view of which the koan 'question' is resolved, and the practitioner's religious faith is enhanced.

Lataif-e-Sitta: Drawing from [Qur'anic](#) verses, virtually all [Sufis](#) distinguish Lataif-e-Sitta (The six subtleties), [Nafs](#), [Qalb](#), [Sirr](#), [Ruh](#), [Khafi](#) & [Akhfa](#). These lataif (sing : latifa) designate various psychospiritual "organs" or, sometimes, faculties of sensory and suprasensory perception. In a rough assessment, they might appear to correlate with [glands](#), [organs](#), [Chinese traditional](#) or [vedic chakras](#). In general, sufic development involves the awakening in a certain order these spiritual centers of perception that lie dormant in every person. Each center is associated with a particular color and general area of the body, as well as oftentimes with a particular prophet, and varies from Order to Order. The help of a guide is considered necessary to help activate these centers. The activation of all these "centers" is part of the inner methodology of the Sufi way or "Work". After undergoing this process, the dervish is said to reach a certain type of "completion" or becomes a Complete Man.

Love: Has many different meanings in [English](#), from something that gives a little pleasure ("I loved that meal") to something one would die for ([patriotism](#), pairbonding). It can describe an intense feeling of [affection](#), an [emotion](#) or an emotional state. In ordinary use, it usually refers to interpersonal love. Probably due to its psychological relevance, love is one of the most common themes in art. Just as there are many types of lovers, there are many kinds of love. Love is inherent in all human cultures. It is precisely these cultural differences that make any universal definition of love difficult to establish. See the [Sapir-Whorf hypothesis](#). Expressions of love may include the love for a "soul" or mind, the love of laws and organizations, love for a body, love for nature, love of food, love of money, love for learning, love of power, love of fame, love for the respect of others, et cetera. Different people place varying degrees of importance on the kinds of love they receive. Love is essentially an abstract concept, easier to experience than to explain.

Mantra: A [religious syllable](#) or [poem](#), typically from the [Sanskrit](#) language. Their use varies according to the school and philosophy associated with the mantra. They are primarily used as spiritual conduits, words and vibrations that instill one-pointed [concentration](#) in the devotee. Other purposes have included religious ceremonies to accumulate wealth, avoid danger, or eliminate enemies. Mantras originated in [India](#) with Vedic [Hinduism](#) and were later adopted by [Buddhists](#) and [Jains](#), now popular in various modern forms of spiritual practice which are loosely based on practices of these Eastern religions. The word *mantra* is a [Sanskrit](#) word consisting of the [root man-](#) "manas or mind" and the suffix *-tra* meaning, tool, hence a literal translation would be "mind tool". Mantras are interpreted to be effective as [sound](#) ([vibration](#)), to the effect that great emphasis is put on correct pronunciation (resulting in an early development of a science of [phonetics](#) in India). They are intended to deliver the mind from [illusion](#) and material inclinations. [Chanting](#) is the process of repeating a mantra.

Martyr: Historically, a martyr is a person who dies for his or her [religious](#) faith. Sometimes, it is for a different "noble cause", like patriotically dying for a nation's glory in a war (usually known under other names such as "fallen warriors"). Occurrences of such a death are known as martyrdom.

Meaning of life: The question “What is the meaning of life?” means different things to different people. The ambiguity of the query is inherent in the word “meaning”, which opens the question to many interpretations, such as: “*What is the [origin of life?](#)”*, “*What is the [nature of life \(and of the \[universe\]\(#\) in which we live\)?](#)*”, “*What is the [significance of life?](#)”*, “*What is [valuable](#) in life?*”, and “*What is the [purpose of, or in, \(one's\) life?](#)*”. These questions have resulted in a wide range of competing answers and arguments, from practical [scientific](#) theories, to [philosophical](#), [theological](#) and [spiritual](#) explanations. Similar questions people ask themselves about the origin and purpose of life are “Why am I here?” and “Why are we here?”.

Meditation: Refers to any of a wide variety of spiritual practices (and their close secular analogues) which emphasize mental activity or quiescence. The English word comes from the [Latin](#) *meditatio*, which could perhaps be better translated as “[contemplation](#).” This usage is found in [Christian spirituality](#), for example, when one “meditates” on the sufferings of Christ; as well as Western philosophy, as in [Descartes' *Meditations on First Philosophy*](#), a set of six mental exercises which systematically analyze the nature of reality. In the late nineteenth century, [Theosophists](#) adopted “meditation” to refer to various spiritual practices drawn from [Hinduism](#), [Buddhism](#), and other [Eastern religions](#). Thus the English word “meditation” does not exclusively translate any single term or concept from the sacred languages of Asia, such as the [Sanskrit](#) *dhyana*, *samadhi*, or *pranayama*. (Note that whereas in Eastern religions meditation is often a central part of religious/spiritual practice, in Christianity it is rather a fringe activity if practised at all.)

Mercy: A term used to describe the leniency or [compassion](#) shown by one person to another, or a request from one person to another to be shown such leniency or compassion. One of the basic virtues of [chivalry](#) and [Christian ethics](#), it is also related to concepts of [justice](#) and [morality](#) in behaviour between people. In India, compassion is known as [karuna](#).

Metaphysics: ([Greek](#) words *meta* = after/beyond and *physics* = nature) A branch of [philosophy](#) concerned with the study of “first principles” and “being” ([ontology](#)). Problems that were not originally considered metaphysical have been added to metaphysics. Other problems that were considered metaphysical problems for centuries are now typically relegated to their own separate subheadings in philosophy, such as [philosophy of religion](#), [philosophy of mind](#), [philosophy of perception](#), [philosophy of language](#), and [philosophy of science](#). In rare cases subjects of metaphysical research have been found to be entirely physical and natural, thus making them part of [physics](#). What might be called the *core* metaphysical problems would be the ones which have *always* been considered metaphysical. What most of such problems have in common is that they are the problems of *ontology*, “the science of being *qua* being”. Other philosophical traditions have very different conceptions—such as “what came first, the chicken or the egg?” problems—from those in the Western philosophical tradition; for example, [Taoism](#) and indeed, much of [Eastern philosophy](#) completely reject many of the most basic tenets of Aristotelian metaphysics, principles which have by now become almost completely internalized and beyond question in Western philosophy, though a number of dissidents from Aristotelian metaphysics have emerged in the west, such as [Hegel's *Science of Logic*](#). In modern times, the meaning of the word *metaphysics* has become confused by popular significations that are really unrelated to metaphysics or ontology *per se*, viz. [esotericism](#) and [occultism](#). Esotericism and occultism, in their many forms, are not so much concerned with inquiries into first principles or the nature of being, though they do tend to proceed on the metaphysical assumption that all being is “one”.

Mind's eye: (or third eye) A phrase used to refer to one's ability to “[see](#)” things (such as [visions](#)) with the [mind](#). This is, essentially, a reference to [imagination](#) and [memory](#), although it can have

[religious](#) or [occult](#) connotations. Also, the term "third eye" has been associated with the [Pineal gland](#). It is a commonly held belief that in some practices (such as the ones described below) are actually referring to and studying the Pineal Gland.

Miracle: According to many [religions](#), a miracle, derived from the old [Latin](#) word *miraculum* meaning 'something wonderful', is a striking interposition of divine intervention by [God](#) in the [universe](#) by which the operations of the ordinary course of [Nature](#) are overruled, suspended, or modified. One must keep in mind that in [Judaism](#), [Christianity](#), [Islam](#) and in other faiths people have substantially different definitions of the word *miracle*. Even within a specific religion there is often more than one usage of the term. Sometimes the term *miracle* may refer to the action of a [supernatural](#) being that is not a god. Then the term divine intervention refers specifically to the direct involvement of a deity.

Moksha: ([Sanskrit](#): *liberation*) or Mukti ([Sanskrit](#): *release*) Refers, in general, to liberation from the [cycle](#) of death and [rebirth](#). In higher [Hindu philosophy](#), it is seen as a transcendence of phenomenal being, of any sense of [consciousness](#) of [time](#), [space](#), and [causation](#) ([karma](#)). It is not seen as a [soteriological](#) goal in the same sense as in, say, a [Christian](#) context, but signifies dissolution of the sense of self, or [ego](#), and the overall breakdown of *nama-roopa* (name-form). It is, in [Hinduism](#), viewed as analogous to [Nirvana](#), though [Buddhist](#) thought tends to differ with even the [Advaita Vedantist](#) reading of liberation. [Jainism](#) and [Surat Shabda Yoga](#) traditions also believe in Moksha. Hinduism, in support of the idea of Moksha, posits the idea of [atman](#) and [Brahman](#). A common mistake is to view them, both spoken of as *Self*, as a monist being of sorts, something possessing substances. In actuality, [Hindu scripture](#) like the [Upanishads](#) and [Bhagavad Gita](#), and especially the non-dual Hindu school of [Advaita Vedanta](#), say that the Self or Super-Soul is beyond being and non-being, beyond any sense of tangibility and comprehension. Moksha is seen as a final release from one's worldly conception of self, the loosening of the shackle of experiential duality and a re-establishment in one's own fundamental nature, though the nature is seen as ineffable and beyond sensation.

Monasticism: (from [Greek](#): *monachos*—a solitary person) The religious practice of renouncing all worldly pursuits in order to fully devote one's life to spiritual work. Many [religions](#) have monastic elements, including [Buddhism](#), [Christianity](#), [Hinduism](#), [Islam](#), and [Jainism](#), though the expressions differ considerably. Those pursuing a monastic life are usually called *monks* or *brothers* (male), and *nuns* or *sisters* (female). Both monks and nuns may also be called *monastics*.

Muraqaba: The [Sufi](#) word for [meditation](#). Literally it means "to watch over", "to take care of" or "to keep an eye". [Metaphorically](#), it implies that with meditation, a person watches over or takes care of his spiritual heart (or soul), and acquires knowledge about it, its surroundings and its creator.

Mysticism: From the [Greek](#) $\mu\upsilon\omega$ (*mueo*, "to conceal"), is the pursuit of achieving communion with or conscious awareness of [ultimate reality](#), the [divine](#), [spiritual truth](#), or [God](#) through direct, personal experience (intuition or insight) rather than rational thought; the belief in the existence of realities beyond perceptual or intellectual apprehension that are central to being and directly accessible through personal experience; or the belief that such experience is a genuine and important source of knowledge. In the [Hellenistic](#) world, "mystical" referred to secret religious rituals.

Nasma: An body made of the purest form of light (called Noor) which is more purest than any visible color. Hazrat Shah Wali Ullah was the first who give hints about this body. Hazrat Qalandar Baba Auliya give its more details while [Khwaja Shamsuddin Azeem](#) thoroughly described that body. This body is actually that is controlling the human physical body. The lights coming from Nasma to material body are visible only through [Kirlian photography](#). These visible lights are called Aura.

Nature: (also called the material world, the material universe, the natural world, and the natural universe) All [matter](#) and [energy](#), especially in its essential form. Nature is the subject of [scientific study](#), and the history of the concept is linked to the history of science. The English word derives from a [Latin](#) term, natura, which was in turn a translation of a [Greek](#) term, physis (or phüsis). Natura is related to the Latin words relating to "[birth](#)", while physis relates to Greek words relating to "[growth](#)". In [scale](#), "nature" includes everything from the [universal](#) to the [subatomic](#). This includes all things animal, plant, and [mineral](#); all [natural resources](#) and events ([hurricanes](#), [tornadoes](#), [earthquakes](#)). It also includes the [behaviour](#) of living [animals](#), and processes associated with inanimate objects - the "way" that things change.

Neopaganism: (sometimes Neo-Paganism) Describes a heterogeneous group of [new religious movements](#) which attempt to revive ancient, mainly pre-[Christian](#) and often pre-[Judaic Indo-European religions](#). As the name implies, these religions are [Pagan](#) in nature, though their exact relationship to older forms of Paganism is the source of much contention. Neopaganist beliefs and practices are extremely diverse, some tending towards [syncretic](#) melding of once-diverse practices and beliefs, others bordering on [historical reenactment](#) of reconstructed ancient cultures. In the [USA](#), [Wicca](#) is the largest Neopagan movement, and while itself heterogeneous, many adherents share a body of common precepts, including a reverence for nature or active ecology, [Goddess](#) and/or [Horned God](#) veneration, use of ancient [mythologies](#), the belief in [magick](#), and often the belief in [reincarnation](#).

New Age: Describes a broad movement of late twentieth century and contemporary [Western culture](#) characterised by an individual eclectic approach to [spiritual](#) exploration. It has some attributes of a new, emerging religion but is currently a loose network of spiritual seekers, teachers, healers and other participants. The name "New Age" also refers to the [market segment](#) in which goods and services are sold to people in the movement. Rather than follow the lead of an organised religion, "New Agers" typically construct their own spiritual journey based on material taken as needed from the [mystical](#) traditions of all the [worlds religions](#) as well as [shamanism](#), [neopaganism](#) and [occultism](#). Participants are likely to dip into many diverse teachings and practises, some mainstream and some fringe, and formulate their own beliefs and practices based on their experiences in each. No clear membership or rigid boundaries actually exist. The movement is most visible where its ideas are traded--for example in specialist bookshops, music stores, and fairs. Most New Age activity may be characterized as a form of alternative spirituality. Even apparent exceptions (such as alternative health practices) often turn out to have some spiritual dimension (for example, the integration of mind, body, and spirit). "Alternative" here means, with respect to the dominant Western Judeo-Christian culture. It is no accident that most New Age ideas and practices seem to contain implicit critiques of mainstream [Christianity](#) and reference to [Jesus](#) in particular. An emphasis on meditation suggests that ordinary prayer is insufficient; belief in reincarnation (which not all New Age followers accept) challenges familiar Christian doctrines of the afterlife.

Nirvana: In the Indian religions [Buddhism](#), [Jainism](#) and [Hinduism](#), nirvāna (from the [Sanskrit](#), [Pali](#): Nibbāna -- [Chinese](#):; [Pinyin](#): niè pán), literally "extinction" and/or "extinguishing", is the

culmination of the yogi's pursuit of liberation. [Siddhartha Gautama](#), the Buddha, described the [Dharma](#) as a [raft](#) which, after floating across a [river](#), will enable the passenger to reach nirvana. [Hinduism](#) and [Jainism](#) also use the word nirvana to describe the state of [moksha](#), and it is spoken of in several Hindu [tantric](#) texts as well as the [Bhagavad Gita](#).

Nondualism: The belief that [dualism](#) or [dichotomy](#) are illusory phenomena. Examples of dualisms include self/other, mind/body, male/female, good/evil, active/passive, and many others. A nondual [philosophical](#) or [religious](#) perspective or [theory](#) maintains that there is no fundamental distinction between [mind](#) and [matter](#), or that the entire phenomenological world is an illusion (with the reality being described variously as the Void, the Is, Emptiness, or the Mind of God). Many traditions (generally originating in [Asia](#)) state that the true *nature of reality* is non-dualistic, and that these dichotomies are either unreal or (at best) inaccurate conveniences. While attitudes towards the experience of duality and self may vary, nondual traditions converge on the view that experience does not imply an "I". In Western philosophy, nondual views are often called [monism](#). Many postmodern theories also assume that the dichotomies traditionally used are invalid or inaccurate. For example, one typical form of [deconstruction](#) is the critique of binary oppositions within a text while [problematization](#) questions the context or situation in which common myths such as dualisms occur. Nondualistic beliefs also include [monism](#) and [pluralism](#).

Nonviolence: (or non-violence) A set of assumptions about morality, power and conflict that leads its proponents to reject the use of [violence](#) in efforts to attain social or political goals. While often used as a synonym for [pacifism](#), since the mid 20th century the term nonviolence has come to embody a diversity of techniques for waging social conflict without the use of violence, as well as the underlying political and philosophical rationale for the use of these techniques. As a technique for social struggle, nonviolence is most often associated with the campaign for Indian independence led by [Mahatma Gandhi](#), and the struggle to attain civil rights for [African Americans](#), led by [Martin Luther King](#). The former was deeply influenced by [Leo Tolstoy's Christian anarchism](#) ideas of non-resistance based on the [Sermon on the Mount](#).

Oneness: A spiritual term referring to the 'experience' of the absence of [egoic](#) identity boundaries, and, according to some traditions, the realization of the awareness of the absolute interconnectedness of all matter and thought in [space-time](#), or one's ultimate identity with [God](#) (see [Tat Tvam Asi](#)). Its meaning may be synonymous to that of [nonduality](#), though some claim that non-duality implies 'not one' and 'not two', i.e. non-duality is analogous to the [Hindu](#) formula of [negation](#), Neti Neti, used in describing the [absolute](#).

Pandeism: A term that has been used at various times to describe religious beliefs. This use has been inconsistent over time - some 19th century figures used the term to describe a particular set of religious beliefs; today, the term is generally used to describe broader philosophical systems, often mixing elements of [pantheism](#) and [deism](#).

Panentheism ([Greek](#) words: *pan*=all, *en*=in and *Theos*=God; "all-in-God") is the view that [God](#) is both [immanent](#) within all [Creation](#), and also maintains a [transcendent](#) character.

Pantheism: ([Greek](#): *pan* = all and *Theos* = God) Literally means "[God](#) is [All](#)" and "All is God". It is the view that everything is of an all-encompassing [immanent](#) God; or that the [universe](#), or [nature](#), and God are equivalent. More detailed definitions tend to emphasize the idea that [natural law](#), [existence](#) and/or the [universe](#) (the [sum total](#) of all that is was and shall be) is represented or personified in the [theological](#) principle of 'God'.

Parapsychology: The study of the evidence involving phenomena where a person seems to affect or to gain information about something through a means not currently explainable within the framework of mainstream, conventional [science](#). Proponents of the existence of these phenomena usually consider them to be a product of unexplained mental abilities.

Pilgrimage: A term primarily used in [religion](#) and [spirituality](#) of a long [journey](#) or [search](#) of great [moral](#) significance. Sometimes, it is a journey to a sacred place or [shrine](#) of importance to a person's [beliefs](#) and [faith](#). Members of every religion participate in pilgrimages. A person who makes such a journey is called a [pilgrim](#).

Plane (cosmology): In [metaphysics](#) and [esoteric cosmology](#), a plane of existence (sometimes called simply a plane, dimension, vibrating plane, or an inner, invisible, spiritual, supraphysical world or [egg](#)) is a theoretical region of [space](#) and/or [consciousness](#) beyond the known physical [universe](#), or the region containing the universe itself. Many [esoteric](#) teachings (e.g., [theosophy](#) and [rosicrucianism](#)) propound the idea of a whole series of subtle planes or worlds or dimensions which, from a center, interpenetrate themselves and the physical [planet](#) in which we live, the [solar systems](#), and all the physical structures of the [universe](#). This interpenetration of planes culminates in the universe itself as a physical structured, dynamic and evolutive expression [emanated](#) - through a series of stages, becoming progressively more material and embodied - from *The Supreme Being*: which allows from Itself the irruption of auto-Singularities, as the *Big Bang*, originated from Its unintelligible *Chaos*.

Prayer: An effort to communicate with [God](#), or to some [deity](#) or deities, or another form of spiritual entity, or otherwise, either to offer [praise](#), to make a request, or simply to express one's thoughts and emotions.

Prophecy: In a broad sense, is the prediction of future events. The [etymology](#) of the word is ultimately Greek, from *pro-* "before" plus the root of *phanai* "speak", i. e. "speaking before" or "foretelling", but prophecy often implies the involvement of supernatural phenomena, whether it is communication with a deity, the reading of magical signs, or [astrology](#). It is also used as a general term for the revelation of divine will. Throughout history, people have sought knowledge of future events from special individuals or groups who were thought to have the gift of prophecy, such as [Oracles](#) at [Delphi](#) in ancient Greece. Cultures in which prophecy played an important role include the [North American Indians](#), [Mayans](#), [Celts](#), [Druids](#), [Chinese](#), [Chaldeans](#), [Assyrians](#), [Egyptians](#), [Hindus](#), [Hebrews](#), [Tibetans](#), [Greeks](#), and many in the [Christian](#) tradition, among others.

Qawwali: (قوالی) The devotional music of the [Sufis](#). Originally performed mainly at Sufi shrines throughout what is now [India](#) and [Pakistan](#), it has also gained popularity in the mainstream, especially through the work of artists like [Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan](#). Qawwali is a vibrant musical tradition that stretches back more than 700 years.

Qi: Also commonly spelled *ch'i*, *chi* or *ki*, is a fundamental concept of everyday [Chinese](#) culture, most often defined as "air" or "breath" (for example, the colloquial [Mandarin](#) Chinese term for "[weather](#)" is *tiān qi*, or the "breath of heaven") and, by extension, "life force" or "spiritual energy" that is part of everything that exists. References to qi or similar philosophical concepts as a type of [metaphysical energy](#) that sustains living beings are used in many belief systems, especially in [Asia](#).

Qigong: ([simplified Chinese](#): 气功; [traditional Chinese](#): 氣功; [pinyin](#): qìgōng; [Wade-Giles](#): ch'i⁴ kung¹) An increasingly popular aspect of [Chinese medicine](#) involving the coordination of different breathing patterns with various physical postures and motions of the body. Qigong is mostly taught for health maintenance purposes, but there are also some who teach it, especially in China, for therapeutic interventions. Various forms of traditional qigong are also widely taught in conjunction with [Chinese martial arts](#), and are especially prevalent in the advanced training of what are known as the *nei chia* (internal martial arts).

The **Qur'an:** ([Arabic](#): القرآن *al-qur'ān* Literally "the recitation"; also called *Al Qur'ān Al Karīm* or "The Noble Qur'an"; or [transliterated](#) Quran, Koran, and less commonly Alcoran) is the [holy book](#) of [Islam](#). It is a tenet of Islam that the Qur'an is the literal word of God in [Arabic](#) and the culmination of God's revelation to mankind, revealed to [Muhammad](#), the final [prophet](#) of Islam, over a period of 23 years through the angel [Jibril](#) (Gabriel).

Rastafari movement: (Rasta, or the Rastafari movement of Jah people) A [religious movement](#) that reveres [Haile Selassie I](#), the former emperor of [Ethiopia](#), as King of Kings, Lord of Lords and the [Lion of Judah](#). The name *Rastafari* comes from *Ras Täfäri*, the pre-coronation name of Haile Selassie I, who Rastas of many [mansions](#) say is the earthly aspect of [Jah](#) (the Rastafari name for [God](#), from a shortened form of *Jehovah* found in KJV Psalm 68:4) and part of the [Holy Trinity](#). The movement emerged in [Jamaica](#) among working-class and peasant black people in the early 1930s, arising from an interpretation of [Biblical prophecy](#), black social and political aspirations, and the teachings of their prophet, Jamaican [Pan Africanist](#) and [UNIA](#) organiser [Marcus Garvey](#), whose political and cultural vision helped inspire a new world view. The movement is sometimes called "Rastafarianism"; however, this is considered improper and offensive by the Rastas themselves.

Reality: In everyday usage means "everything that exists." The term "Reality," in its most liberal sense, includes everything that is, whether or not it is observable, accessible or understandable by science, philosophy, theology or any other system of analysis. Reality in this sense may include both [being](#) and [nothingness](#), whereas "[existence](#)" is often restricted to being. In the strict sense of European-German philosophy, there are levels or gradation to the nature and conception of reality. These levels include, from the most subjective to the most rigorous: [Phenomenological reality](#), [Truth](#), [Fact](#) and [Axiom](#). Other cultural traditions, particularly those based on [Buddhism](#), have different concepts of the nature of reality: see, for example, [samsara](#) and [maya](#).

Reincarnation: As a doctrine or [mystical](#) belief, holds the notion that one's '[Spirit](#)' ('[Soul](#)' depending on interpretation), 'Higher or True Self', 'Divine Spark', 'I' or 'Ego' (not to be confused with the [ego](#) as defined by psychology) or critical parts of these returns to the material world after physical [death](#) to be reborn in a new body. The natural process is considered integrative of all experiences from each lifetime. A new [personality](#) feature, with the associated [character](#), is developed during each life in the physical world, based upon past integrated experience and new acquired experiences. Some Reincarnation theories express that usually rebirth is made each time in alternated female and male type of bodies. Also that there is interaction between pre-determinism of certain experiences or lessons intended to happen during the physical life, and the [free-will](#) action of the individual as they live that life. This doctrine is a central tenet within [Hinduism](#), [Sikhism](#), [Jainism](#), [Surat Shabda Yoga](#), some African religions, as well as various other [religions](#) teachings and [esoteric](#) philosophies. Most modern [Pagans](#) also believe in reincarnation. [Transmigration](#) is similar but considers inter-species embodiments, whereas Reincarnation of a human being is always as a human being. Reincarnation is traditionally understood to be akin to the [Buddhist](#) concept of [Rebirth](#), but in fact the two concepts are very

distinct philosophically - Buddhism teaches that there is no self to reincarnate. An alternative view is that the teachings of Buddhism might stress one aspect, the teachings of Hinduism might stress another aspect, but that an advanced Buddhist and an advanced Hindu would directly perceive the phenomenon of reincarnation identically.

Religion: Sometimes used interchangeably with [faith](#) or [belief system](#)—is commonly defined as [belief](#) concerning the [supernatural](#), [sacred](#), or [divine](#); and the [moral codes](#), practices, values, institutions and rituals associated with such belief. In its broadest sense some have defined it as the sum total of answers given to explain humankind's relationship with the universe. In the course of the [development of religion](#), it has taken many forms in various cultures and individuals. Occasionally, the word "religion" is used to designate what should be more properly described as "organized religion" – that is, an organization of people supporting the exercise of some religion, often taking the form of a [legal entity](#) (see [religion-supporting organization](#)). There are many different religions in the world today.

Religious ecstasy: A trance-like state characterized by expanded mental and spiritual awareness and is frequently accompanied by visions, hallucinations, and physical euphoria. Such an experience usually lasts about a half-hour. However, there are many records of such experiences lasting several days, and some people claim to have experienced ecstasy over a period of over three decades, or to have recurring experiences of ecstasy during their lifetime.

Religious music: (also sacred music) [Music](#) performed or composed for [religious](#) use or through religious influence.

Repentance: The [feeling](#) and act in which one recognizes and tries to right a wrong, or gain [forgiveness](#) from someone that they wronged. In religious contexts it usually refers to repenting for a sin against [God](#). It always includes an admission of guilt, and also includes at least one of: a solemn promise or resolve not to repeat the offense; an attempt to make restitution for the wrong, or in some way to reverse the harmful effects of the wrong where possible.

Responsibility assumption: A [doctrine](#) in the [spirituality](#) and [personal growth](#) fields holding that each individual has substantial or total [responsibility](#) for the events and circumstances that befall them in their [life](#). While there is little notable about the notion that each person has at least some role in shaping their experience, the doctrine of responsibility assumption posits that the individual's mental contribution to his or her own experience is substantially greater than is normally thought. "I must have wanted this" is the type of catchphrase used by adherents of this doctrine when encountering situations, pleasant or unpleasant, to remind them that their own desires and choices led to the present outcome. The term *responsibility assumption* thus has a specialized meaning beyond the general concept of taking responsibility for something, and is not to be confused with the general notion of making an assumption that a concept such as "responsibility" exists.

Revelation: Refers to an uncovering or disclosure of that which had been previously wholly or partly hidden via communication from the divine. In [monotheistic](#) religions, revelation is the process in which [God](#) makes himself, his will, and/or other information known to mankind. The recipient of revelation is commonly referred to as a [prophet](#), and sometimes is termed a messenger. There are a number of ways that religious thinkers have traditionally approached this topic; many widely differing views have been proposed. Generally speaking, one can find all of the following viewpoints in varying segments of [Judaism](#) and in varying groups within [Christianity](#).

Revivalism: A revival is the apparent restoration of a living creature from a dead state to a living state. In a New Testament story, Lazarus was revived by divine intervention. In religious terms, Revival is the substitution of [religious](#) fervor in life and worship, for an intellectualized, pragmatic approach to everyday conduct (often stigmatized by revivalists as 'pride').

Ritual: A formalised, predetermined set of [symbolic](#) actions generally performed in a particular environment at a regular, recurring interval. The set of actions that comprise a ritual often include, but are not limited to, such things as recitation, [singing](#), group processions, repetitive [dance](#), manipulation of [sacred](#) objects, etc. The general purpose of rituals is to express some fundamental truth or meaning, evoke spiritual, numinous emotional responses from participants, and/or engage a group of people in unified action to strengthen their communal bonds. The word ritual, when used as an adjective, relates to the noun '[rite](#)', as in *rite of passage*.

Sacrament: A [Christian rite](#) that mediates [divine grace](#). Among many [Protestants](#), the word *mediates* would mean only that it is a visible [symbol](#), reminder or manifestation of invisible divine grace. [Roman Catholics](#), [Eastern Orthodox Christians](#), the [Oriental Orthodox](#), [Assyrian Christians](#), members of the [Anglican](#), [United Methodist](#), and [Old Catholic](#) traditions, the [Independent Catholic Churches](#) and [Lutherans](#) hold that sacraments are not mere symbols, but rather, "signs or symbols which effect what they signify", that is, the sacraments in and of themselves, rightly administered, are used by God as a means to communicate grace to faithful recipients. Christian [churches](#) and [sects](#) are divided regarding the number and operation of the sacraments, but they are generally held to have been instituted by [Jesus](#). Sacraments are usually administered by the [clergy](#) to a recipient or recipients, and are generally understood to involve visible and invisible components. The invisible component (manifested inwardly) is understood to be [God's](#) grace working in the sacrament's participants, while the visible (or outward) component entails the use of water, wine, or oil that is blessed or consecrated.

Sacrifice: (from a Middle [English](#) verb meaning 'to make sacred', from Old [French](#), from [Latin](#) sacrificium : sacer, sacred; sacer + facere, to make) Commonly known as the practice of offering food, or the lives of animals or people to the [gods](#), as an act of [propitiation](#) or [worship](#). The term is also used [metaphorically](#) to describe selfless good deeds for others.

Sadhana: [Spiritual](#) exercise by a [Sadhu](#) or a Sadhaka to attain a desired goal. The goal of sadhana is to attain some stage, which can be either [moksha](#), liberation from the cycle of birth and death ([Samsara](#)), or a particular goal such as the blessing by a deity through his or her appearance before the Sadhaka at the end of the limited Sadhana. Sadhana can involve [meditation](#), [puja](#) to a deity, namasmarana (sometimes with the help of a [japa mala](#)), [mortification of the flesh](#) or unorthodox practices such as in a smashana sadhana on a cremation ground. Each type of Yoga entails its own type of sadhana. To embark on a sadhana, a [guru](#) is required to give one the necessary know-how and the seed for the future result, in the form of some [diksha](#), initiation, which he or she has received from his or her guru.

Saint: Generally refers to someone who is exceptionally virtuous and [holy](#). It can be applied to both the living and the dead and is an acceptable term in most of the world's popular religions. The Saint is held up by the community as an example of how we all should act, and his or her life story is usually recorded for the edification of future generations. The process of officially recognizing a person as a Saint, practiced by some churches, is called [canonization](#), though many [Protestant](#) groups use the less formal, broader usage seen in [Scripture](#) to include all who are faithful as saints.

Salvation: Refers to deliverance from undesirable state or condition. In [theology](#), the study of salvation is called soteriology and is a vitally important concept in several religions. [Christianity](#) regards salvation as deliverance from the bondage of [sin](#) and from condemnation, resulting in eternal life with [God](#).

Samadhi: A term used in [Hindu](#) and [Buddhist](#) yogic meditation. Samadhi is also the [Hindi](#) word for a structure commemorating the dead (aking to a tomb, but without remains).

Sanskara: A term used in [Hinduism](#) meaning imprints left on the subconscious mind by experience in this or previous lives.

Sant Mat: An [esoteric](#) religious movement active in the [United States](#), [Europe](#), [Latin America](#), and especially [India](#). Sant Mat shares a lineage with [Sikhism](#) and contains elements of thought found in [Hinduism](#), such as [karma](#) and [reincarnation](#). Sant Mat also contains elements found in [Sufism](#). Although origins of Sant Mat are not very well known, followers believe that it was [Kabir](#) who have revived the Sant Mat tradition. The tradition has inspired and influenced a number of other religious groups and organizations. The spiritual path is also referred to as the Science of the Soul or 'Sant Mat', meaning 'teachings of the saints'. More recently it has been described as "The Way of Life" or "Living the Life of Soul." It incorporates the pursuit of a personal and private path of spiritual development in the common tradition of mystics past and present, from a variety of cultures, times and religions. There are no rituals, no priestly class, no mandatory contributions nor compulsory gatherings. This leaves the followers free to observe and pursue the religion they were born into if they feel so inclined, and preserves social customs while engendering a deeper and broader perspective.

Satguru: (or Sadguru) Means true [guru](#) (Sanskrit sat=true), literally: true teacher. The title means that his students have [faith](#) that the guru can be [trusted](#) and will lead them to [moksha](#), [enlightenment](#) or [inner peace](#). It is based on a long line of Hindu philosophical understandings of the importance of knowledge and that the teacher, guru, is the sacred conduit to self-realization.

A popular [etymology](#) claims that the word guru comes from गुरु, *Gu*=darkness; *Ru*=light in [Sanskrit](#), literally the one that takes you from darkness to light. Nowadays, in India, every teacher is called guru. In the West, its usage has extended into anyone who makes religious or philosophical statements and has followers because of this. In further extension it means simply expert. In [Hinduism](#) guru is used interchangeably with satguru. Traditionally the title "guru" is used in the context of a relationship between a teacher and a student, rather than an absolute. See [Guru-shishya tradition](#). In [Sikhism](#), Satguru is one of the many names for [God](#). In [Surat Shabd Yoga](#), one who [initiates](#) followers into the path often is referred to as a Satgurtu or Sat Guru.

Satori: ([Japanese](#) *satori*; [Chinese](#): wù - from the verb, [Satoru](#)) A [Zen Buddhist](#) term for [enlightenment](#). The word literally means "to understand". It is sometimes loosely used interchangeably with [Kensho](#), but Kensho refers to the first perception of the Buddha-Nature or True-Nature. The kensho experience may not hold as further training is still necessary by the Monk or Lay. Satori on the other hand refers to the lasting experience. Think of when a baby first walks, after much effort, it stands upright, find its balance and walks a few steps, then falls (Kensho).

Self-realization: In [yoga](#), self-realization is knowledge of one's true self. This true self is also referred to as the [atma](#) to avoid ambiguity. The term "self-realization" is a translation of the Sanskrit expression atma jnana (knowledge of the self or atma). The reason the term

"realization" is used instead of "knowledge" is that *jnana* refers to knowledge based on experience, not mere intellectual knowledge. As discussed in the article on [yoga](#), while the goal of self-realization is the same in all yoga paths, the means used to achieve that goal differ. For example, in [hatha yoga](#), self-realization is said to be achieved when the serpent force or [kundalini](#) rises through the [shushumna nadi](#) to the [sahasrara chakra](#). The following terms are related to self-realization or atma jnana: [moksha](#) (liberation from the cycle of birth and death); [samadhi](#) (Supreme or Divine Bliss).

Seven Virtues: Derived from the [Psychomachia](#), an epic poem written by [Prudentius](#) (c. 410). Practicing these [virtues](#) is alleged to protect one against temptation toward the [Seven Deadly Sins](#). The *Seven Virtues* considered by the [Roman Catholic](#) church are those of [humility](#), [meekness](#), [charity](#), [chastity](#), [moderation](#), [zeal](#) and [generosity](#). These are considered to be the polar opposite of the [seven deadly sins](#), namely [pride](#), [wrath](#), [envy](#), [lust](#), [gluttony](#), [sloth](#) and [greed](#).

Shabd: (or Shabda) Literally means “sound” or “word” in Sanskrit. Esoterically, Shabd is the “Sound Current vibrating in all creation. It can be heard by the inner ears.” Various referred to as the Audible Life Stream, Inner Sound, Sound Current or Word in English, the Shabd is the [esoteric](#) essence of [God](#) which is available to all human beings, according to the [Shabd path](#) teachings of [Eckankar](#), the [Quan Yin Method](#), [Sant Mat](#) and [Surat Shabd Yoga](#). Adherents believe that a [Satguru](#), or [Eck Master](#), who is a [human](#) being, has merged with the Shabd in such a manner that he or she is a living manifestation of it at its highest level (the “Word made flesh”). However, not only can the Satguru can attain this, but all human beings are inherently privileged in this way. Indeed, in Sant Mat the *raison d’être* for the human form is to meditate on the Sound Current, and in so doing merge with it until one’s own divinity is ultimately realized.

Shamanism: Refers to the traditional healing and religious practices of [Northern Asia](#) ([Siberia](#)) and [Mongolia](#). By extension, the concept of shamanism has been extended in common language to a range of traditional beliefs and practices that involve the ability to diagnose, cure, and sometimes cause human suffering by traversing the [axis mundi](#) and forming a special relationship with, or gaining control over, [spirits](#). Shamans have been credited with the ability to control the weather, [divination](#), the interpretation of dreams, [astral projection](#), and traveling to upper and lower worlds. Shamanistic traditions have existed throughout the world since prehistoric times.

Shinto: (*Shintō*) (sometimes called Shintoism) A native [religion](#) of [Japan](#) and was once its [state religion](#). It involves the worship of *kami*, which can be translated to mean [gods](#), [spirits](#) of nature, or just spiritual presences. Some kami are local and can be regarded as the [spirit](#) or [genius](#) of a particular place, but others represent major natural objects and processes, for example, [Amaterasu](#), the [Sun goddess](#). The word Shinto was created by combining two [kanji](#): "神" *shin* meaning god (the character can also be read as "kami" in Japanese) and "道" *tō* meaning [Tao](#) ("way" or "path" in a [philosophical](#) sense). Thus, Shinto means "the way of the gods." After World War II, Shinto lost its status of [state religion](#); some Shinto practices and teachings, once given a great deal of prominence during the war, are no longer taught nor practiced today, and some remain largely as everyday activities without religious connotations like [omikujii](#) (a form of [drawing lots](#)).

Shunyata: (Śūnyatā, ([Sanskrit](#), [Pali](#): suññatā), or "Emptiness") A term for an aspect of the [Buddhist metaphysical](#) critique as well as Buddhist [epistemology](#) and [phenomenology](#). Shunyata signifies that everything one encounters in life is empty of soul, permanence, and self-nature.

Everything is inter-related, never self-sufficient or independent; nothing has independent reality. Yet shunyata never connotes [nihilism](#), which Buddhist doctrine considers to be a delusion, just as it considers [materialism](#) to be a delusion.

Sikhism: ([Punjabi](#);) A religion based on the teachings of ten [Gurus](#) who lived primarily in 16th and 17th century [India](#). It is one of the [world's major religions](#) with over 23 million followers. *Sikhism* comes from the word *Sikh*, which in turn comes from its [Pali](#) word "sikho", which means "the searcher of Truth". The two core beliefs of Sikhism are: The belief in one [God](#). The opening sentence of the Sikh scriptures is only two words long, and reflects the base belief of all who adhere to the teachings of the religion: [- Ek Onkar](#) The teachings of [the Ten Sikh Gurus](#) (as well as other accepted Muslim and Hindu self-realized persons) as enshrined in the [Guru Granth Sahib](#). The Guru Granth Sahib, the Sikh scripture, and Guru Khalsa Panth, the community of initiated Sikhs, are both jointly considered the eleventh and final Sikh Guru. Sikhism departs sharply from certain social traditions and structures of [Hinduism](#) and [Islam](#) (such as the [caste system](#) and [purdah](#), respectively). Sikh [philosophy](#) is characterised by logic, comprehensiveness, and a "without frills" approach to both spiritual and material concerns. Its theology is marked by simplicity.

Simple living: (also known as voluntary simplicity or voluntary poverty) A [lifestyle](#) considered by its adherents to be an alternative to [Western consumerism](#). Adherents claim various reasons for pursuing this lifestyle, such as personal [health](#), [ecological](#) or [spiritual](#) motivations. The term "downshifting" is often used to describe the act of moving toward a lifestyle based on voluntary [simplicity](#). Many who practice simple living subscribe to the [axiom](#) "less is more."

Simran: 'Simran' takes its root from the word 'Smaran,' (from Sanskrit) a noun which means: remembering or contemplating on the highest - that which should be valued in memory, in general. It teaches that: everything changes, & inner and outer purity naturally happen. Smaran does not project about restriction through God or religion. It shows that remembering the highest aspect of life that one has seen will eventually open up what's important to an individual.

Soul: The soul, according to many [religious](#) and [philosophical](#) traditions, is the *ethereal substance* — [spirit](#) ([Hebrew: rooah](#) or *nefesh*) — particular to a unique living [being](#). Such traditions often consider the soul both [immortal](#) and innately aware of its immortal nature, as well as the true basis for [sentience](#) in each living being. The concept of the soul has strong links with notions of an [afterlife](#), but opinions may vary wildly, even within a given religion, as to what happens to the soul after [death](#). Many within these religions and philosophies see the soul as immaterial, while others consider it possibly material.

Spirit: The English word spirit comes from the [Latin](#) *spiritus*, meaning breath. In [religion](#) and [spirituality](#), the [respiration](#) of the human being has for obvious reasons been strongly linked with the very occurrence of life. A similar significance has been attributed to human [blood](#). *Spirit* has thus evolved to denote that which separates a living body from a corpse, but can be used metaphorically (she performed the piece with spirit or she put up a spirited defence) where it is a synonym for such words as 'vivacity'.

Spiritism: A religious and philosophic doctrine established in France in the mid 19th Century by [Allan Kardec](#). The term was coined by him as the specific name of the doctrine he was about to publish but, given the fact that the word was created from roots taken from the common language, it was soon incorporated into the normal use and has been used to name other doctrines as well, though the authentic Spiritists protest against this usage. During the late 19th

century, many well educated people from [Europe](#) and the [United States](#) embraced Spiritism as a logical explanation of themes related to the Christian Revelation. However, most of the initial enthusiasm receded. But in some places the work of a few dedicated preachers managed to achieve a solid foundation — more notably, in Brazil, and to a certain extent in the [Philippines](#). In [Brazil](#), more than 2 million people declare themselves Kardecist spiritists, according to the last [IBGE](#) census data, which makes Brazil the largest Spiritist country in the world. Spiritism has influenced [syncretisms](#) like Brazilian [Umbanda](#) and Vietnamese [Caodaism](#). Spiritism is not to be confused with [spiritualism](#). Its use with that meaning is regarded as pejorative by both Spiritualists and Spiritists. Uncapitalised, the word, in English, is an obsolete term for [animism](#) and other religious practices involving the [invocation](#) of [spiritual beings](#), including [shamanism](#).

Spiritual evolution: The [philosophical/theological/esoteric](#) idea that nature and human beings and/or human culture evolve along a predetermined [cosmological](#) pattern or ascent, or in accordance with certain pre-determined potentials. Predeterminism of evolution concept is also complemented with the idea of a creative impulse of human beings, known as [epigenesis](#). Within this broad definition, theories of spiritual evolution are very diverse. They may be cosmological (describing existence at large), personal (describing the development of the individual), or both. They can be [holistic](#) (holding that higher realities emerge from and are not reducible to the lower), [idealist](#) (holding that reality is primarily mental or spiritual) or [nondual](#) (holding that there is no ultimate distinction between mental and physical reality). All of them can be considered to be [teleological](#) to a greater or lesser degree.

Spiritualism: May refer to a variety of modern [religious ideologies](#), primarily active in the [United States](#) and [Europe](#). Central tenets of Spiritualist [liturgy](#) and [dogma](#) are the beliefs and practices of [mediumship](#) which purports to be evidence of the continued existence of an individual's [spirit](#) or [soul](#) after [death](#). The origin of Spiritualism is commonly considered to be the [Modern Spiritualist movement](#) of the 19th century [United States](#).

Spirituality: In a narrow sense, is a concern with matters of the [spirit](#), however that may be defined; but it is also a wide term with many available readings. It may include belief in [supernatural](#) powers, as in [religion](#), but the emphasis is on personal experience. It may be an expression for life perceived as higher, more complex or more integrated with one's [worldview](#), as contrasted with the merely sensual.

Sufi whirling: The practice of Sufi whirling (or Sufi spinning), is a twirling [meditation](#) that originated among the ancient [Indian](#) mystics and [Turkish Sufis](#), which is still practiced by the [Dervishes](#) of the [Mevlevi](#) order. Following a recommended fast of several hours, Sufi whirlers begin with hands crossed onto shoulders and may return their hands to this position if they feel dizzy. They rotate on their left feet in short twists, using the right foot to drive their bodies around the left foot. The left foot is like an anchor to the ground, so that if the whirler loses his or her balance, he or she can think of their left foot, direct attention towards it and regain balance back.

Sufism: (Arabic [تصوف](#) *taṣawwuf*) A [mystic tradition](#) of [Islam](#), which is based on the pursuit of spiritual truth as a definite goal to attain. In modern language it might also be referred to as Islamic spirituality or Islamic [mysticism](#). While [fiqh](#) focuses on the legal aspects of Islam , Sufism focuses on the internal aspects of Islam, such as perfecting the aspect of sincerity of [faith](#) and fighting one's [ego](#). Sufi practitioners are organized into a diverse range of brotherhoods and sisterhoods, with a wide diversity of thought. Sufi orders ("[tariqas](#)") can be [Shi'a](#), [Sunni](#), both or neither.

Supplication: (also known as petitioning) The most common form of [prayer](#), wherein a person asks a [supernatural deity](#) to provide something, either for that person who is praying or for someone else on whose behalf a prayer of supplication is being made. One example of supplication is the [Catholic ritual](#) of [novena](#) (from *novem*, the Latin word for "nine") wherein one repeatedly asks for the same favor over a period of nine days. This ritual began in [France](#) and [Spain](#) during the [Middle Ages](#) when a nine day period of hymns and prayers led up to a [Christmas](#) feast, a period which ended with gift giving. In [Islam](#), the [Arabic](#) word *du'a* is often used for supplication. *Du'a* may be made in any language, although there are many traditional Islamic supplications in Arabic, [Persian](#) and [Turkish](#).

Surat Shabd Yoga: (or Surat Shabda Yoga) A form of [spiritual practice](#) that is followed in the [Sant Mat](#) and many other related spiritual traditions. As a [Sanskrit](#) term, *surat* means "[soul](#)," *shabd* means "word" and *yoga* means "union." The term "word" means the "Sound Current," the "Audible Life Stream" or the "Essence of the Absolute Supreme Being," that is, the dynamic force of creative energy that was sent out, as sound vibration, from the Supreme Being into the abyss of space at the dawn of the [universe's](#) manifestation, and that is being sent forth, through the ages, framing all things that constitute and inhabit the universe. The etymology of "Surat Shabda Yoga" presents its purpose: the "Union of the Soul with the Essence of the Absolute Supreme Being." Other expressions for Surat Shabda Yoga include Sehaj Yoga (an easy path leading to Sehaj or equipoise) The Path of Light and Sound, The Path of the Saints, The Journey of Soul, and The Yoga of the Sound Current.

Tai Chi Chuan: T'ai Chi Ch'uan or Taijiquan ([Chinese](#): 太極拳; [pinyin](#): Tàijíquán; literally "supreme ultimate fist") (commonly known as T'ai Chi, Tai Chi, or [Taiji](#)) A [nei chia](#) ("internal") [Chinese martial art](#). This art is often practiced for the purposes of [health](#) and [longevity](#) (some recent medical studies support its effectiveness here). T'ai Chi Ch'uan is considered a *soft* style martial art, an art applied with as complete a relaxation or "softness" in the musculature as possible, to distinguish its theory and application from that of the *hard* martial art styles which use a degree of tension in the muscles. T'ai Chi as practised by its traditional styles contains much language, theory and imagery from [Taoism](#) and [Chinese Buddhism](#) as well as the Chinese school of thought known as [Neo-Confucianism](#).

Tao Te Ching: ([Chinese](#):, *Dào dé jīng*) Roughly translated as *The Book of the Way and its Virtue* (see [article](#) on translating the title) is an ancient [Chinese scripture](#). Tradition has it that the book was written around [600 BCE](#) by a sage called [Laozi](#) (WG: Lao Tzu, "Old Master"), a record-keeper in the Emperor's Court of the [Zhou Dynasty](#). A careful reading of the text, however, suggests that it is a compilation of [maxims](#) sharing similar themes. The authenticity of the date of composition/compilation and the authorship are still debated. This short work is one of the most important in [Chinese philosophy](#) and [religion](#), especially in [Taoism](#), but also in [Buddhism](#), because the latter – an Indian religion – shared many Taoist words and concepts before developing into [Chinese Buddhism](#). (Indeed, upon first encountering it, Chinese scholars regarded Buddhism as merely a foreign equivalent of Taoism.) Many Chinese artists, including [poets](#), [painters](#), [calligraphers](#) and even [gardeners](#) have used the book as a source of inspiration. Its influence has also spread widely outside the Far East, aided by many different translations of the text into western languages.

Tenrikyo: (; *Tenrikyō*, lit. *Teaching of Divine Reason*, also known as Tenriism) A [religion](#) of [Japanese Shinto](#) origin with some [Buddhist](#) influence. It was founded by a female peasant, [Nakayama Miki](#), who underwent a revelatory experience from 1838 onwards. After this date she is referred to as [Oyasama](#) (lit. Honoured Parent) by followers. Tenrikyo is estimated to have

about 2 million followers world-wide with 1.5 million of those in Japan. The focus of the religion is to attain *yoki yusan* or *yoki gurashi*, the 'joyous life', on Earth through charity and abstention from greed, a self-serving life, hatred, anger and arrogance. *Yo* is "positive", the same character as *Yang* in the Chinese [Yin and Yang](#). *Ki* is "spirit" or "energy", the same character as *Ch'i* in Chinese. *Yusan* is "an outing to the mountain or fields" (lit. excursion), implying an outgoing life. *Gurashi* is "livelihood", implying life in a more day-to-day sense.

Theism: The belief in one or more [gods](#) or [goddesses](#). More specifically, it may also mean the belief in God, a god, or gods, who is/are actively involved in maintaining the [Universe](#). This secondary meaning is shown in context to other beliefs concerning the divine. The term is attested in English from [1678](#), and was probably coined to contrast with *atheism* attested from ca. [1587](#).

Theosis: In [Eastern Orthodox](#) and [Eastern Catholic](#) theology, theosis, meaning *divinization* (or woodenly, *deification* or, *to become god*), is the call to man to become [holy](#) and seek union with God, beginning in this life and later consummated in the [resurrection](#). *Theosis* comprehends salvation from sin, is premised upon apostolic and early Christian understanding of the life of faith, and is conceptually foundational in both the East and the West.

Tithe: (from [Old English](#) *teogotha* "tenth") A one-tenth part of something, paid as a voluntary contribution or as a [tax](#) or levy, usually to support a [Jewish](#) or [Christian](#) religious organization. Today, tithes (or *tithing*) are normally voluntary and paid in [cash](#), [checks](#), or [stocks](#), whereas historically tithes could be paid in kind, such as agricultural products. There are still European countries today that allow some churches to assess a mandatory tithe which is enforced by law.

Torah: (תורה) A [Hebrew](#) word meaning "[teaching](#)," "[instruction](#)," or "[law](#)." It is the central and most important document of [Judaism](#) revered by [Jews](#) through the ages. It primarily refers to the first section of the [Tanakh](#)—the first five books of the [Hebrew Bible](#), but the term is sometimes also used in the general sense to also include both of Judaism's written law and [oral law](#), encompassing the entire spectrum of authoritative [Jewish](#) religious teachings throughout history, including the [Mishnah](#), the [Talmud](#), the [midrash](#), and more.

Transcendentalism: The name of a group of new ideas in [literature](#), [religion](#), [culture](#), and [philosophy](#) that advocates that there is an ideal [spiritual](#) state that 'transcends' the physical and empirical and is only realized through a knowledgeable intuitive awareness that is conditional upon the individual. The concept emerged in [New England](#) in the early-to mid-[nineteenth century](#). It is sometimes called "*American Transcendentalism*" to distinguish it from other uses of the word *transcendental*. It began as a protest against the general state of culture and [society](#) at the time, and in particular, the state of [intellectualism](#) at [Harvard](#) and the doctrine of the [Unitarian](#) church which was taught at [Harvard Divinity School](#).

Unitarian Universalism: (UU or UUism) A theologically [liberal](#), inclusive [religion](#) formed by the merger of [Unitarian](#) and [Universalist](#) organizations in the mid 20th century. UUs generally: cherish creativity, freedom, and compassion; embrace diversity and interconnectedness; and promote personal spiritual growth and justice-making through worship, fellowship, personal experience, social action, deeds, and education. While one UU may differ from another in personal creed, the term UU is a distinct theological signifier and [Unitarianism](#) or [Universalism](#) should not be confused or interchanged with Unitarian Universalism.

Upanishad: (*Upaniṣad*) Part of the [Hindu Śruti scriptures](#) which primarily discuss [meditation](#) and [philosophy](#) and are seen as religious instructions by most schools of [Hinduism](#). The *Upanishads* are commentaries on the [Vedas](#), their putative end and essence, and thus known as *Vedānta* = "End of the Veda". The term *Upanishad* derives from the [Sanskrit](#) words *upa* (near), *ni* (down) and *śad* (to sit) = "sitting down near" a spiritual teacher to receive instruction in the Guru-Shishya tradition or parampara. The teachers and students appear in a variety of settings (husband answering questions about immortality, a teenage boy being taught by [Yama](#), or Death personified, etc.). Sometimes the sages are women and at times the instructions (or rather inspiration) are sought by kings.

Vegetarianism: The practice of not eating [meat](#), [poultry](#), [fish](#) or their by-products, with or without the use of [dairy](#) products or [eggs](#). The exclusion may also extend to products derived from animal carcasses, such as [lard](#), [tallow](#), [gelatin](#), [rennet](#) and [cochineal](#). Some who follow the diet also choose to refrain from wearing products that involve the death of animals, such as [leather](#), [silk](#), [feather](#), and [fur](#). It should be noted that although vegetarians generally try to abstain from all animal by-products, many are willing to make small exceptions for their diet, attire, and so forth.

Veneration: In traditional Christian churches (for example, [Catholicism](#) and [Eastern Orthodoxy](#)), veneration ([Latin](#) *veneratio*, [Greek](#) δουλία *dulia*), or veneration of saints, is a special act of honoring a dead person who has been identified as singular in the traditions of the religion, and through them honoring [God](#) who made them and in whose image they are made. Veneration is often shown outwardly by respectfully bowing or making the [sign of the cross](#) before a [saint's icon](#), [relics](#), or [cult image](#). These items are often also kissed.

Vipassana: (Sanskrit: vipasyanā) The practice of Insight Meditation. While it is often referred to as [Buddhist meditation](#), the practice taught by the Buddha was non-sectarian, and has a universal application. It does not require conversion to Buddhism. While the [meditation](#) practices themselves vary from school to school, the underlying principle is the investigation of phenomena (Sanskrit: [dharmas](#)) as they manifest in the five aggregates ([Skandha](#)) namely, matter or form ([Rupa](#)), sensation or feelings ([Vedana](#)), perception ([Samjna](#)), mental formations ([Sankara](#)) & consciousness ([Vijnana](#)). This process leads to direct experiential perception, Vipassanā.

Virtue: ([Greek](#) ἀρετή; [Latin](#) *virtus*) The habitual, well-established, readiness or disposition of man's powers directing them to some goodness of act. (1) Virtue is moral excellence of a man or a woman. The word is derived from the Greek [arete](#) (ἀρετή). As applied to humans, a virtue is a [good](#) character trait. The Latin word *virtus* literally means "manliness," from *vir*, "man" in the masculine sense; and referred originally to masculine, [warlike](#) virtues such as [courage](#). In one of the many [ironies](#) of [etymology](#), in [English](#) the word *virtue* is often used to refer to a woman's [chastity](#). In the Greek it is more properly called *ἠθικὴ ἀρετή*. It is "habitual excellence". It is something practised at all times. The virtue of perseverance is needed for all and any virtue since it is a habit of character and must be used continuously in order for any person to maintain oneself in virtue.

Wabi-sabi: (in [Kanji](#): 侘寂) Represents a comprehensive [Japanese](#) world view or [aesthetic](#). It is difficult to explain wabi-sabi in [Western](#) terms, but the aesthetic is sometimes described as one of beauty that is imperfect, [impermanent](#), or incomplete. A concept derived from the [Buddhist](#) assertion of the first noble truth - [Dukkha](#).

Worship: Usually refers to specific acts of [religious](#) praise, honour, or [devotion](#), typically directed to a [supernatural](#) being such as a [god](#) or [goddess](#). It is the informal term in English for what [sociologists of religion](#) call *cultus*, the body of practices and traditions that correspond to [theology](#). Religious worship may be performed individually, in informally organized groups, or as part of an organized service with a designated leader (as in a [church](#), [synagogue](#), [temple](#), or [mosque](#)). In its older sense in the [English language](#) of *worthiness* or *respect*, *worship* may sometimes refer to actions directed at members of higher social classes (such as [lords](#) or [monarchs](#)) or to particularly esteemed persons (such as a [lover](#)). Typical acts of worship include: [prayer](#); [sacrifice](#) (*korban* in Hebrew); [rituals](#); [meditation](#); [holidays](#), [festivals](#); [pilgrimages](#); [hymns](#) or [psalms](#); the construction of [temples](#) or [shrines](#); the creation of [idols](#) of the deity.

Yana (Buddhism): A [Sanskrit](#) word with a range of meanings including [nouns](#) such as [vehicle](#), journey, and path; and [verbs](#) such as going, moving, riding, and marching. In the Indian religions [Buddhism](#) and [Hinduism](#), both *yana* and *marga* (road or path) express the [metaphor](#) of spiritual practice as a path or journey. Ancient texts in both religions discuss doctrines and practices associated with various *yanas*. In Buddhism, *yana* often augments the metaphor of the spiritual path with the idea of various vehicles that convey a person along that path. The *yana/marga* metaphor is similar to the Chinese image of the [Tao](#) (path or way) but Indian and Chinese cultures appear to have evolved such similar metaphors independently.

Yin and yang: The concept of yin and yang ([Korean](#): 음양; [Revised](#): eumyang; [McCune-Reischauer](#): ŭmyang; [traditional Chinese](#): 陰陽; [simplified Chinese](#): 阴阳; [pinyin](#): yīnyáng; [Vietnamese](#): Âm-Dương) originates in ancient [Chinese philosophy](#) and [metaphysics](#), which describes two primal opposing but complementary forces found in all things in the universe. Yin, the darker element, is passive, dark, feminine, downward-seeking, and corresponds to the night; yang, the brighter element, is active, light, masculine, upward-seeking and corresponds to the day. The pair probably goes back to ancient agrarian religion; it exists in [Confucianism](#), and it is prominent in [Taoism](#). Though the words yin and yang only appear once in the [Tao Te Ching](#), the book is laden with examples and clarifications of the concept of mutual arising. Yin and yang are descriptions of complementary opposites rather than absolutes. Any yin/yang dichotomy can be seen as its opposite when viewed from another perspective. The categorisation is seen as one of convenience. Most forces in nature can be broken down into their respective yin and yang states, and the two are usually in movement rather than held in absolute stasis.

Yoga: (Sanskrit, "union") A family of [spiritual practices](#) that originated in [India](#), where it is seen primarily as a means to [enlightenment](#) (or [bodhi](#)). Traditionally, [Karma Yoga](#), [Bhakti Yoga](#), [Jnana Yoga](#), and [Raja Yoga](#) are considered the four main yogas. In the [West](#), yoga has become associated with the [asanas](#) (postures) of [Hatha Yoga](#), which are popular as fitness exercises. Yoga as a means to [enlightenment](#) is central to [Hinduism](#), [Buddhism](#), and [Jainism](#).

Zazen: In [Zen Buddhism](#), sitting meditation or zazen ([Japanese](#): 座禪; literally "seated concentration") is a [meditative](#) discipline practitioners perform to [calm](#) the body and the mind and experience [insight](#) into the nature of existence. While the term originally referred to a sitting practice, it is now commonly used to refer to practices in any posture, such as walking.

Zhuangzi: Zhuāngzǐ ([pinyin](#)), Chuang Tzu ([W-G](#)), or Chuang Tse ([Chinese](#) literally meaning "Master Zhuang") A famous [philosopher in ancient China](#) who lived around the [4th century BCE](#) during the [Warring States Period](#), corresponding to the [Hundred Schools of Thought](#) philosophical summit of Chinese thought. He was from the Town of Meng (蒙城 Méng Chéng) in the State of Song (now Shāngqiū [Henan](#)). His [given name](#) was 周 Zhōu. He was also known

as Méng Official, Méng Zhuāng and Méng Elder. The [Taoist](#) book *Zhuangzi* of the same name as the author is a composite of writings from various sources. The traditional view is that Zhuangzi himself wrote the first seven chapters (the "inner" chapters) and his students and related thinkers were responsible for the other parts (the "outer" and "miscellaneous" chapters). Strong proof of direct authorship by Zhuangzi of any of the text is difficult.

Zoroastrianism: Once the "official" religion of [Sassanid \(Sassanian\) Persia](#), and played an important role in the [Achaemenian](#) as well as [Parthian](#) empires in [Persia](#). The religion is also known as Mazdaism by some followers; and currently, as Zarathustrianism by others. The faith is ostensibly monotheistic, although Zoroastrianism has a [dualistic](#) nature, with a series of six entities (similar in function and status to [angels](#)) accompanying [Ahura Mazda](#) (the Supreme Being), and forming a heptad that is good and constructive, and another group of seven who are evil and destructive, lead by a [satanic](#) figure, [Ahriman](#). It is this persistent conflict between good and evil that distinguishes Zoroastrianism from monotheistic frameworks that have only one power as supreme. By requiring its adherents to have faith and belief in *equally opposing* powers Zoroastrianism characterizes itself to

Abacomancy A "divination" practice which interprets patterns in dust or in the funerary ashes of the recently deceased to forecast future events.

Abatwa Legendary South African 'little people' from the Zulu traditions, said to be small enough to ride ants and take shelter under single blades of grass. Folklore states that these people are nomadic hunters capable of killing and consuming large animals. Alleged to be shy and reclusive creatures, the Abatwa sometimes will give advice or aid to human beings.

Abductee A human or animal which has been taken without consent by an extraterrestrial life form.

Abduction The act of an unknown life form taking an individual or a group. Many people believe these life forms to be of extraterrestrial origin. In many abduction cases the abductees are studied by the alleged aliens. There have been reports of beings performing surgical operations, and collecting sperm, ova and tissue samples. In some cases, the abducted person will claim to have had a device implanted somewhere in the body.

Abnuaaya Also known as "Almas" and "Albasty", the Abnuaaya are the fabled 'wildmen' of the Caucasus Mountains and central Asia. The creatures have a history of sightings dating back many centuries, perhaps even prior to 1420, and modern crypto zoologists believe that based off eyewitness accounts and descriptions, the Almas may be remnants of Neanderthal man or a species similar to the [Yeti](#)

Abominable Snowman Popular terms for a "Yeti" or "Meh-teh".

Absent Healing Psi phenomenon in which the practitioner is able to invoke healing changes within a subject without being present at the time of healing or at a great distance.

Absent Sitter Psi term for a person, who is not present at the time of a psychic reading, for whom the reading is given. Similar or alternative term is "proxy sitting."

Acutomancy A form of divination utilizing sharp or pointed objects, such as needles, which are dropped in customary lots of seven onto a table surface, where the resulting random pattern is interpreted to gain insights into future events.

Adamastor The name given to a spirit once believed to haunt the Cape of Good Hope and prophesized doom for those seeking to sail around the Cape to India. Said to have appeared to famed explorer Vasco de Gama on his expeditions to circumnavigate the cape to reach trade ports in the east.

Adytum From the Greek term 'aduton', which means a place to which entrance is forbidden. This is a term alternatively used with 'sanctum sanctorum' or 'Holy of Holies' to describe the innermost sanctum of a temple or church, or an area of sacred space in occult practices.

Aeromancy A divinatory practice utilizing atmospheric, airborne, or sky phenomenon to interpret future events. Examples may include cloud formations, comets and meteors, changes in weather patterns, or wind currents. The term also describes an obscure practice reported to involve the summoning of ghosts and specters (allegedly with the aid of demons) to project images of future events upon the clouds.

Afrit In Arabian traditions, an afrit is the spirit of a murder victim which rises to avenge the crime. Traditions hold that the spirit rises from the slain person's body in the form of 'smoke rising from a fire'. The spirit form is malevolent and their activities are regarded as quite terrifying in nature. The time honored tradition of removing these violent spirits is to drive an iron nail into the ground in the location the murder was committed. See also "nailing down the ghost".

Agalmatomancy From the Greek 'algama' (figure) and 'manteia' (divination), the divinatory practice of forecasting future events by reading features of statues. See also "Idolomancy".

Age of Aquarius The alleged two-thousand year long period in human history marked by enlightenment, love, and profound peace heralded by the ascension of the constellation of Aquarius into 'the house of the Sun' in "astrology". Astrologers through out history have disputed the time frame in which this period of universal enlightenment is set to begin, with most estimates falling between 1904 and 2160 AD. The term received its greatest popularity during the 1960s when spiritual exploration and alternative lifestyles became fashionable in society because of the political and social unrest of the time. See also "New Age".

Agent (a) Psi term for a person who makes the attempt to communicate information to another (termed the "percipient") in a clinical ESP experiment. (b) The subject in a controlled psychokinesis experiment. (c) The person who is the central focus of poltergeist activity.

Agogwe An allegedly mysterious creature reported in the east African country of Tanzania, described as being a rust colored, woolly-haired mammal which walks upon two legs, most often reported as being between four and four and one-half feet tall. A similar creature, the "sehite", has been reported in the Ivory Coast.

Aigypan A "sasquatch" like creature reported as inhabiting the remote jungles of Venezuela, which some allege to build primitive tools and weapons, as well as crude huts for shelter. Some reports even claim that these creatures are carnivorous, sometimes attacking and eating men, but

prone to carrying off women, allegedly for breeding purposes. Said to be very dangerous and quite ill-tempered.

Ailuromancy Also known as "felidomancy", a divinatory practice which interprets the movements of felines to forecast future events.

Akashic Records Believed in mystical doctrines to be the source or storage area for memories of all human experience, from the beginning of time to the very end of time itself. Held in some traditions to contain the memories of every living soul through the ages as a repository or permanent record of the spiritual evolution of humanity.

Alchemy An ancient "psuedo-science" commonly recalled for experiments to transmute base metals into gold, the formulation of a universal cure to remedy all known diseases, the indefinite extension of life through chemical and magical means, and the production of artificial life forms in a laboratory setting. Richly illustrated in symbolism and steeped in arcane traditions, the practice of alchemy eventually led to the formation of accepted sciences such as chemistry. Today, sometimes regarded as a symbolic philosophy for the evolution of the human spirit from 'base man' to 'enlightened man' through the use of alchemical symbolism and imagery.

Alectormancy Also spelled as 'alectromancy' and 'alectryomancy', from the Greek 'alectruon' (cock) and 'manteia' (divination), the archaic divinatory practice of forecasting future events by placing a rooster or hen into a circle of grain, around which letters of the alphabet have been arranged. Answers to questions concerning the future are interpreted by which letters the bird chooses to feed at. Other variations included divining the future from the crowing of a cock or by reciting the letters of the alphabet, making special note of those letters which are spoken when a cock crows. The practice was especially popular in the Roman Empire to identify robbers and thieves.

Aleuromancy From the Greek 'aleuron' and 'manteia' (divination), the divinatory practice of utilizing flour to forecast future events. One method involved mixing flour and water in a bowl and then interpreting the patterns left at the bottom and sides of the vessel. Another practice involved writing sentences upon slips of paper, which were then baked into balls of dough and divided amongst participants to learn their fates. The practice is still in existence in the form of Chinese fortune cookies.

Alien Abduction Term used to describe being taken onboard an "alien" craft against one's will or being 'kidnapped' by extraterrestrial beings.

Amniomancy A divinatory practice in which the coloration of the subtle membrane surrounding the head of a newborn infant is interpreted to forecast the general fortunes of the child in later life.

Angakok Traditional Eskimo mediums, or shamans, who reportedly have the power to communicate with spirits or to raise the spirits of the dead. Native Eskimo beliefs hold that any misfortune at sea is caused by the ghosts of their ancestors and an angakok is often brought in to appease the spirits by communications and frequent offerings.

Angel An immortal spiritual being which functions as an intermediary between the realm of men and that of the Divine.

Animism (1)Religious practices based on the belief that all living things and natural objects have their individual spiritual essence or "soul". (2)The belief that every object found in nature, whether living or non-living, has a spirit or life-force attached to it which is endowed with the same fundamental reasoning and volition of men. In essence, all of nature is endowed with a pure life essence which holds all things in a symbiotic relationship and a spiritual balance within the universe. This is a core belief in many magical philosophies and practices.

Apparition A fully manifested ghostly figure reported to be complete in form, sometimes to the point where it is virtually indistinguishable from a living person. See also "crisis apparition", "haunting apparition", "experimental apparition", and "thought form apparition".

Arithmancy Alternatively 'Arithmomancy' and 'Arithomancy'. The term comes from the Greek 'arithmos' (number) and 'manteia' (divination), relating to forecasting future events by the use of numbers; esoterically it is concerned with the science of correspondences between gods, men and numbers, as taught by Pythagoras. The Caldeans also practiced this type of divination, as well as the Platonists and Pythagoreans. Arithmancy is also a part of the Jewish "Kabbalah".

Astral Derived from the Latin term for 'star', it has come to mean the fabric of time and space, a realm of existence beyond physical experience.

Astral Body A "soul", consciousness, or body comprised of spiritual energy, said to mirror the precise appearance of the physical form.

Astral Plane A spiritual dimension or parallel universe comprised of spiritual energy.

Astral Projection The ability to separate the "astral body" from the physical body, allowing it to transcend time and space, to travel great distances or in time.

Astral Travel The ability to traverse time and space along "astral planes" or an alternative term for "astral projection".

Astrology The divinatory practice involving the study of the positions and aspects of celestial bodies in the belief that they have an influence on the course of natural earthly occurrences and human affairs. Future events can be forecast by interpreting the movements and position of planets and stars against the celestial patterns of the "zodiac".

Aura Term used to describe the subtle energy field surrounding all living things, including plants, animals, and human beings. Said to appear in a rainbow of colors which conform to the outline of the being. Predominant colors or the brightness of the energy field may be interpreted as indicative of the subject's psychological condition, relative health, or spiritual advancement. Sometimes thought to be proof of the existence of an "astral body". "Kirlian photography" reportedly is able to visually document auras.

Automatic Writing Alleged form of spirit communications in which a "medium" or channeler places a writing instrument upon a blank sheet of paper and allows messages from the spirit world to be written. Characteristically, the writer enters an "altered state of consciousness" and is unaware of the words being written, which may or may not be in their own handwriting. Skeptics feel that the practice is a manifestation of the channeler's subconscious or own unconscious "ESP" abilities.

Baka A Haitian term used to describe a ghostly creature not unlike a "ghoul". The spirit is said to have been a member of a secret society of magic practitioners in life, which initiates them into the mysteries of the afterlife to grant mystical powers. After death, the spirit of the initiate is brought back in the form of a baka to eat human flesh, spread disease and misery, and to seek revenge for insults borne in life.

Ball Lightning (also known as Globe Lightning) A rare form of lightning which consists of a bright luminous globe that appears to float in the air or move rapidly along other objects.

Banshee Also known by the Gaelic term 'bean si', the spirit is aptly described in folklore as 'the lady of death' which haunts ancient Irish family lines. The spirit appears just prior to a family member's death and announces grave misfortune by wailing and crying. Most traditions hold that the banshee appears primarily within the vicinity of the family's ancestral home during the night. While the voice of the banshee is considered to be unmistakably that of a human female, some reports state that there is an animal quality about the cry or that the lamentations are wailed in an unknown language. Variations of the tradition hold that if the banshee enters into the ancestral home, the portent of death may be applicable to a family member who is staying elsewhere or perhaps living abroad. The spirit is reported to manifest as either a beautiful young woman dressed in elegant garments of an archaic time, or as an aged hag dressed in grave clothes. Both types are said to have long hair, which floats about them in a preternatural breeze, and eyes that glow red from perpetual crying. Traditions further hold that the spirit form is very shy, easily irritated, capable of flight, and that the spirit will not pay multiple visits in the same generation of the family to which it is attached. The beliefs surrounding the banshee sometimes attribute their origins to earlier family members who have been appointed as the messengers of death.

Barnum Effect Psychological term for the tendency of individuals to accept very general or vague characterizations of themselves and take them to be accurate. A good example of this can be seen when people believe what is said about them in psychometric tests, personality profiles, astrological predictions, and so on. This phenomenon is named after P. T. Barnum, who believed that a good circus had "a little something for everybody."

Basilisk A mythological creature who is described as a serpent, lizard or a dragon and is said to kill with its breath or glance. From the Greek basileus meaning "little king". Said to be a creature hatched from a cock's egg by a serpent, and is said to be the incarnation of the Death God.

Bekk-Bok

(also known as Almosty and Albasty) An apelike creature that resembles Neanderthal man and are reported to live in the Caucasus Mountains in Central Asia. They have been described as being at least six feet tall with prominent brow ridges, a receding chin and a prominent jaw. The first known reference was reported by Bavarian Hans Schitberger who was traveling through the Tien Shan Mountains after being captured by Mongols. (Also known as Wind-Man, Abnuaaya, Biabin-Guli, Gul-Biavan, Guli-Avan, Golub-Yavan, Kaptar, Kra-Dhun, Ksy-Giik, Ksy-Gyik, Mirygy, Mulen and Voita.)

Belomancy A divination using randomly drawn arrows from a quiver or other holder. The arrows are labeled, and the advice or oracle tied to the arrow which travels the furthest is taken to be valid. "For the king of Babylon stood at the parting of the way, at the end of the two ways, to use divination; he made his arrows bright, he consulted with images, he looked in the liver."

Bibliomancy A divination wherein a book, especially the Bible is opened at random to a verse or passage, and the chosen passage is then interpreted. Another method of divination used to discover if a person is innocent or guilty of sorcery. The accused is weighed against the great Bible at a local church, and if the person weighs less than the Bible, they are presumed innocent.

Bigfoot A large, hairy, humanoid creature said to inhabit wilderness areas in the Pacific Northwest United States and parts of Canada. Named for the size of its alleged footprints. (Also known as Sasquatch, and Abominable Snowman)

Black Magic A type of magic, witchcraft or sorcery used for evil purposes. It is a perversion of the magical arts used to destroy others or for personal gain.

Blind An experimental psi control in which the subjects are not informed of key features or characteristics of the experiment prior to it being conducted. Also used to describe a testing procedure in which a judge is asked to compare targets and responses without knowing which responses correspond to the targets.

Body Snatcher (Also known as Grave Robber) A person who steals newly buried corpses in order to sell them to universities and medical schools for dissection.

BUFORA British UFO Research Association. The largest UFO group in Great Britain, founded in 1964.

Bunyip A bellowing water monster from Aboriginal legend, believed to bring diseases. It lives at the bottom of the water holes, swamps, lakes and rivers of the Australian outback. The creature is roughly the size of a calf and requires calm water to live in. Unless its food sources are interfered with, the bunyip usually leaves human beings alone. However, if necessary it has the strength to pull a person down into the water and drown him. The name comes from an Aboriginal word meaning "devil" or "spirit".

Cabinet A box or curtained enclosure in which a physical medium is secured and from which various phenomena may manifest (e.g., lights, objects moving, instruments played). Certain stage magicians can simulate this procedure with great effect.

Card Guessing An experimental test for ESP in which subjects guess the identity of a set of cards (e.g., playing cards or Zener cards).

Cartomancy Fortune telling using cards.

Centaur The centaurs of Greek mythology are creatures that are part human and part horse. They are usually portrayed with the torso and head of a human, and the body of a horse. Centaurs are the followers of the wine god Dionysus and are well known for drunkenness and carrying off helpless young maidens. They inhabited Mount Pelion in Thessaly, northern Greece. According to one myth, they are the offspring of Ixion, the king of Lapithae (Thessaly), and a cloud. He had arranged a tryst with Hera, but Zeus got wind of it and fashioned a cloud into Hera's shape. Therefore, the Centaurs are sometimes called Ixionidae. Notorious is their bestial behavior on the wedding of Pirithous, king of the Lapiths. They violated the female guests and attempted to abduct the bride. What followed was a bloody battle, after which they were driven from Thessaly. An exception was the kind and wise centaur Chiron, the teacher of the Greek heroes Jason and Achilles. In medieval romances, the centaurs were called 'Sagittary'

Cerebral Anoxia Lack of oxygen to the brain, often causing sensory distortions and hallucinations. Sometimes used to explain features of the near-death experience.

Channeling Describes the method in which mediums allow themselves to be used in order to manifest something which comes from outside themselves. For example, a healer is a channel for healing energy. Another form of channeling is trance mediumship during a trance, mediums can be aware of their surroundings and listen to instructions of a spirit guide and converse with other people whilst passing on messages, words of wisdom or inviting questions.

Charm A spell or object possessing magic power.

Chimaera Also Chimera. The Greek for 'she-goat', but in Greek mythology the Chimaera was a fire breathing female creature with the body of a lion, a goat's head emerging from her back, and a serpent as her tail. Hesiod's account though gives it the mane and legs of a lion, the body of a goat and the tail of a dragon or serpent, with three heads (lion's, goat's and serpent's). According to Homer and Hesiod, the Chimaera was of divine origin. Her mother was Echidna (a monster and a prolific breeder of monsters, it was half-woman and half-serpent), her father was the monster Typhon. The Chimaera was slain by Bellerophon, with Pegasus help. The Chimaera is identified as female in literature, but is usually male in artwork. According to all authorities, the monster was native to Lycia, where there was a volcano bearing its name. The base of this mountain was infested with serpents, higher up on its flanks were meadows and goats, and toward its desolate top, which belched out flames, a pride of lions had its resort. Even in the fantasies of mythology the Chimaera was felt to be extreme and the word today suggests something absurdly fantastic, wildly imaginary; also have been used as a symbol of the impossible.

Chupacabra From the Spanish for "goat sucker", an alleged creature that is supposedly responsible for draining the blood and/or removing the organs of mammalian and avian livestock. The name comes from the creature's earliest attacks in Puerto Rico where goats were completely drained of blood. The monster is described by most as being bipedal — some say it walks, some say it flies, and some say it has a kangaroo hop — and around four feet tall, weighing an odd seventy pounds, having a spiked crest, with a round head, greenish-gray fur, large pointy spikes on the back, tailless, huge red eyes devoid of lids, lipless mouth, fangs and claws. There have been numerous sightings of Chupacabras in lower North America, Central and South America, starting in the early 1970s (some even say 50s and 60s, although it has been "formally identified and baptized" only in 1994). There is a lot of speculation about its origins, the most popular theory being that the creature or creatures are from outer space, left on earth by aliens for some unknown purpose. Others claim that the Chupacabra is an American Army genetic experiment that went terribly wrong

Cipher Test A coded message left by a person who intends to communicate the cipher after death.

Circumambulation Ceremonially surrounding an object or living thing for the purpose of protection.

Clairaudient Psychic ability to hear sounds or voices inaudible to the normal ear.

Clairoleofactor To have an extraordinary sense of smell, as if you could smell flowers before they bloom or smell trouble before it occurs or death before it happens.

Clairvoyance This is a French term that means 'clear seeing'. It usually refers to the receiving of information from objects or events at the present time without using the normal senses or logical inference. Literally the term refers to visual information. Most of this information involves smaller targets of a more local nature.

Coincidence The occurrence, within a short space of time, of two or more meaningfully related events and without any apparent causal connection between them. Coincidences are sometimes bizarre and extraordinarily improbable.

Collective apparition This is when more than one person sees a ghost or spirit at the same time.

Collective Unconscious Concept put forward by C.G. Jung to refer to a level of unconscious thought and experience shared collectively by humans.

Confederate A person who secretly provides information to a fraudulent psychic or mentalist

Conjuring Using trickery to simulate paranormal effects, generally for the purpose of entertainment.

Contact Mind Reading A technique simulating telepathy, in which the "mind reader" (who generally holds a hand or arm) responds to slight muscle movements produced unconsciously by the person whose mind is apparently being read. Also known as muscle reading, Cumberlandism or Hellstromism.

Correlation Coefficient A mathematical index of the degree of association between two or more measures.

Cosmic Consciousness A blissful experience in which the person becomes aware of the whole universe as a living being. See also altered state of consciousness, mystical experience.

Cosmology 1. The branch of philosophy dealing with the origin and general structure of the universe, with its parts, elements, and laws, and esp. With such of its characteristics as space, time causality, and freedom. 2. The branch of astronomy that deals with the general structure and evolution of the universe.

Crisis apparition This is when spirits of loved one's appear just before or soon after they die.

Crop Circle Circular or more elaborate formations found in growing crops, most commonly in Southern Britain. Sometimes they are associated with UFO sightings. Many formations appear to have been intelligently created and to have some symbolic meaning. Despite several "confessions" made by various individuals and groups, the crop circle mystery remains unsolved.

Cross-correspondence 1. Separate items of information, received independently by two or more mediums, which make sense only when pieced together. 2. The cross-correspondences is a classic case of highly complex cross-correspondences which continued from 1901 to 1932 among a group of automatists associated with the Society for Psychical Research.

Cryptomnesia Knowledge (acquired in normal ways) that may be revealed without the person remembering its source. Such memories may falsely appear to be paranormal revelations. Sometimes cryptomnesia is used as an explanation for apparently paranormal experiences such as xenoglossy or past-life memories.

Crystal Gazing Staring into a reflecting surface (e.g., mirror, glass, crystal, liquid) in order to obtain paranormal information. Also known as scrying. See also divination.

Daemon A guardian spirit who communicates inspiration and advice.

Death Bed Visions A dying person has an awareness of the presence of dead relatives or friends, these visitors are said to come and assist the dying with the transition from life to death.

Death Worm Allegedly, a fat, bright red snakelike animal measuring two to four feet in length that supposedly has the dramatic ability to kill people and animals instantly at a range of several feet. The Mongolian Death Worm is believed to accomplish this by either spraying an enormously lethal poison, or by somehow transmitting high electrical charges into its victims. The worm is said to be found solely in the sand dunes of the southern part of the Gobi Desert; Allghoi Khorkhoi (local name, meaning "intestine worm," because of its color and appearance) is so feared among the people of Mongolia that the simple mention of it is considered bad luck. It is believed that touching any part of the worm will bring instant death, and its venom supposedly corrodes metal. Local folklore also tells of a predilection for the color yellow and local parasitic plants such as the Goyo. First reported in 1929, the Mongolian Death Worm is said to emerge during the hot months of June and July and to hibernate the rest of the year.

Deep Trance Medium A psychic who allows a spirit to enter him/her body so that the spirit may communicate with the living.

Deja Vu Seeing or doing something completely new but having the distinct feeling that the experience had been done before.

Deliverance Christian ritual designed to rid a person of negative forces or influence. Otherwise known as an exorcism.

Delta A term used to refer to any kind of anomalous experience.

Dematerialization The fading or disappearance of an object.

Demonic Possession Possession by evil spirits.

Demonology One who studies and practices the art of demonology. An individual who specializes in the removal of evil or demonic forces from a given environment using the art of demonology. One who brings demonic forces out of their slumber to be cast away. Someone who uses the art of demonology to contact demons for one use in battling them.

Demons An evil, or inhuman spirit that are said to have the ability to enter your home via the Ouija board, it is claimed that in such cases a demon will attach itself to an individual and not the home and therefore will follow where ever that person goes, similar too but not to be confused with possession.

Deport Movement of an object from a secure and enclosed space.

Direct Voice A voice heard in a séance which does not seem to emanate from any person. The voice may seem to come out of thin air, or from a trumpet used specifically for this purpose.

Discarnate Spirits that exist without a physical body.

Discernment To perceive or feel using the mind of senses.

Disembodied Voice A voice heard that comes from no physical body. Also known as an EVP.

Dissociation Activity performed outside of normal conscious awareness, or mental processes that suggest the existence of separate centers of consciousness.

Divination To obtain unknown knowledge or the future events from omens. Astrology may be considered divination.

Divining Rod A forked rod or sometimes a pair of L-shaped rods used in dowsing.

DMILS Direct Mental Interaction With Living Systems. Used to denote instances where one person is attempting to influence a distant biological system, usually the physiology of another person.

Doppelganger A spirit of a living person outside of the physical body.

Dowsing Also known as radiesthesia. Dowsing is the art of using a forked stick, or wire, or some other object to focus in on locating anything from water, oil, explosives, caves, minerals, mines, or tunnels.

Dybbak This is a word derived from a Jewish legend said to be called a restless soul of some one deceased that enters a human body and possesses a person.

Ecto mist Is a cloudy substance caught on film it normally looks like a fog.

Ectoplasm A substance which emanates from the body of a medium during a trance. This often appears as a mist-like substance.

EEG or Electro-encephalography A method of recording variations of electrical activity in the cortex of the brain.

Electro kinesis The generation of electricity from the mind that can be used to charge watches and batteries.

Electromagnetic Field A field propagated by a combination of electric and magnetic energy which radiates from radio and light waves to gamma and cosmic rays. It is believed that when spirits manifest, they create an electromagnetic field. Also known as an EMF.

Electromagnetic Flux Electrical energy conversion spark or repeated sound in which electromagnetic energy is alternatively stimulated to visually appear or audibly create sound. To

create visible Flux, there must be enough electromagnet energy available via X- Rays or solar flares.

Elemental spirit A spirit associated with one of the four elements. Earth, fire, air and water.

Elongation Paranormal extension of the physical body, reported in some mystics and physical mediums.

EMF Detector An instrument that measures electromagnetic energy. Also known as a Gauss Meter or Magnetometer.

Empath Someone who shows considerable empathy, especially of the apparently psychic type.

Empathy The ability to understand the experience or emotional state of another person or animal. Often used to refer to an apparently psychic ability to experience another person's sensations, pain or emotions.

Energetics The branch of physics that deals with energy. The physics of energy and its transformations.

ESP Extrasensory perception is considered what scientist refer to as a receptive psi. This type of experience usually involves the transfer of information.

Evil Eye Alleged ability of some people to harm others by looking at them.

Evocation The summoning of most often evil spirits using a magical incantation or ritual.

EVP Electronic voice phenomena. Voices captured on audio tape when no one is present. It is believed that these voices are from spirits attempting to communicate with living people.

Exorcism Said to be a holy rite used to cast out any bad entity from a living persons body or a location.

Exorcist Usually the high priest who conducts an exorcism.

Experimental Parapsychology Para psychological research involving experimental methods rather than survey techniques or the investigation of spontaneous cases.

Extra dimensional Originating outside our normal space-time reality.

Extrasensory Perception Paranormal acquisition of information. Includes clairvoyance, telepathy and precognition.

Extraterrestrial Originating beyond planet Earth. Not normally considered to be extra dimensional.

Fairy Small, human-like mythical being. May be benevolent or malevolent.

Faith Healing Healing that is associated with prayer or belief in Divine power.

Fallen Host These are said to be angels that have fallen from God's grace, they have been mentioned in biblical scriptures to serve as a warning of what the wrath of God can bring.

False Arrival Apparition This is when a person hears and sometimes sees another person arrive, this can happen from half an hour to an hour before the person actually arrives.

False Awakening A phenomenon whereby a person believes they have woken up but they are still dreaming.

Faraday Cage A wire mesh enclosure that provides a shield to radio waves.

Fire Walking Walking on red-hot coals, without pain or damage to the feet.

Flying Saucer A term, coined in 1947, to refer to unknown disk-like aerial objects, often believed to be extraterrestrial spacecraft. The term has now been largely superseded by "UFO".

Focal Person Person who is at the centre of poltergeist activity.

Fortean Phenomena Strange phenomena, especially those which challenge conventional scientific knowledge. Named after the American researcher and writer Charles Fort. Fortean phenomena include those generally considered paranormal, but also bizarre non-paranormal events such as monsters and prodigies, extraordinary coincidences, and unusual rains.

Fortune Telling Various practices which aim to divine future events.

Free-Response Test An ESP test in which the subject responds freely or does not choose from a fixed list of targets. For example, the subject may write down or draw their impressions, or may talk freely into a tape recorder. In order to assess the accuracy of the responses, they are compared with various targets by a judge.

Ganzfeld A technique for investigating ESP in which the person experiences an absence of patterned stimulation. This generally involves the subject wearing halved table-tennis balls over the eyes while listening to hiss, or white noise, through headphones.

Gauss Meter An instrument which measures electromagnetic fields. Also called EMF detectors or magnetometers.

General Extrasensory Perception ESP in which it is unclear whether the results are due to clairvoyance, telepathy, precognition or retro cognition.

Geomancy An ancient form of divination which involves the scattering of soil, earth or other materials upon the ground or, markings in earth or sand which make up a configuration that can be read by a seer.

Geophysics A branch of earth science dealing with the physical processes and phenomena occurring especially in the earth and in its vicinity.

Ghost Generic term to describe a deceased person or image appearing to the living. Animals and even inanimate objects, like buildings, can also be ghosts.

Ghost Lights Lights which sometimes appear in haunted houses or in some cases, woods. Not necessarily evil, these lights are often photographed by psychic researchers.

Globule A tiny sphere of electromagnetic energy. Spirits often appear on film as globules. Also known as orbs. These are not always perfect circles.

Glossolalia Unintelligible speech generally uttered in a dissociated or trance state. Also known as "speaking in tongues".

Gnome A name given to fairies or 'little people', supposedly lost souls or pre-Christian people, or fallen angels doomed to walk the earth. It has been suggested that they are elemental nature spirits that inhabit a different dimension to our own.

Goat Name given to a subject in a psi test who does not believe in the phenomenon.

Gray lady This is said to be a ghost of a human spirit that has died by the hands of a lover or is waiting for a lover to return.

Griffin The Griffin is a legendary creature with the head, beak and wings of an eagle, the body of a lion and occasionally the tail of a serpent or scorpion. Its origin lies somewhere in the Middle East where it is found in the paintings and sculptures of the ancient Babylonians, Assyrians and Persians. In Greek mythology, they took gold from the stream Arimaspias and, neighbors of the Hyperboreans, they belonged to Zeus. The later Romans used them for decoration and even in Christian times the Griffin motif often appears. Griffins were frequently used as gargoyles on medieval churches and buildings.

Grigori A collective term for fallen angels. It was said that Grigori were sent to guide and assist man during the beginning of civilization. They are also known as Watchers.

Guardian Angel Is an angel assigned to a living person to protect them from god.

Guide A spirit who is believed to assist a person's spiritual journey.

Haunted A person or place to which spirits may be attached. These spirits can be human or inhuman in nature.

Haunting Refers to an apparition that is seen or heard or felt to perform the same acts over and over, like a recorded replay of past events.

Healer Someone who claims the power of healing.

Healing Types of healing are Hands on, Absent, Prayer, Color, Sound. Healing is considered medicine for the soul. Healing of any kind means laying oneself open to the Divine Source of Love either by receiving or giving. This universal source is the very life we breathe, it is the energy that permeates every living thing. The practice of these types of healing has been used for centuries, even the ancient Egyptians recognized the importance of sound, some of the great pyramids are known to have amazing acoustics and it has been suggested that they may have been used for healing through the use of incantations.

Histology The anatomical study of the microscopic structure of animal and plant tissues. The microscopic structure of tissue.

Huna A Hawaiian religious practice involving clairvoyance, precognition, healing, miracles and magic.

Hyper aesthesia Exceptionally acute sensory awareness.

Hypnagogic Imagery Imagery occurring in the hypnagogic state occurring while dropping off to sleep.

Hypnopompic Imagery Imagery occurring in the hypnopompic state occurring while waking up.

Hypnosis An ASC involving a heightened degree of suggestibility.

I-Ching A Chinese form of divination involving the use of 64 hexagrams.

Imagery The ability to perceive images in the mind. These may be visual, auditory, tactile, etc.

Immortality Various beliefs based on the assumption that some aspect of personal existence survives death.

Incline Effect An increase in performance on a psi test when the test is repeated.

Incorruptibility Inexplicable lack of decay in a corpse.

Incubus A spirit that attacks women sexually known to be a demonic entity this is the opposite of the scubas.

Indirect Voice Mediumistic phenomenon in which the discarnate entity appears to speak using the vocal apparatus of the medium. Often the voice will sound very different from the medium's normal voice.

Infestation Condition which occurs when evil spirits inhabit a location. Infestation in a person is called possession.

Intuition The process of coming to a direct knowledge or certainty without using the rational thought process. Handy for us ghost hunters who are not blessed with the gifts of the sensitive.

Invocation Summoning benevolent spiritual beings.

Jamais Vu The exact opposite to Déjà vu, something which is familiar and experienced by an individual before but they believe it is the first time they have experienced it.

Ka Ancient Egyptian term for the astral body.

Karma Hindu and Buddhist ethical doctrine of "as one sows, so shall one reap".

Kinesiology The study of muscles and their movements as applied to physical conditioning.

Kirlian Photography The photographing of the human aura. Two Russian scientists, Semyon and Valentina Kirlian founded this process.

Kundalini In Yogic belief, a source of tremendous vital energy that may be stimulated by various practices. Kundalini, or the "Serpent Power", is believed to provide energy for paranormal phenomena.

Laying on of Hands A healing practice, in which the healer's hands are placed on or near the body of the sick person.

Levitation The rising of an object or person by no visible means.

Ley Lines Lines as a way Alignments of ancient sites, these are considered to be earth's natural energy lines and also that spirit may use these of traveling quickly from one place to another. It has also been suggested that where two Ley Lines cross there is a possible chance of a portal opening to other dimensions.

Life Review Flashback memories of the whole of a person's life, often associated with the near-death experience.

Light Trance Medium A person whom spirits can communicate through. The spirit wishing to communicate through them does not possess light trance mediums.

Loch Ness Monster A legendary animal which lives in the depths of Loch Ness, a lake in the Highlands of northern Scotland. The size of this monster, Nessie as it is fondly called, is 12-15 m (40-50 ft) and it has a long, snake-like neck. It is popularly believed to be female. The sightings date back to 565 CE when the Irish Saint Columba claimed he saw the Niseag (the Celtic name for Nessie) when he attended a burial for a man who had been bitten to death by the monster. While it has been sighted in the subsequent centuries, it was not until the 19th century that the sightings become more frequent. The most famous encounter was perhaps in the summer of 1933. On that day Mr. and Mrs. Spicer, returning from a trip to London, saw a monster cross the road, with an animal in his jaws, and submerge in the lake. This incident drew the attention of the world press and Nessie became an international phenomena. There have been many expeditions since, but none as successful as to prove its existence. Also the many sightings, photos and films have been inconclusive.

Lucid Dreaming Dreaming in which the person is aware that the experience is a dream. Often associated with feelings of aliveness and freedom, and with the ability to control dream events.

Lucidity 1. An early term for clairvoyance. 2. Lucid dreaming

Luminous Phenomena The experience of strange lights or glows, often around objects or people.

Lycanthrope The supposed magical transformation of a person into the form of a wolf.

Macro-PK Psychokinetic effects that can be directly observed rather than only inferred from statistical analysis.

Magic 1. Practices that aim to use paranormal or spiritual means to influence events. See also white magic, black magic. 2. The art of conjuring.

Magician A person who practices magic.

Malevolent Malevolent spirit is a way to describe a malicious supernatural force that causes harmful acts to living beings.

Manifestation The appearance or taking form of an entity. Can also mean the outbreak of activity.

Manticore A monstrous creature which inhabits the forests in Asia, especially in Indonesia, Malaysia and India. The manticore, considered to be the most dangerous predator in these regions, has the body of a lion and a head with human resemblance. The mouth is filled with three rows of razor-sharp teeth and the scaled tail ends in a ball with poisonous darts. The monster stalks through the forest in search of humans. Upon an encounter with a human, the manticore fires a volley of darts at the victim, who dies immediately. This unfortunate person is devoured completely, even the bones and clothing, as well as the possessions this person carried, vanish. When a villager has completely disappeared, this is considered proof of the presence of a manticore.

Materialisation The deliberate, usually temporary, visible and/or physical formation of a spirit.

Medicine Man / Medicine Woman A witchdoctor or shaman.

Meditation Mental or physical-mental techniques which aim to produce spiritually desirable states of consciousness.

Medium A psychic through whom spirits can communicate. There are two types of mediums: light and deep trance.

Mental Mediumship The paranormal obtaining of information by a medium.

Mesmerism A system of healing developed by F.A. Mesmer, involving the induction of trance states and the supposed transfer of animal magnetism. People in Mesmeric trance often showed paranormal abilities such as clairvoyance.

Metal Bending Psychokinetic ability to bend metal objects.

Metaphysics Derived from the Latin word 'meta' which means 'beyond' metaphysics would literally mean that which is beyond the laws of physics. The study of psychical research.

Metempsychosis Another term for reincarnation.

Micro-PK Psychokinetic effects that cannot be directly observed, but only inferred from the statistical analysis of data.

Miracle A beneficial event attributed to supernatural or divine intervention.

Mnemonist A person who has learned techniques that enable extraordinary feats of memory.

Morphic Resonance A term coined by Rupert Sheldrake to refer to the way in which the "morpho genetic field" underlying form of an object or organism may influence distant fields.

Multiple Personality A psychiatric condition in which the person manifests two or more distinct and separate personalities at different times.

Mystic 1. A person who has mystical experiences. 2. Used loosely to refer to psychics, mediums or romantics.

Mystical Experience ASCs involving experiences of ecstasy, unity, timelessness, loss of self, divine revelation, etc.

Mysticism

Religious or spiritual doctrines which argue that the human mind or soul can directly experience the divine. See also mystical experience, transpersonal psychology.

NDE Near death experience. Experienced when the person is in fact clinically dead for a period of time. The person usually feels themselves leaving their body and sometimes observing the location and people around them, they usually often view their own lifeless bodies, then the person feels as though they are rising up through some sort of tunnel towards a bright light. Sometimes they may see or hear a deceased family member or friend, or even a religious figure of some kind. The person having this experience is usually told it is not the right time, or they decide themselves it is not time to die, and they return to their bodies.

Necromancy Black magic practices involving communicating with the dead.

Nessie (Loch Ness Monster) A legendary animal which lives in the depths of Loch Ness, a lake in the Highlands of northern Scotland. The size of this monster, Nessie as it is fondly called, is 12-15 m (40-50 ft) and it has a long, snake-like neck. It is popularly believed to be female. The sightings date back to 565 CE when the Irish Saint Columba claimed he saw the Niseag (the Celtic name for Nessie) when he attended a burial for a man who had been bitten to death by the monster. While it has been sighted in the subsequent centuries, it was not until the 19th century that the sightings become more frequent. The most famous encounter was perhaps in the summer of 1933. On that day Mr. and Mrs. Spicer, returning from a trip to London, saw a monster cross the road, with an animal in his jaws, and submerge in the lake. This incident drew the attention of the world press and Nessie became an international phenomena. There have been many expeditions since, but none as successful as to prove its existence. Also the many sightings, photos and films have been inconclusive.

Null hypothesis The hypothesis that experimental results are due to chance.

Numerology A system of divination involving the interpretation of numbers.

OBE Out of body experience, or astral projection. This is the sensation or experience many people have of actually leaving their body for a period of time, this is where the spirit or soul leaves the body. This can also be described as 'traveling clairvoyance'.

Occam's Razor The principle of preferring the simplest explanation of event, "a person should not increase beyond what is necessary the number of entities required to explain anything".

Occultism A system of practice and belief, which assumes that there is the existence of supernatural, paranormal and mysterious forces.

Omen A sign that foretells events.

Oppression The first stage of a haunting where the invading entity attempts to gain access to that location or person targeted for victimization.

Oracle 1. An answer to a question, believed to come from the gods. 2. A shrine at which these answers are given.

Orb A sphere of electromagnetic energy produced by spirits.

Orgone Energy A term used by Wilhelm Reich to refer to a universal life force, associated with sexuality.

Ouija Board Game board manufactured by the Parker Brothers Company. Used to communicate with spirits. Some believe this 'communication' is caused by the collective unconscious of the participants.

Out of Body Experience A fully conscious experience in which the person's center of awareness appears to be outside of the physical body.

Palmistry The art of foretelling a person's future by reading the lines and features on their hand.

Paranormal Occurrences that take place outside the natural order of things. This would include ghosts, UFO's, ESP and other things difficult to explain by nature but in the realm of the natural.

Paranormal Dream Dreams in which the dream imagery provides paranormal knowledge.

Parapsychology Derived from the Latin word 'Para' which means beyond parapsychology literally means beyond psychology. It is generally defined as the scientific study of paranormal phenomena. The study of psychic or psi phenomena. These can be described as an exchange of information between living things (mostly people), or between living things and the surrounding environment. They can also be described as the possible influences of living things on the environment, which occur without the use of what we usually call normal senses, and don't seem to be explicable by the known physical laws of nature.

Past-Life Memories Mental images that are believed to be memories of previous lives.

Past-Life Regression A technique of hypnosis involving regressing people to supposed previous lives.

Pendulum An object suspended by a thread. Movements of a pendulum are often used by dowsers to locate objects or answer questions.

Percipient Person who receives impressions in an ESP test.

Phantom An apparition or specter existing only as an energy form.

Phenomenology An approach to research that aims to describe and clarify a person's own experience and understanding of an event or phenomenon.

Phoenix In ancient Greek and Egyptian mythology, the phoenix is a mythical bird and associated with the Egyptian sun-god Re and the Greek Phoibos (Apollo). According to the Greeks the bird lives in Arabia, nearby a cool well. Each morning at dawn, it would bathe in the water and sing such a beautiful song, that the sun-god stops his chariot to listen. There exists only one phoenix at the time. When it felt its death approaching (every 500 or 1461 years), it would build a nest of aromatic wood and set it on fire, and was consumed by the flames. When it was burned, a new phoenix sprang forth from the pyre. It then embalmed the ashes of its predecessor in an egg of myrrh and flew with it to Heliopolis ("city of the sun"). There it would deposit the egg on the altar of the sun god. In Egypt it was usually depicted as a heron, but in the classic literature as a peacock, or an eagle. The phoenix symbolizes immortality, resurrection, and life after death. In that aspect it was often placed on sarcophagi. It is associated with the Egyptian Benu, the Garuda of the Hindus, and the Chinese Feng-huang.

Phonology The science of speech sounds, including phonetics and phonemics.

Phrenology The reading of character and mental ability from the shape of a person's skull.

Physical Mediumship The production of paranormal physical phenomena lights, sounds, materialization, elongation, levitation, etc. by a medium. Physical mediumship often but not always involves a state of trance.

PK Psycho kinesis or PK is referred to as expressive psi, or mind over matter.

Placebo An inactive treatment often given to a control group.

Placement Test A test for PK in which the subject attempts to influence the place in which dice or other objects land.

Planchette A small platform on casters generally used with a Ouija board. Sometimes used with an attached pencil to produce automatic writing.

Plant Psi ESP exhibited by plants.

Pocomania A Jamaican spiritist religion

Poltergeist A German term which means 'noisy ghost'. Most parapsychologists link this phenomena with living persons, or to a stress related situation. In this type of phenomena, objects are reported to move under their own power, objects breaking by themselves, and even sounds have been heard. Most of these events take place when a certain person is around. This has also been referred to as RSPK, or recurrent spontaneous psycho kinesis.

Possession Refers to cases in which a person's body is apparently taken over by another personality or entity.

Prayer A sincere attempt to communicate with a spiritual being or power.

Pre-existence Belief that the personality or soul exists prior to birth.

Precognition The ability to receive information about objects or events that exist in a future time.

Precognitive dreams To have dreams of events incidents before they happen.

Prediction A statement that claims to foretell future events.

Premonition An experience believed to foretell future events.

Presence A subjective feeling that a person, animal or discarnate entity is present.

Process research Research that aims to investigate factors affecting psi.

Proof research Research that aims to demonstrate the existence of psi.

Prophecy 1. A prediction, usually resulting from a sense of spiritual revelation. 2. The ability to receive prophetic revelations.

Proxy Sitting A séance in which another person sits in on behalf of the person receiving a communication.

Psi A term used to encompass all paranormal abilities. Includes both ESP and PK abilities.

Psi-Mediated Instrumental Response Theory put forward by Rex Stanford that psi activity is used to serve an organism's needs.

Psyche Generally refers to the mind.

Psychedelic Literally "revealing mind". A class of plants and drugs that can produce florid ASC's.

Psychic A person who exhibits psi ability.

Psychic Cold This is a situation where one feels unnaturally cold. There are two types of psychic cold. The first a spirit is materializing and draws energy from the environment. This results in a lowering of ambient temperature. The second type the materializing spirit will draw energy from people that are present. The people will feel cold but the thermometer will not register a lowering of ambient temperature.

Psychic Healing Forms of healing using psychic powers.

Psychic Imprint An energy field which assumes the appearance of a person. This usually occurs because of the residue or severe emotional energy, which is imprinted into the environment because of a tragic event.

Psychic Photography General term used to refer to paranormal photographic images.

Psychic Research The general study of paranormal phenomena including ESP, hauntings, ghosts, etc.

Psychic Surgery Actual or simulated surgical procedures carried out by healers.

Psycho kinesis The paranormal influence of the mind on physical events and processes.

Psychometry This is the ability to read the history of an object or location. It can also be used to gain information about people that may be associated with an object or location.

Pyramid Power Belief that pyramid shapes can produce paranormal effects.

Quackery Integrating metaphysics with sympathetic magic or spiritualism with healing. The term is generally used to describe frauds that dispense useless or harmful treatments to vulnerable people on their deathbeds.

Qualitative Method A research method involving the collection of non-quantitative data using observations, interviews, subjective reports and case studies.

Quantitative Method A research method involving the collection and statistical analysis of numerical data.

Radiesthesia Theories based on the assumption that living organisms emit some kind of radiation or emanation that is capable of being detected using instruments or by dowsing.

Radionics Use of certain instruments to detect radiations or emissions from a living organism, such as dowsing.

Raps The name given to unexplained knocking sounds associated with physical mediumship and poltergeist activity.

Raudive Voices Intelligible voices recorded on magnetic tape under conditions of silence or white noise which are heard only when the tape is played. A phenomenon discovered by Konstantin Raudive.

Rebirth In Buddhism, the belief that there is some continuity of mind from one life to the next. Buddhism, however, does not accept the existence of the individual soul and therefore does not view rebirth as the soul's literal re-incarnation.

Recurrent Spontaneous Psycho kinesis A technical term for poltergeist activity.

Regression A statistical technique that enables predictions to be made from a set of data. a technique used in hypnosis, involving suggesting to hypnotized persons that they are returning to an earlier time. Sometimes the regression occurs spontaneously, without suggestion.

Reincarnation The belief that some aspect of a person's consciousness, personality, or soul survives death and can be reborn in a new body at some future date. Reincarnation is often seen as a repeating cycle of death and rebirth in which future lives are influenced by past and present actions through the law of karma.

Remote Viewing This is usually the perception of information in the form of smells, tastes, feelings, sounds, or sensations. Most of the studies with remote viewing deal with information being channeled from other locations.

Retroactive Psycho kinesis Paranormal influence that an agent can have on an experiment after it has been completed.

Retrocognition The awareness of objects and events that existed in a past time.

Ritual Magic Magical activity involving rites and ceremonies.

Santeria A Cuban spiritist religion.

Screen Touch Matching A card-guessing procedure in which the subject and experimenter sit on opposite sides of a screen which has a small gap at the bottom. Key cards are hung on the screen in front of the subject (the faces may be seen or unseen). Underneath each key card is a blank card that can be seen by both subject and experimenter. The experimenter holds the target cards and the subject indicates the guess on each trial by pointing to the corresponding blank card. The experimenter then places the card in a pile on his or her side of the screen in a position corresponding to that of the indicated blank card.

Scubas A spirit that attacks men sexually and is demonic in nature.

Séance A mediumistic session.

Second Sight Another name for clairvoyance.

Sensitive A person with psychic abilities.

Sensory deprivation Conditions of greatly restricted sensory input.

Shadow Ghost A black, mist like spirit that has no discernable features. It is usually demonic in nature and is sometimes described by witnesses as a 'black shape'.

Shaman A witchdoctor or medicine man/woman who communicates with spirits while in trance and who has the power of healing. May also show other paranormal abilities.

Shape-Shiftingn Paranormal ability to assume the form of another person, an animal or other entity.

Sheep-Goat Effect Effect, discovered by the parapsychologist Gertrude Schmeidler, in which "sheep" score higher than mean chance expectation on psi tests, while "goats" score lower than MCE.

Siddhis Name given to paranormal powers associated with the practice of Yoga.

Simultaneous Dream A dream whose elements correspond closely with those in the dream of another person.

Sixth sense Popular term for ESP.

Skeptic A person inclined to discount the reality of most paranormal claims and to be critical of some parapsychological research. Generally seeks rational or scientific explanations for the phenomena studied by parapsychologists.

Slate-Writing Writing that appears on a slate during a séance.

Sleep Paralysis An often frightening state of seeming to be awake but unable to move.

Somnambulist 1. a person who performs physical activity while asleep also known as sleep-walking. 2. a person in a deep hypnotic state.

Sorcery A form of magic.

Sortilege Divination by lots.

Soul The spiritual element of a person, generally believed to be immortal.

Space Brothers Extraterrestrial entities, channeled by some mediums.

Spectra A ghost or apparition.

Spell Written or spoken words believed to have magical power.

Sphinx In ancient Egypt, the Sphinx is a male statue of a lion with the head of a human, sometimes with wings. Most sphinxes however represent a king in his appearance as the sun god. The name "sphinx" was applied to the portraits of kings by the Greeks who visited Egypt in later centuries, because of the similarity of these statues to their Sphinx. The best known specimen is the Great Sphinx of Gizeh (on the western bank of the Nile) which is not a sphinx at all but the representation of the head of king Khaf-Ra (Chephren) on the body of a crouching body. It was supposedly built in the 4th dynasty (2723-2563 BCE), although others claim it dates back to the 7th-5th millennium. The Greek Sphinx was a demon of death and destruction and bad luck. She was the offspring of Typhon and Echidna. It was a female creature, sometimes depicted as a winged lion with a feminine head, and sometimes as a female with the breast, paws and claws of a lion, a snake tail and bird wings. She sat on a high rock near Thebes and posed a riddle to all who passed. The riddle was: "What animal is that which in the morning goes on four feet, at noon on two, and in the evening upon three?" Those who could not solve the riddle were strangled by her. Finally Oedipus came along and he was the only who could answer that it was "Man, who in childhood creeps on hands and knees, in manhood walks erect, and in old age with the aid of a staff." The Sphinx was so mortified at the solving of her riddle that she cast herself down from the rock and perished. The name 'sphinx' is derived from the Greek sphingo, which means "to strangle". In ancient Assyrian myths, the sphinx usually appears as a guardian of temple entrances.

Spirit 1. Adiscarnate entity. 2. Soul. 3. Divine essence.

Spirit Cure Healing that is believed to result from the intervention of spirits.

Spirit Photography Photographs of figures or faces, believed by some to be those of deceased persons.

Spiritualism Religious doctrines that advocate communication between the living and the spirits of the dead using a medium as intermediary.

Spontaneous Cases Paranormal phenomena that occur in everyday life, unsought and unexpected.

Spontaneous Human Combustion Refers to cases in which a badly burned human body has been discovered in circumstances suggesting that the fire originated spontaneously in or on the body of the victim.

Sprite A soul, spirit or apparition.

Stigmata Markings on someone's body that come up by unexplained reasons that usually correspond with the markings of Christ.

Subject A person whose psi ability is being investigated.

Subjective Paranormal Experience Or Subjective Psi Experience. An experience that the person who has it believes to be paranormal.

Subliminal Perception Perceiving without conscious awareness.

Super-ESP Hypothesis The suggestion that people are capable of unlimited ESP. The super-ESP hypothesis is often presented as an alternative to the survival hypothesis in explaining mediumistic phenomena the medium is believed to obtain information using super-ESP powers and not directly from the spirit of a deceased person.

Supercharged Orb Unusually an orb that has a color to it normally green or red caught on film.

Supernatural Events that have no natural explanation. Commonly refers to acts of the divine but can also include extraordinary acts caused by negative forces.

Synchronicity A term used by C.G. Jung to refer to coincidental events that are meaningfully but not causally connected.

Table Turning Movements that come from the table used during a séance, these are suggested as being a form of communication from the spirit world.

Table-Tilting Mysterious movements of a table, usually occurring in a seance when a group of people place their hands on the surface of the table. Often the movements are interpreted as spirit communications. Also known as table-turning or table-tipping.

Tarot A special deck of cards, usually 78, used in fortune telling.

Telekinesis The ability to move objects from a distance. This is also called the psychokinetic effect.

Telemetry The science and technology of automatic measurement and transmission of data by wire, radio, or other means from remote sources, as from space vehicles, to a receiving station for recording and analysis.

Telepathy This is commonly known as an awareness of information or emotions that exist in the mind of another person. A more simple explanation is 'mind-to-mind' communication.

Teleportation The materialization or dematerialization of an object. Ostensible teleportation is what would appear to be the movement of an object from one place to another without it actually traveling the distance between the locations.

Temporal Lobe Activity Electrical activity in the temporal lobes of the brain. Often associated with strange sensations, time distortions and hallucinations. Sometimes used as an explanation for seemingly paranormal experiences such as apparitions and alien abduction experiences.

Theosophy Quasi-religious and philosophical system of the Theosophical Society, founded in 1875 by Madame Blavatsky. Its paranormal claims were controversially and damningly reported upon by the Society for Psychical Research in 1885.

Therianthropy The supposed ability to change from human to animal form and back.

Theurgy Magical practices which aim to contact and communicate with the gods.

Thixotropy This is a property that is exhibited by certain gels. A thixotropic gel maintains its shape and appears solid, but if it is subjected to certain forms of disturbance, such as shaking, it will start to flow like liquid. Possible explanation for bleeding statues etc.

Thoughtography Paranormal ability to produce images on photographic film by concentrating on a mental image. Most famously demonstrated by Ted Serios.

Trance A dissociated state of consciousness, generally involving reduced awareness of surroundings and external events.

Transcendental Meditation A technique of meditation taught by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, involving the repetition of a sound or mantra.

Transpersonal Psychology The study of experiences, beliefs and practices that suggest that the sense of self can extend beyond our personal or individual reality. The subject matter of transpersonal psychology overlaps to some extent with parapsychology, but the two disciplines tend to have different approaches and emphases. Parapsychology is primarily concerned to investigate evidence for and against the reality of paranormal phenomena. Transpersonal psychology, on the other hand, is more interested in investigating the transpersonal significance of such phenomena the ways in which they may give people a sense of connectedness with a larger, more universal or spiritual reality.

Traveling Clairvoyance 1. An early term for the out of body experience. 2. Clairvoyance exhibited when a subject travels in imagination to another location.

Trumpet A conical tube, often luminous, used in séances to produce direct voice communication.

UFO Unidentified Flying Objects, considered to be alien aircraft. It is interesting to note that a large majority of UFO's are sighted during or after an electrical storm.

Ufology The study of unidentified flying objects.

Ultrasonography The diagnostic use of ultrasonic waves (acoustic frequencies above the range audible to the human ear) to visualize internal bodily structures and organs.

Umbanda A Brazilian spiritist religion.

Unidentified Flying Object Unexplained sightings of lights or objects in the sky, often taken to be evidence of extraterrestrial visitations.

Up Through Technique An experimental test for clairvoyance in which the subject guesses the order of a stacked series of target symbols cards from bottom to top.

Vampire Mythical creature who rises up out of it'sgrave at night to feed on the blood of others.

Vanishing Islands Such as Atlantis. These are geographical areas that seem to have vanished without a trace.

Veridical Information or experience that is confirmed by facts and events.

Veridical Dream A dream that relates to actual events of either the past, present or future, that the dreamer is unaware of.

Vision A religious apparition.

Voodoo A spiritist and ancestor religion, originating in Africa, and now found predominantly in Haiti, Jamaica and Cuba. Magical rites, trance states and possession all play a major role in Voodoo.

Warlock The masculine name for a witch, wizard or magician.

Werewolf In popular folklore, a man who is transformed, or who transforms himself, into a wolf in nature and appearance under the influence of a full moon. The werewolf is only active at night and during that period, he devours infants and corpses. According to legend, werewolves can be killed by silver objects such as silver arrows and silver bullets. When a werewolf dies he is returned to his human form. Origin The word is a contraction of the old-Saxon word wer (which means "man") and wolf -- werwolf, manwolf. A Lycanthrope, a term often used to describe werewolves, however, is someone who suffers from a mental disease and only thinks he has changed into a wolf. The concept of werewolves, or lycanthropes, is possibly based on the myth of Lycaon. He was the king of Arcadia, and in the time of the ancient Greeks notorious for his cruelty. He tried to buy the favor of Zeus by offering him the flesh of a young child. Zeus punished him for this crime and turned him into a wolf. The legends of werewolves have been told since the ancient Greeks and are known all over the world. In areas where the wolf is not so common, the belief in werewolves is replaced by folklore where men can change themselves in

tigers, lions, bears and other fierce animals. History In the dark Middle Ages, the Church stigmatized the wolf as the personification of evil and a servant of Satan himself. The Church courts managed to put so much pressure on schizophrenics, epileptics and the mentally disabled, that they testified to be werewolves and admitted to receive their orders directly from Satan. After 1270 it was even considered heretical not to believe in the existence of werewolves. The charge of being a werewolf disappeared from European courts around the 17th century, but only for the lack of evidence. The belief in werewolves, however, did not completely disappear. In Europe after 1600, it was generally believed that if there were no werewolves, then at least the wolf was a creature of evil. This resulted in an unjustified and negative image of the wolf; an image that most people still have today. (Greek) lykanthropos - lykos wolf; anthropos human being; Wolfman.

Werewolf Mythical creatures that change from humans to wolves. These creatures can only be killed with a silver bullet and the plant wolfs bane is said to act as a deterrent.

White Magic Magical spells or rituals to produce beneficial effects.

White Noise A hiss-like sound, formed by combining all audible frequencies.

Wicca System of witchcraft, especially as practiced today in western countries.

Witch Someone who practices witchcraft.

Witchdoctor A medicine man/woman or shaman.

Wraith A spirit that comes back to avenge his own death this is considered an omen spirit.

Xenoglossy The alleged writing or speaking in a language that is unknown to the individual speaking or writing it.

Yeren A mythical man beast or red haired ape 5-6 feet in height. Sighting of the Yeren have been reported in Asia and the Shennongjia Mountains in Central China.

Yeti The Abominable Snowman of the Himalayas. In 1951, an expedition found a track on the Menlung Glacier between Tibet and Nepal, at an altitude of 6000 meters. The footprints they saw were 33 cm by 45 cm and were made by a foot which has 5 toes of which the inner toes were larger than the others. The heel was flat and exceptionally broad. The track itself appeared to be fresh so the footprints were not enlarged by melting snow. This was clearly shown by the many photographs they took. Although there were many doubts about these photographs, if they were believed to be true at all. But those who did believe were certain that was not made by any known animal. The people of Nepal call it a "rakshasa" which is Sanskrit for "demon". According to them, stories of its existence date back to the 4th century BCE; references to the Yeti are found in a poem called 'Rama and Sita'. It has regularly been sighted since 1832. Yeti means "magical creature". The name 'The Abominable Snowman' however, was given to it by western newspapers who wanted to give their readers the feeling of terror which the creature supposedly causes in the valleys, crevices and glaciers of the Himalayas. According to legends, there are three species: the Rimi (some 2,5 m), the Nyalmot (4,5 m) and the Raksi-Bombo (1,5 m). In spite of differences in size, the species have a general resemblance. The Yeti has reddish hair (although others claim it is gray), smells terrible and it is very strong (it throws boulders as if they were pebbles). It makes an ululating or whistling sound, and is sometimes heard roaring like

a lion. The Yeti is rumored to be very fond of strong alcoholic drinks. There are many uncertainties about its origin, whether it exists or not. Some say that the Yeti is a descendant of a race of giant apes, the 'gigantopithecus' who retreated into the Himalayas some 500,000 years ago. Another theory is that the Yetis are descendant of the A-o-re, an ancient people that fled into the mountains to escape their enemies. In the following millennia, they degraded to a race of monstrous creatures. Skeptics say that the tracks were made by ordinary animals like a bear or an ape. Of the many expeditions set out to find it, was also that of Sir Edmund Hillary, the first ever to climb the Mount Everest. He funded this expedition himself, for he and his guide Tenzing Norgay had seen footprints of a Yeti on a previous expedition. Unfortunately, his expedition was as unsuccessful as those who had gone before. However, he brought back with him a borrowed artifact: the upper half of the skull of a Yeti. This scalp came from the Khumjung Gompa (monastery) in Nepal where it is kept as a relic. It is some 300 years old, 20 cm high and has a circumference of 65 cm. Scientists said it belonged to a serow (mountain goat) which lives in eastern Asia. There have been many other expeditions, but on none of those they got so much as even a glimpse of the creature. However, just like the 1951 expedition, they found tracks of the Yeti, and made casts of its footprints. The lack of evidence did not keep the government of Nepal from officially declaring the Yeti to exist in 1961. It became their national symbol, and an important source of income. There are even stamps of the creature.

Yoga Religious philosophy originating in India. It advocates the use of physical and psycho-spiritual techniques to lead the person to higher consciousness.

Zener Cards Set of 25 cards, 5 each of circle, square, Greek cross, five-pointed star, three wavy lines, designed by the perceptual psychologist Karl Zener for use in card-guessing tests of ESP. Also known as ESP cards.

Zombie Dead bodies with no souls, said to be created by black magic of voodoo sorcerers.

Zooform Phenomena A term used to describe entities that resemble animals, but appear to be supernatural.

Agent: A human being, typically a teenage female, who unknowingly directs poltergeist energy.

Altered State of Consciousness (ASC): Any state of consciousness that is different from "normal" states of waking or sleeping.

Amulet: An object that has the power to ward off ghosts and evil spirits.

Angel: Benevolent spiritual beings who help and watch over people.

Apparition: The disembodied soul or spirit that can be seen visually.

Apport: When a solid object seemingly appears from out of nowhere, with the help of the spirits in the presence of a medium.

Asport: When a solid object is teleported to a different location with the help of the spirits in the presence of a medium.

Astral Body: The soul of an individual projected outside of their bodies.

Astral Projection: See Out-Of-Body (OBE).

Atmospheric Apparition: Not actually a ghost or spirit, but instead a "visual imprint" of people and events that was left behind in the environment that continues to replay.

Aura: A field of energy believed by some to surround living creatures.

Automatic Writing: A type of communication with ghosts or spirits where they take control over the writer's hand and write out a message.

Automatism: An unconscious or spontaneous muscular movement caused by ghosts or the spirits. Automatic Writing is one form of Automatism.

Banshee: Omen spirits of Scotland and Ireland.

Channeling: A form of spirit communication where an unseen entity possesses a medium in a controlled environment to impart guidance, wisdom or future events. The channeled entity could be a deceased human being, an Angel, Demon, Elemental or other higher plain spirit.

Charms: A spell or object possessing magic power.

Clairvoyance: Either an internal or external vision of present or future events, objects, places, and people.

Cold Reading: A psychic reading given with no prior knowledge of the sitter.

Collective Apparition: A ghost or spirit sighting simultaneously by more than one living person.

Collect Unconscious: Form of analytical psychology developed by Carl Jung. It is the collective memory of all the humanity's past and is held somewhere inside the unconscious mind.

Crisis Apparition: Ghosts that appear to loved ones and close friends just before or soon after their death.

Cross Correspondence: Information received from the spirit world.

Crossroads: Point where two roads intersect. Said to be a focus point of supernatural energy.

Death Bed Apparitions: See Crisis Apparition.

Demon: Fallen angels associated with evil.

Direct Voice Phenomenon (DVP): The voice of a ghost or spirit being spoken to the sitters of a seance. The voice usually comes from some point near the medium, but not through the medium. Sometimes a spirit horn or trumpet is used. **Direct Writing:** When ghost or spirit's handwriting appears directly on a previously unmarked, unwritten surface.

Drop-In Communicator: A ghost, spirit or entity that makes its presence known at a seance.

Dowsing: The paranormal detection of underground water or mineral deposits (or lost persons)

and objects) using a divining rod or pendulum.

Dybbuk: A Jewish legend. The restless soul of a deceased human being that enters the body of a living person and takes possession.

Earth Lights: Luminous phenomena typically shaped in ball form or irregular patches of light appearing randomly and defying explanation.

Ectoplasm: Ectoplasm can be either a solid, liquid or vaporous substance produced by ghosts or spirits. It is usually a milky white color and has an ozone smell. Some forms of ectoplasm are known to move in lifelike patterns.

Electronic Voice Phenomena (EVP): EVP is the attempt to capture a ghost or spirits voice on audio recording tapes. Typically there is no voice heard to the people present in the recording but after reviewing the tapes there are strange voices recorded.

Electro-Magnetic Field (EMF) Detectors: Handheld scientific instruments that can pick up electronic and magnetic fields over different frequencies. They can read changes and distortions in the normal electro-magnetic fields.

Elemental Spirit: A spirit associated with one of the classical four elements (fire, earth, air and water).

Energy Vortex: see Ectoplasm.

Extrasensory Perception (ESP): The acquisition of information by means beyond the five human senses.

Exorcism: A religious rite used to cast out a ghost, spirit or entity from a living person's body or a particular location.

Exorcist: A religious "holy man" who conducts an exorcism.

Fairy: Small, human-like mythical being. May be benevolent or malevolent.

False Awakening: An experience in which a person believes he or she has woken up, but actually is still dreaming.

Family Apparitions: Ghosts that haunt one particular family. Their appearance usually means that someone within the family is about to die.

Focal Person: Person who is at the center of poltergeist activity.

Ghost: The visual appearance of a spirit or soul of a deceased being, human or animal. The disembodied soul or life force.

Ghost Catcher: A wind chime like device that makes noise as a ghost or spirit passes by it.

Ghost Hunt: An attempt made by the living to find and see a ghost or spirit.

Ghost Hunter: A living individual who searches out and sometime finds and identifies ghosts and spirits.

Ghost Investigation: A scientific endeavor, in a controlled environment, set up to communicate, record, and capture visual evidence of the existence of ghosts.

Ghost Lights: See Earth Lights.

Ghostbuster: A living person who can remove an unwanted ghost, spirit, entity or poltergeist activity from a particular location.

Ghoul: Evil spirit or monster that robs graves and feeds off of the flesh of the dead.

Gray Lady: The ghost of a woman who has died at the hands of a lover or waits for the return of a loved one.

Guardian Angel: An angel believed to protect the individual.

Halloween: All Hallows Eve, is the night of October 31st when the spirit and normal world allegedly become one.

Hallucination: A false and distorted perception of reality.

Haunt: A place where a ghost or ghosts frequently return.

Haunting: The continuous manifestation of inexplicable phenomena associated with the presence of ghosts or spirits attached to a particular location.

Haunted Objects: Jewelry, furniture, clothing, etc, that seem to be haunted by a past owner or have been cursed.

Hypnotism: An induced trance or sleep state.

Ley Lines: Invisible lines that run between sacred objects or locations.

Levitation: The paranormal raising or suspension of an object or person.

Lucid Dreams: A dream where the dreamer does not know that they are dreaming.

Luminous Phenomena: The experience of strange lights or glows, often around objects or people.

Magnetometer: A technical device used to study the strength, direction and fluctuation or magnetic fields.

Marian Apparition: The appearance of the Virgin Mary.

Materialization: The manifestation of physical objects, animals or people.

Medium: A person with a gift to communicate with ghosts and spirits on behalf of the living.

Modern Apparitions: "New" Ghosts of deceased individuals. They appear infashion from the current time.

Near-Death Experience (NDE): A phenomenon in which a person clinically diesor comes very close to death only to be revived and then can recall in great detailstories of spiritual worlds and other supernatural events.

Necromancer: A person usually considered a wizard or sorcerer, who can raise thedead and command the spirits to obtain information about the future.

Necromancy: A form of prophecy preformed by a necromancer.

Omen: A foretelling of a future event.

Oracle: A seer who can communicate with ghosts, spirits and Gods to obtaininformation.

Orb: A mass of energy in the shape of a ball, there are several classifications depending on size, ghostly appritions are usally always associated with an orb and are present.

Ouija Board: A board with letters and numbers used by people who are attempting to communicate with ghosts or spirits.

Out-Of-Body (OBE): Also called Astral Projection. The phenomenon in which aliving person's spirit can exit their body, travel the earth and other spiritual worldsand then return back to their bodies.

Paranormal: Beyond the normal.

Parapsychology: The scientific study of unusual events associated with the humanexperience and PSI subjects.

Percipient: A living person who sees a ghost, spirit or paranormal event.Phantom Animals: Ghosts of deceased animals.

Phantom Hitchhiker or Traveler: A ghost or spirit that haunts a particular stretchof road or route. Phantom Hitchhikers ask for rides only to suddenly disappearwhen they reach their destination.

Photographic Apparitions: Ghosts and spirits that you can't see, but appear inphotographs after they are developed.

Planchette: A pointer used with a Ouija Board to communicate with ghosts,spirits or higher plane entities.

Poltergeist: "Noisy Ghost." Poltergeists are invisible masses of spirit energy thatmay or may not be connected to a living human Agent. Some of the most commonpoltergeists activities include loud unexplained noise, levitations, the moving ofobjects, and electrical problems.

Possession: When a persons mind and body are taken over by ghosts, spirits orother supernatural

entities such as demons.

Precognition: The paranormal awareness of future events.

PSI: A general term used to denote the unknown factors responsible for a variety of paranormal phenomena.

Psychic: Popular term used to denote a person who regularly uses, or who appears to be especially gifted with, psi abilities.

Psychic echo: When sounds from the past have mysteriously recorded themselves into the natural environment.

Psychokinesis (PK): Mind Movement. Psychokinesis (PK) is the apparent ability to influence the environment by intention alone.

Purgatory: The place where the souls of those who have died must go to be cleansed of all their sin before they can be admitted to Heaven.

Radio Voice Phenomenon (RVP): The voice of a ghost or spirit communicating through a regular radio.

Reciprocal Apparition: An experience where both the agent and the ghost or spirit see and react to each other.

Recurring Apparitions: Ghosts or spirits that appear in regular cycles, usually once a year, on the anniversary of their death for example.

Reincarnation: The belief that a soul can be reborn into a new body after death.

Repressed Psychokinetic Energy: A theoretical psychic force unconsciously produced by an individual while undergoing a physical or mental trauma.

Retrocognition: Paranormal knowledge of past events.

Scrying: A type of prophecy where an individual can see future events by staring into a shiny or reflective surface, such as a mirror or crystal ball.

Seance: The gathering of a group of individuals for the purpose of communicating for the ghost of the dead.

Sensitive: Someone who is aware or can detect paranormal events beyond the range of their five human senses.

Screaming Skulls: Human skulls that protest with poltergeist activity when their final wishes are not fulfilled.

Shaman: A witch doctor or medicine man who communicates with spirits while in a trance and who has the power of healing.

Sixth sense: Popular term for ESP.

Sleep Paralysis: A frightening state of seeming to be awake but unable to move.

Soul: The spiritual life force or essence, carrying an individual's personality and consciousness of all actions.

Spectre: A ghost or apparition.

Spirit: Often used to define the soul of a person, but it can also be used to represent places such as sacred lakes or objects, shrines, and elemental entities.

Spirit Detection: The reading made by scientific equipment (EMF Detectors, Temperature changes, etc.) when a ghost or spirit is present.

Spirit Photography: Photographs of figures or faces, believed by some to be those of deceased persons.

Spirit Profile: Researching the background and history of the ghost or spirit, then determining its consistent patterns as a result of the findings.

Spiritualism: Belief systems that ghosts and spirits can and do communicate with the living.

Spook Lights: See Earth Lights.

Stigmata: Unexplained markings on a person's body that correspond to the wounds of Christ.

Super-ESP: A more powerful form of telepathy that allow certain individuals to pick up information about a deceased person from other living people.

Supernatural: Something that exists or occurs through some means other than any known force in nature or science.

Time-Slips: Moments where the past and present collide at one point. **Telepathy:** Mind-to-mind communication.

Telephone Calls From The Dead: When a person receives a telephone call from someone who is dead. The person may or may not know that the caller is deceased.

Teleportation: Paranormal transportation of an object from one location to another, even through solid objects.

Transportation Apparitions: The appearance of ghostly cars, trucks, ships, bicycles, carriages, trains, airplanes and anything else that carry people. They haunt their old routes.

Vampire: A supernatural creature (undead) that can only come out at night and lives by drinking the blood of the living.

Vortex: A opening or doorway between our world and the spirit world.

Wild Hunt: A group of ghost horsemen or packs of ghostly dogs seen at night.

Witch: A woman with supernatural powers.

Wraith: A ghost that comes back to avenge its own death. Considered an omenspirit.

Absolute Energy - An invisible primal life force found in the atmosphere, necessary for the existence of all life in the universe.

Activity - Conscious and unconscious thoughts have an effect on outer manifestations; this effect corresponds to the type and kind of thought.

After-Death World - Umbrella term, any level of the etheric world that is alive, vibrating and full of soul-minds without physical bodies.

Air Fairies - Nature spirits who work and reside in air, have charge of wind and storms.

Alchemist - A scientist who studies how to transmute anything from a lower form to a higher form using both a chemical process and a spiritual process.

All Hallows Eve (Halloween) - The night of October 31st. Originally a Pagan festival of darkness, and death. Halloween was believed to be the one time of year when the souls of the dead revisited their former homes. The modern use of wearing costumes originated from the use of scary masks worn to scare the roaming souls away.

All Soul's Day - The anniversary of Siddhartha's death celebrated in respect of all people who have made their transition.

Amethyst - A jewel that has the vibrational frequency to protect the wearer from external negative activity.

Amulet - A charm worn around the neck in order to bring good luck or ward off evil.

Ancestral Ghost - A discarnate being that communicates or makes his presence known to an earthling who is capable of psychism.

Angel - Supernatural being, an instrument of divine justice.

Angelic Host - A group of synchronized etheric world intelligences desiring to offer assistance to civilization.

AntiChrist - Satan. The enemy of man and God who, according to many religious cultures, will establish a reign of evil on Earth which will last fifty years before being overthrown by the second coming of Christ.

Apparition - A supernatural appearance or image recognizable (being familiar) to the viewer.

Apport - An object transported through supernatural means.

Arch-Angels - Etheric world intelligences who have purified their soul-minds from all imperfection before earth came into being.

Astral Body - The invisible spirit of a person (or, more unlikely, animal). See Astral Projection.

Astral Plane - The level of existence through which spirits of the dead first pass. The level in which an Astrally projected spirit travels.

Astral Projection - The separation of the astral body (or spirit) from the physical body. The astral body travels in the astral plane to locations near or far.

Astrology - A science and art that brings guidance and counsel to mankind based on one's birth date.

Aura -An invisible electromagnetic energy field completely surrounding a living being.

Automatic Writing - The production of written material by a spirit through a person but without conscious control of that person. Often, a person may write pages and pages of words that, upon "awakening", they do not remember writing.

Beelzebub - One of Satan's chief Lieutenants, considered Satan's "left hand man".

Black Art - To deliberately use psychic energy for evil intent.

Black Magic - The practice of conjuring preternatural forces for a specific evil purpose.

Black Mass - The mass said in honor of Satan at the black witches sabbath and by Satanists.

Born with a Veil - A baby born with a thin membrane that envelopes the fetus, it is believed that this child is psychic.

Brimstone - an element that has the properties to burn away negative vibrations and evil spirits.

Channeling - To allow an spirit to enter one's mind and impress thoughts upon the consciousness to be spoken aloud.

Cherub - A member of the second order of etheric world angels, known for their knowledge and help in carrying out the Divine plan.

Circumambulism - Ceremonial walking around an object or person to secure protection.

Clairaudience - The psychic ability to hear sounds or voices normally not heard by most people.

Clairvoyance - The psychic ability to see objects, persons, places or events regardless of time or distance.

Conjuring - The process of calling preternatural forces into aid or action through the use of sorcery or ceremonial black magic.

Curse - To invoke preternatural forces to cause harm or injury to a person, place or object.

Dead Sea Scrolls - a number of leather, papyrus and copper scrolls collaborating on the books in the Old Testament of the Bible, found in 1948 in caves on the northwest coast of the Dead Sea, believed to have been written between 168 B.C. and A.D. 233.

Demon - An evil entity hostile to humans. A lower level evil spirit working for Lucifer.

Demonic - Pertaining to or caused by demons.

Demonologist - Involved in the study of Demonology.

Demonology - The study of demons, including their characteristics, classification, and effect on mankind.

Devil - An upper level evil spirit working for Lucifer. (Beelzebub, among many)

Diabolical - Pertaining to or caused by a devil.

Discarnate - Existing outside a physical body.

Disembodied - A spirit functioning without a body.

Doppleganger (Doubleganger) - A spirit of a living person outside of the physical body.

Dowser - A psychic with radiesthetic sense; detects oil, water, or anything underground by means of the reaction of his or her dowsing rods.

Dowsing Rod - A "Y" shaped rod (sometimes made from a tree branch)

Dwarf - A nature spirit that is short, dark, ranging in height from two inches to two feet.

Earthbound - A spirit being trapped on or remaining on the earthly plane.

Ectoplasm - An unknown substance which emanates from the bodies of mediums, correlating to supernatural phenomena.

Elemental - A lesser spirit associated to the fundamentals of nature (fire, earth, wind and water).

Entity - A disembodied or preternatural spirit.

Electronic Voice Phenomena (EVP) - Voices of spirits captured using audio and/or video recording.

Fairy - An elemental spirit considered benign but inclined to mischief.

Faith Healing - To expect that one will get better is one of the necessary factors in every type of cure, this confidence that one will be cured comes from a desire to live.

Fallen Angels - Discarnate entities who live close to earth and are desirous and capable of haunting earthlings.

Familiar - A live cat or other animal owned by a witch upon which she transfers psychic energy in cases of evil-oriented activities.

Frankincense - A gum resin of trees of the Boswellia family used to invoke the etheric world helpers for guidance and protection.

Gabriel - The planetary archangel in charge of the moon, a genius of mysteries, who has worked psychically through the great masters during their earthly incarnations.

Ghost - A supernatural appearance or image unrecognizable to the viewer.

Gnomes - Nature spirits made of pure elemental substance, living underground, in mines, and in rocks.

Goblin - A nature spirit showing itself as small, swarthy, and malicious, capable of shape-shifting to become an animal, thief, or villain, name given to the more mischievous and grotesque-looking fairies.

Herbalist - A practitioner who understands plants for their medicinal use. knows where they grow, how to prepare them for healing various kinds of diseases, and how to use them in everyday life.

Hex - To use BLACK MAGIC to harm another person's body, family or property by means of deep concentration.

Hexagram - Two interlaced equilateral triangles, one apex pointing up and one apex pointing down.

Hinduism- Ageless religion of India.

Holy Grail - The holy cup used in Jesus Christ's last supper.

House Blessing - A minor exorcism of a home performed by a priest.

Human Sacrifice - The ceremonial killing of a person as an offering to an evil spirit for magical purposes.

Human Spirit - The (earthbound) spirit of a deceased person.

Hypnosis - Represents the alpha and theta levels of consciousness that one also reaches during sleep.

I Ching - A divination process where one uses the patterns of three tossed objects to receive an answer to one's psychological, business, or social problem from the BOOK OF CHANGES.

Imp - A nature spirit who does more harm than good to the earthling.

Incantation - To sing and chant formulaic words, phrases or sounds to special rhythm and tonation.

Incarnate - Living in a physical body.

Incubus - A demon which seeks sexual intercourse with a living woman.

Inhuman spirit - An entity or spirit of a being that has never lived in the earthly realm.

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Judaism - A religion which holds the belief that every human being has a right to justice, purity, and truth which even the power of kings cannot erase.

Kia - A trancelike state of emotional ECSTASY wherein the SHAMAN has enhanced awareness.

Kabbalah - Doctrines received from tradition, a Jewish doctrine or system of theosophy tells the importance of humanity's role in God's universe.

Karma - Sanskrit, Buddhism, Hinduism, Theosophy, the principle that makes every man or woman the cause of their present global location, lifestyle, intelligence, relatives and physical body condition.

Kirlian Photography - The process for taking pictures of the emanations and radiations surrounding living objects.

Legion - The term used to describe the multitude and myriad of evil spirits.

Levitation - The raising of a body or object without any physical or visible means.

Limbo - A level of consciousness which comprises one of the seven planes in the density in the etheric world.

Low Magic - To use amulets, talismans, handed down rituals, chants and incantations as an aid to help the magician perform his or her psychic feats.

Lucifer - Satan, leader of the rebellious angels.

Magic - The art of producing illusions. (See conjuring, Black magic)

Magic Circle - An imaginary circle drawn with a pointed finger or magical item or a real circle made with substance.

Materialization - The appearance of spirits in material form.

Meditation - A disciplined mind technique for a set time to achieve a high state of consciousness.

Medium - A person who makes contact with discarnate or inhuman spirits on the astral plane.

Miracle - An occurrence caused by supernatural causes, that excites wonder, an effect or extraordinary event which surpasses all known human or natural causes.

Mystic - One who brings new knowledge of spiritual truths (proven or not) incorporates psychic skills and psychic healings with religion.

Necromancy - The practice of conjuring evil spirits.

Necronomicon - The book of the dead.

Numerology - The study of numbers in regard to a person's character and life plan.

Occult - Pertaining to the supernatural; that which is beyond the range of natural knowledge.

Old Soul - One who has been incarnated innumerable times.

Oracle - Any person or thing that serves as an agent of divine communication.

Ouija board - A board consisting of the letters of the alphabet, numbers 1-0, and words "yes", "no" and "goodbye" which is used as a tool for communicating with spirits.

Out of body experience - (See astral projection), can be done purposefully or unconsciously by a person.

Palmistry - Encompasses all phases of analyzing one's hands to tune into one's past and future.

Parapsychology - The scientific study of phenomena that natural laws cannot explain.

Pentagram - The magical diagram consisting of a five pointed star which is a representation of man. Considered by occultists to be the most potent means of conjuring spirits.

Phantomania - An occurrence in which the victim is held paralyzed while being subjected to preternatural attack.

Planchette - The indicator or pointer used in association with a Ouija board.

Poltergeist - From the German, meaning "noisy spirit". Term for a spirit which is associated with the movement of objects and general mischievous haunting activity.

Possession - The state in which a living person is controlled by a foreign, malignant entity.

Precognition - Knowledge of future events.

Premonition - A vision or warning of future events.

Preternatural - Associated with inhuman, demonic or diabolical spirits or forces.

Prophet - A human spokesman for an etheric world.

Psychic - Dealing with the ability to see, hear, feel and sense beyond the average human ability; A medium.

Psychic Attack - The transference of negative energy into a person to deliberately harm.

Psychic Cold - The cold sensation received when a spirit is present, usually having defined boundaries.

Psychic Photograph - Supernatural or preternatural Images appearing on a photograph.

Psychic Research - The study of psychic phenomena.

Psychokinesis (PK) - The movement of objects without the use of physical means, such as using the mind.

Psychometry - The ability to acquire knowledge of people, places or object by touching an object associated with it.

Regression - The activation of the subconscious mind to recall parts of the past.

Reiki - A type of healing in which the healer is a channel for universal force and energy.

Reincarnation - The belief that each person possesses a soul which is independent of the body and can be reborn into another body.

Relic - An item closely associated with a holy person or saint, usually a part of that persons body or clothing.

Religion - A belief in powers higher than one's self backed by faith rather than logic.

Remote Viewing - The term used when a person is able to "see" a remote object and explain it's characteristics and location without ever physically been to the particular location. Used heavily by the US Government, during the height of the Cold War, for spying.

Ritual - A prescribed event or a particular form or ceremony that is built up by tradition, and with it, a great amount of energy.

Ritual Magic - Proven processes and ceremonies used repeatedly .

Salt - Symbol of the element EARTH because it's a crystalline substance it can receive and hold etheric magnetism better than other substances. Has properties to ward off evil vibrations.

Satan - God's adversary, expelled from Heaven for rebelling against God.

Satanic - Pertaining to Satan.

Satanism - The Worship of Satan.

Scrying - To perceive psychic visions on clear, shiny surfaces that relate to the masses or to individual questions, surfaces from clear crystal, clear water, polished mirrors, are effective, Crystal Ball is most commonly used.

Séance - A group of dedicated persons and at least one well-grounded medium who sit in a blacked-out room to produce physical phenomena. Groups sit in a circular formation to keep

psychic energy concentrated in the center for easier manipulation by the etheric world intelligences.

Sect - A group of people who all believe, or who profess to believe, in the same basic principles of a religious nature.

Sensitive - A person who possesses psychic powers.

Seth - A very highly evolved Etheric world intelligence who spoke through Jane Roberts, bringing her new scientific knowledge about the reality of man and the universe. An energy personality essence no longer focused in physical reality.

Shaman - An individual capable of many psychic and mediumship skills, either a natural born characteristic or can be earned through many difficult initiations.

Smudging - To burn a special plant (usually Sage) in an area before a ceremony, a healing, or a lecture, which cleanses the atmosphere of any negativity.

Solar Plexus - Believed to be the Soul of man, the center of the body where one feels the emotions of the universe.

Sorcerer - A male who has made a pact with the devil in exchange for magic powers.

Sorceress - A female who has made a pact with the devil in exchange for magic powers.

Sorcery - The practice of black magic.

Spectre - A ghost (unrecognizable to the viewer)

Spell - A magical command or incantation during which period of time a person or object is held captive by a psychic for the benefit of the psychic.

Spirit - A collective word, the basic theme is always, "indestructible life".

Spiritualism - A science, philosophy, and religion using the doctrine of metaphysics, belief in the continuity of life after death and communication with this life for the advancement of civilization and personal growth.

Spiritualist - One who believes in the communication between this world and the invisible world, and who endeavors to mold his or her character and conduct in accordance with the highest teachings derived from such communion.

Sprite - A radiant, small nature spirit whose energy blends well with good deeds for earthlings, brings guidance, confidence, honor and security regarding money and opportunities, changes demensions to be recognized by earthlings.

ST. Michael - A lofty etheric world Angel who communicated with earthlings during the time of the Old Testament, his function was to be guardian over Israel. In the New Testament, he was the first of the seven Archangels and led the host against the Devil.

Stigmata - Marks on one's body resembling crucifixion wounds, bleeding from these points simulating the wounds of Jesus the Christ.

Succubus - A demon which seeks sexual intercourse with living men.

Supernatural - Activity caused by God or His angels, commonly referred to as to anything outside the bounds of natural laws.

Superstition - The unfounded believe that certain object, activities or rituals can be helpful or harmful.

Talisman - Drawings of various shapes and sizes which have specific purposes of good luck.

Tarot Cards - A pack of cards for the purpose of divination using symbolism contains seventy-eight cards forming a system of communication.

Telekinesis - Telepathic sounds and noises projected to people.

Telepathy - Psychic communication between individuals.

Teleportation - Objects moved by supernatural forces.

Torah - A sacred book of teachings, an inclusive term that refers to all that God has revealed about Himself, history of the Jewish people, and the conduct that is required of them.

Trance - An altered state of consciousness brought about by the willing collaboration between the medium and the etheric world intelligence for the purpose of physical phenomena.

Transcendence - A temporary, spontaneous experience in which the life force leaves the physical body to bypass the experience of physical pain, the life force hovers close to the physical body.

Troll - A nature spirit that inhabits the mountains and has charge of their functions, shows itself as a dwarf or a giant, capable of shape-shifting, can be helpful or capricious and hostile.

Voodoo - Magical practice considered to be a form of black magic but also is considered as a religion to some.

Walk-In - Coined by Ruth Montgomery, a superior spirit from the sixth plane who enters an adult physical body on earth and uses it while helping the planet in trying times.

Whammy - Casting a spell on another by staring intently, using direct eye contact, and influencing thoughts and behavior.

Warlock - A male witch.

Werewolf - A person who has been transformed into or having assimilated wolf-like characteristics.

White Witch - A witch whose practice in witchcraft is solely for the purpose of good.

Wicca - An ancient witchcraft religion which honor the gods of nature. Wicca means "wise one".

Witch - A woman who practices witchcraft.

Witchcraft - The practice of performing acts with the aid of a spirit.

Adept - An individual that has studied, and has become skilled in magic.

Altar - A raised structure used during rituals and to cast spells. This is also where tools are kept and offering are made.

Amulet - A charm, usually worn around the neck, to provide luck or to ward off evil.

Apparition - A ghostly figure.

Astral Projection - When the conscious mind leaves the physical body and moves into the astral body.

Astrology - The study of celestial bodies and how they affect humanity.

Athame - a personal knife, usually made of steel that is double bladed with a black handle. The double edge symbolizes that power works both ways. Light and Dark. The handle is black because black absorbs power. This knife it not used for cutting, it is used only to direct power.

Balefire - A large outdoor fire, traditionally burned on Yule, Beltane, and Midsummer.

Beltane - Feast celebrating the symbolic union of the God and Goddess.

Besom - A Broom made from a bundle of twigs. This is a symbol of water.

Black Magic - The practice of magic for evil purposes.

Book of Shadows - A handwritten book of rituals, spells, and magical lore.

Burning Times - A time during the middle ages when large numbers of people were executed for supposedly practicing witchcraft.

Cauldron - A large iron vessel used for boiling. It is a tool for transformation, and when filled with water, scrying.

Cense - To purify with incense

Chalice - A goblet which represents water, or wine.

Clairaudience - A psychic ability in which individuals can hear sounds and voices not heard by others.

Clairvoyance - A psychic ability to see objects, persons, places, and events that should normally not be perceived by the senses.

Conjuring - Calling preternatural forces using ceremonial black magic.

Coven - An assembly of 13 witches.

Covenstead - Home of a coven

Curse - Using preternatural forces to cause harm.

Demon - An evil supernatural being.

Doppelganger - A ghostly twin.

Earthbound - A spirit that is confined to the earthly realm.

Elemental - A spirit that is bound to nature through earth, wind, water, and fire.

Entity - Any spiritual being that exists outside the body.

Esbat - A Wiccan/Pagan ritual that usually takes place during the full moon.

Evocation - Summoning spirits or other non-physical entities to appear by using the power to memory and imagination.

Exorcism - The removal of a spirit by using a religious ceremony.

Exorcist - The one who conducts the exorcism.

Familiar - A spirit who takes the form of an animal and takes companionship with a witch.

Garrote - A form of execution that was once performed in Spain. An iron collar is placed around the neck and is tightened until the neck is broken.

Ghost - Spirit of the dead.

Grimoire - A black magic manual used for invoking demonic spirits.

Grounding - Shutting down psychic awareness and reorienting the conscious mind to the material world.

Human Sacrifice - Ceremonial killing of a human being as an offering when using black magic.

Hydromancy - The divination by water or other liquid. Visions can be seen by observing the ebb and flow of tides.

Incarnate - Being of physical body.

Incubus - An evil spirit that is said to attack persons in the night when they are asleep.

Levitation - The raising up of a body or object without the use of physical means.

Magic - The use of charms, spells, or rituals to produce supernatural effects.

Magick - Movement of natural energy to create change.

Medium - A person with the ability to make contact with spirits on the astral plane.

Natural Magick - Using personal power with the earth's power to cause a positive change.

Necromancy - The practice of communicating with the dead to predict future events. Black Magic.

Necronomicon - The Book of the Dead.

Occult - Of, or relating to supernatural influences and phenomena.

Oneiroscopy - The interpretation of dreams.

Poltergeist - German for "noisy ghost" associated with movement of objects and other mischievous acts.

Possession - When a living person is dominated and controlled by evil entities.

Premonition - a vision of the future or future events.

Preternatural - Beyond or different from what is natural, or according to the regular course of things, but not clearly supernatural or miraculous.

Pentacle - Five pointed star having magical and mystical significance.

Psychic - One that has the ability to see, hear, feel or sense more than the average human

Psychic Awareness - When information from the psychic mind is available to the conscious mind.

Psychic Mind - The unconscious mind where we receive psychic impulses.

Psychokinesis - The movement of objects without the use of physical means. Mind power

Pyromancy - Divination by fire.

Reincarnation - Rebirth of a soul into a new body.

Relic - An item cherished for its age and historic interest.

Ritual - A Ceremony used to produce specific results through movement and manipulation of objects and inner processes.

Sea Witch - A witch who's interests lie in controlling the seas.

Shaman - A member of a tribal society that is a medium between the visible and invisible world

that also practices magic for purpose of good.

Sorcerer - A male that has made a pact with the devil in exchange for magical powers.

Sorceress - A female that has made a pact with the devil in exchange for magical powers.

Sorcery - The practice of black magic.

Scrying - A method used to still the conscious mind and contact the psychic mind to create psychic awareness. This is done by gazing at an object such as water, or flames.

Specter - A ghost

Spell - Magical ritual using a spoken chant.

Succubus - A demon in the form of a female that attacks men in their sleep.

Supernatural - Relating to things that exist outside of the natural world.

Talisman - An object that is marked with magical signs, and gives the individual that has it supernatural powers or protection.

Telekinesis - The movement of objects by using occult powers.

Telepathy - Communicating without the use of senses.

Visualization - The process of forming mental images to direct personal power and other energies during magic.

Warlock - A male witch

Werewolf - a person that undergoes a transformation to become a wolf like creature.

White Witch - A witch who practices magic for the purpose of good, and nothing else.

Wicca - An ancient witchcraft religion. Followers worship nature through reverence of the god and goddess.

Witch - A woman that practices witchcraft.

Witchcraft - Practicing acts with the aid of spirits. Magic.

Zombie - An animated corpse with supernatural powers.

Advent A period of four weeks prior to Christmas. It has a twofold theme: preparing for the Second Coming of Christ and preparing for the celebration of the birth of Jesus.

Candidate One who is already baptized in another Christian faith and who now is preparing to be received into the full communion of the Catholic Church. At the time of full reception, he or she will make a profession of faith, be confirmed, and receive Eucharist.

Catechumen One who is not baptized and is preparing for full initiation at the Easter Vigil through baptism, confirmation, and Eucharist.

Catechumenate Second period of the order of Christian initiation of adults which involves intense preparation in word, worship, community life, and apostolic works.

Cycle A, B, C The three year cycle of liturgical readings: A Cycle - Matthew; B Cycle - Mark; C Cycle - Luke. All three cycles incorporate John.

Easter Season A period of seven weeks beginning with Easter Sunday and ending with the feast of Pentecost.

Elect The name given to catechumens who celebrate the Rite of Election on the first Sunday of Lent signifying their being chosen for the initiation sacraments.

Evangelization The task of the Church during the pre-catechumenate which involves the inviting, the welcoming, the witness, the sharing of faith, and the proclamation of the gospel to inquirers/candidates.

Inquirers Those who participate in the pre-catechumenate of a parish. . They are "inquiring" into the Christianity in the Catholic Tradition.

Lectionary The book used in liturgical celebrations that contains all the scripture readings of the liturgical year.

Lent A six week period extending from Ash Wednesday to sundown on Holy Thursday. It is a retreat time in preparation for the Easter Triduum.

Liturgical Year The seasons and cycles of the Christian year. It is the instrument and means for leading God's people along the way to the Lord. The readings introduce and invite us into the Paschal Mystery. It includes: Christmas Cycle (the first Sunday of Advent through the Baptism of the Lord), Easter Cycle (Ash Wednesday through Pentecost), and Ordinary Time.

Minor Rites Rites during he period of the catechumenate which include exorcisms, blessings, and anointings.

Mystagogy The final period of the order of Christian initiation of adults which is from Easter to Pentecost. The National Statutes for implementation in the USA also recommend and extended mystagogy for one year.

National Statutes Particular law for the implementation of the order of Christian initiation of adults in the United States presented by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB).

Neophyte One who is initiated at the Easter Vigil. The term comes from the Greek word meaning new plant, as in a new sprout on a limb/branch.

Ninety Days Occasionally used to mean the combination of the Period of Purification and Enlightenment, and the Period of Mystagogy which corresponds with Lent (40 days) and the Easter Season (50 days).

Order of Christian Initiation of Adults This is the official collection of rites of the Roman Catholic Church for initiation of adults (including children of catechetical age), and the reception of baptized candidates.

Ordinary Time The cycle within the liturgical year that is outside the liturgical seasons (Advent, Lent, Easter). This time provides us with an opportunity to reflect on the meaning of God's gift to us in Christ, our attitudes, our prayer life, and our service to others.

Pre-Catechumenate The first period of the order of Christian initiation of adults which is the initial introduction of an inquirer into the Christian way of life in the Catholic Tradition. It is also the period of evangelization on the part of the Church.

Presentations During the period of purification and enlightenment, the elect are presented with the Creed and the Lord's Prayer through special rites. Both presentations can be anticipated during the period of the catechumenate when it is more convenient.

Purification and Enlightenment This the third period of the order of Christian initiation of adults which usually coincides with the Lenten season. It is the final period of preparation for initiation at the Easter Vigil.

RCIA Acronym for Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults for use in scholarly reference to identify the paragraph. The term RCIA is discouraged for popular usage.

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults English title of *Ordo initiationis christianae adultorum*. The latest English translation edition was published in 1985.

Rite of Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens The bridge between the pre-catechumenate and the catechumenate for the unbaptized.

Rite of Welcome The bridge between the inquiry period and the period of pastoral formation that coincides with the catechumenate. It is for those already baptized.

Rite of Election Presided over by the Bishop, the rite inaugurates the final period of preparation before initiation. It is the bridge between the catechumenate, and purification and enlightenment.

Rite of Call to Continuing Conversion Coincides with rite of Election, but is the rite for candidates, the already baptized.

Rite of Scrutiny Three rites of exorcism for the Elect during Lent.

Rite, Penitential Celebration for candidates, similar to the rite of scrutiny.

Rite of the Sacraments of Initiation Rites usually celebrated at the Easter Vigil which are Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist.

Sunday The first day in the Christian liturgical week, the original feast day, the heart of the calendar, the basis and nucleus of the liturgical year.

The Triduum The three days of the celebration of Easter which begins with sundown on Holy Thursday evening and ends with evening prayer on Easter Sunday evening. It includes the liturgies of Holy Thursday, Good Friday, the Easter Vigil, and Easter Sunday.

Book of the elect: The book the Catechumens for election are to sign at the Rite of Sending in their parish, this book is presented to the bishop at the Rite of Election on the first Sunday of Lent, from there they are sent to the Easter sacraments.

Candidate: Generally anyone preparing to become a Catholic, but the term is often used more specifically for a person who is baptized in another Christian tradition, who is preparing for reception into the full communion of the Roman Catholic Church.

Canon law: The body of law that governs church practice and protects the rights and privileges of individuals and community.

Catechesis: The instruction and spiritual formation of the catechumens, neophytes and candidates.

Catechumen: An unbaptized person who is seeking initiation into the church and who has been accepted into the order of catechumens.

Catechumenate: The process by which the Catholic church brings unbaptized children and adults to Christian initiation. Also, the period of time during which an unbaptized person prepares for Christian initiation.

Chrism: A combination of oil and sweet balsam or perfume that is mixed and consecrated by the bishop and used to anoint newly baptized people and newly ordained priests and bishops. Chrism is also used in the consecration of churches and altars.

Doctrine: The formal teachings of the church.

Elect: Catechumens who have been found ready by the community of faith to take part in the next celebration of the sacraments of initiation.

Election: The process of selecting those catechumens who are considered ready to take part in the next celebration of the sacraments of initiation. The celebration of the Rite of Election takes place the first Sunday of Lent. The bishop declares in the name of the church that particular catechumens are ready and chosen for the sacraments at Easter. The Book of the Elect is presented to the bishop at this celebration.

Enlightenment: The period of Lent during which the elect are involved in the final stage of preparation for celebrating the rites of initiation. (may also be called illumination and purification).

Enrollment: The rite of inscribing into the Book of the Elect the names of those catechumens to be elected to take part in the next celebration of the sacraments of initiation. (usually done at the Rite of Sending in the parish, or can be done at the Rite of Election in some diocese, ours has the Rite of Sending).

Ephphetha: The rite in which the presider touches the ears and the mouth of the elect and prays that they be open to hear and proclaim the word of God in faith. (it may be celebrated as part of the preparation rites on Holy Saturday.)

Evangelization: The activity by which the church proclaims the gospel in word and in deed. (Also the period in which the Inquirers are prepared for the catechumenate).

Fasting: A form of sacrifice by which faithful Christians join themselves with the suffering and death of Jesus by foregoing food for a specific period of time. On Ash Wednesday and on Good Friday , Catholics are obliged to fast in a modified way. Many Christians fast from Holy Thursday evening to after the Easter Vigil in anticipation of the Lord's resurrection.

Godparent(s) : This is the person who will accompany the catechumen on his/her journey through the rites and periods of the catechumenate through the time of mystagogy (the time after Easter) .This person is selected by the catechumen with the approval of the parish priest.

Illumination: see enlightenment

Immersion: Baptism in which the person is partially or entirely submerged in the baptismal waters.

Infusion: Baptism by pouring water over the head of the person.

Initiation: The process by which a person enters the faith life of the church. The process extends from the person's first inquiry through the completion of mystagogy.

Inquirers: Persons who sincerely seek to learn about the faith of the church.

Lectionary: A book containing the assigned scripture readings for the celebration of the eucharist and the other sacraments.

Mystagogy (Mystagogia) : The period of time following initiation, usually the Easter season, which centers on catechesis in the meaning and experience of the mysteries of baptismal faith.

Neophyte: A newly baptized person who is in the final period of Christian initiation, mystagogy.

Oil of Catechumens: The blessed oil used in anointing catechumens as a sign of their need for and God's offer of strength in overcoming all opposition to the faith they will profess throughout their lives.

Pascal Triduum: The three days from Holy Thursday evening through Easter Sunday during which Christians celebrate the passover of Israel from slavery to freedom, the passover of Jesus Christ from death to life, our own passover from sin to grace and the world's passover from darkness to light.

Periods: Times of growth in the initiation process: (1) Inquiry or precatechumenate : (2) catechumenate : (3) purification and enlightenment : (4) mystagogy

Precatechumenate (Pre-cat) : The period of inquiry prior to acceptance into the order of catechumens; the time of initial evangelization.

Presentations : The rites during the period of purification and enlightenment through which the church passes on to the elect the Creed and the Lord's prayer, the cherished documents of the church, and the traditions they represent: the way Christians believe and the way Christians pray.

Purification : see enlightenment

Scrutinies : Rites celebrated with the elect, usually at the Sunday liturgy on the 3rd, 4th, and 5th Sundays of Lent. Petitioning for the spirit of repentance, an understanding of sin and the experience of the true freedom of the children of God.

Sponsors : Also called Parish companions, persons (from this parish) who accompany the inquirers when they seek acceptance into the order of catechumens and who remain with them as companions during the catechumenate until the rite of election. (the candidate may choose to have this person as their sponsor at the Easter services also).

Stages : see periods

absolution the sacrament of forgiveness in which the bond between a believer and God is repaired through the contrition of the believer and Christ by the liturgical action of a priest

acolyte one of the Minor Orders of the church, also any server at Mass

Adeste Fideles the Latin name of the song, "Oh Come All Ye Faithful" commonly sung at Mass immediately following the consecration

adoration an act of worship, usually involving deep feelings of love

advent a season of preparation for Christmas, beginning with the Sunday nearest November 20 (feast of the apostle Andrew).

alb An ankle-length white gown worn under other vestments at Mass. from the Latin word meaning "white"

alleluia Exclamation of praise. from the Hebrew phrase meaning "praise Yahweh."

altar the table or platform used at Mass. from the Latin word meaning "high" or "raised"

ambry a pantry or niche for storing consecrated oils. from the Old English word meaning "place for safekeeping"

amen an interjection that expresses approval. from the Hebrew word meaning "verily"

antimensium Latinized spelling of antiminsion

antiminsion a consecrated piece of cloth with the seven jewels of the altar sewn into the cloth, used when the altar has no altar stone. from the Greek phrase that means "instead of a table."

antiphon A short text that is chanted before and after a psalm

apostle a strong supporter, especially one of the original 12 followers of Jesus. from the Greek word for messenger.

apostolic succession the authority by which all Liberal Catholic priests work as ministers of the sacraments. Priests in the Liberal Catholic Church are direct heirs of the original apostles through an unbroken chain of ordinations from their time to ours.

archbishop an honorary rank given to those bishops, such as the Presiding Bishop and regional bishops, whose area of responsibility is larger than usual.

asperger an aspergillum

asperges At Mass, the ritual cleansing of the altar and church with holy water (from the first word of Psalm 121 in Latin, meaning "Thou shalt sprinkle me")

aspergillum PL. aspergilla. An instrument used to sprinkle holy water, especially at Mass. The aspergillum can be made of corn straw, or a tube with a perforated metal reservoir at one end. Also asperger.

auricular relating to the sense of hearing, as in an auricular confession.

baptismal font a basin used in the sacrament of baptism

benediction a blessing or invocation, usually at the end of a liturgy, meeting, or event. from two Latin words that mean "good speech"

benediction veil another name for humeral veil

bishop a high-ranking cleric in the Roman Catholic Church. Two sacraments -- ordination, confirmation -- are reserved to bishop alone.

bishop commissary a bishop given a special assignment.

bishopric a diocese. from the Old English word meaning realm.

Blessed Sacrament the Eucharist, also a host (bread) consecrated during the Eucharist

Book of Gospels a large, sometimes ornate book, containing the gospel readings used at Mass

brazier A metal pan for holding burning charcoal and incense. from the Greek word for brass. also brasier.

bread the unleavened wafer used at Mass. by tradition, this bread contains only flour and water.

breaking of the bread at Mass, the moment when the priest breaks a consecrated Host to symbolize the spread of Christ's love throughout the world. The term is sometimes used to mean the entire service of the Eucharist. (cf., 1 Corinthians 10:16) The actual breaking of bread is called The Fraction. In the early church, it occurred before the consecration.

brother the salutation used in addressing a monk or friar, usually only those who are not priests.

brother Any member of a religious community, a monk, a friar.

canon a religious law. also the official list of books included in the Bible. from the Latin word for rule

canon law the rules governing the behavior and actions of the Liberal Catholic Church and its clergy

canticle a song or chant. from the Latin word meaning sing.

cantor one who leads the singing in a synagogue or church

cassock a long, black garment worn by altar servers under the surplice; also worn by diocesan priests (black); monsignors (rose); bishops (violet), cardinals (red), and the Pope (white).

catechesis oral instruction. pl. catecheses.

catechumen one who is being instructed in the principles of Christianity

cathedra the bishop's official chair. from the Greek word for seat. pl. cathedrae

cathedral the bishop's home church, literally the church containing the bishop's throne

catholic whole, universal

celebrant the person who officiates at a ritual

censing To cleanse using incense

chalice the cup used to hold the wine that becomes the Blood of Christ at Mass

chalice veil a square piece of cloth used to cover the chalice when it is not being used, often the same material (or at least the same color) as the priest's vestments

chancel rail A dividing barrier or screen that divides the sanctuary of a church from its nave. The congregation comes to the chancel rail for communion.

charism a gift received miraculously from the Holy Spirit. from the Greek word meaning a divine gift or favor.

charismatic relating to someone who has received one or more "gifts of the Holy Spirit" (e.g., healing, prophecy, gift of tongues)

chasuble a long sleeveless vestment similar in shape to a poncho worn by a priest while saying Mass.

chrism a blend of oil and balsam that is consecrated by a bishop on Maundy Thursday and distributed to priest for use in baptisms and healing services. Bishops also use oils at confirmations and ordinations. A balsam is a process that results in a kind of sludge. In the Liberal Catholic Church, the bishop uses powdered resin of frankincense and benzoin as balsam. from the Greek word for anoint.

christ from the Greek word meaning "the anointed one"

church a building used for Christian worship, also the congregation as a group

ciborium a covered receptacle used for keeping consecrated hosts, also a large vaulted covering over a tabernacle. from the Egyptian word for cup.

cincture a girdle or belt, often made of rope

clergy the group of people who have received Holy Orders. from the Latin word meaning clerk.

cloister a secluded and quiet place, especially associated with a monastery. from a Latin word meaning closed

collect At Mass, several short prayers said just before the day's

color, liturgical the hue caused by dye in vestment. The Liberal Catholic Church uses the following colors for various things: white, green, purple, red, rose, and gold.

common the part of a liturgy -- especially Mass -- that is generic and does not change from day to day

communio a communion prayer

communion of saints a teaching of the church taken from the Nicene Creed that there is an essential spiritual oneness of all believers

complin bedtime prayers and readings

confession the acknowledgment of one's sins, especially told to a priest in a one-to-one auricular setting.

confirmation the sacrament by which a baptized person is imprinted with the mark of the Holy Spirit by a bishop

confiteor At Mass, the confession of sins (from the Latin word meaning "I confess")

consecration the setting aside or setting apart something or someone for the worship of God.

contemplation the deepest form of meditation on spiritual matters

contemplative a person who devotes his or her life to contemplation

convent a building or community of religious, especially nuns, who share one or more vows and live under the guidance of a superior. from a Latin word meaning "that which is assembled."

cope a floor length cape used by priests and bishops at some rituals (e.g., solemn benediction)

corporal a square piece of linen placed in the center of the altar during Mass. The words of consecration are spoken with the bread and wine sitting on the corporal. from the Latin word for body.

corpus body, usually referring to the body of Christ

credence table a small table on the epistle side of the altar used for holding Mass implements when they are not needed

credo (see Creed) Credo is the Latin word meaning "I believe" creed

creed a statement of beliefs. At Mass, one of several creeds is said in unison by the congregation.

crozier a long staff with a shepherd's hook at one end, carried by bishops, archbishops, and abbots at liturgical events. from a German word meaning cross.

cross an upright plank with a transverse plank used to execute Jesus

cross bearer one who carries a cross or crucifix into and out of a church

cross, risen a style of crucifix where the hands of Jesus are free and lifted above the transverse plank of the cross

crozier a variant of crozier (c.v.)

crucifix a cross containing a corpus, depicting the executed body of Jesus

crucify to kill using a cross

cruet a small vessel, usually made of glass with a stopper, used to hold water or wine before they are used at Mass

cult a way of expressing religious reverence, or individuals who share some common belief. In current usage, cult also refers to an obsessive religious group, especially one you disagree with. from the Latin word meaning worship.

dalmatic a outer vestment with squared corners worn by a deacon, especially at the celebration of Mass. from an old French term meaning white wool from Dalmatia.

deacon a cleric ranking just below a priest. There are actually two kinds of deacons: transitional (one who hopes to be ordained a priest), and permanent (one whose calling is that of a deacon with no vocation to become a priest).

dean the administrator of a seminary

diaconate the group of deacons, the rank held by a deacon

diocesan priest a priest in a church who is not a member of a religious order

diocese a district of church under the guidance and jurisdiction of a bishop

disciple a follower, especially one of the original followers of Jesus. from the Latin word for pupil.

doorkeeper one of the Minor Orders held by a seminarian who is still in training

doxology an expression or short hymn of praise. from a Greek word meaning praise.

ecclesiastical pertaining to or appropriate for use in a church

elevation the ritualistic raising of a consecrated element.

episcopal pertaining to a bishop

epistle one of the letters included in the New Testament. The following books are the epistles in the canon in use: Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, and Jude. from the Greek word meaning to send.

epistle side the side of the sanctuary from which the epistle is read. Standing in the nave and looking at an altar, the epistle side is on the right.

eschatology teachings, beliefs, and doctrines concerning the end of times

eucharist the central sacrament of the church -- instituted by the Master Jesus at the last supper with His earthly followers -- characterized by the transubstantiation (change) of bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ. from the Greek word for grace and thanksgiving.

Eucharistic Prayer at Mass, the long prayer that results in the consecration of bread and wine as the Body and Blood of Christ.

evangelical pertaining to one of the four gospels in the Bible: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Also refers to a Christian who considers the printed Bible to be the supreme authority for religion.

evangelism militant zeal, a zealot

evangelist any of the authors of the four gospels, also a Protestant preacher or missionary.

father the salutation used in addressing priest

feast a festival honoring God or a saint

flagon a flask or oversized cruet

fraction the ritual breaking of bread during Mass

friar a member of an order of brothers and sisters who continue to live in the world, a kind of monk without a monastery. from the Latin word for brother.

gaudete the third Sunday in advent, one of the two days of the year where the liturgical is rose

gloria At Mass, the song that begins "Glory be to God in the highest"

God the supreme being, expressed in the Holy Trinity

gospel any of the first four books of the New Testament: Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John. from an Old English phrase meaning good news.

gospel side the side of the sanctuary from which the gospel is read. Standing in the nave and looking at an altar, the epistle side is on the left.

grace a spiritual gift

gradual at Mass, a short verse or song between the reading of the epistle and the gospel.

hierarchy a chain of command

holiday a holy day

Holy Orders the sacrament of ordination. In the Liberal Catholic Church, there are ranks or sequence of orders: Minor Orders (cleric, acolyte, exorcist, reader, doorkeeper), Transitional (subdeacon), and Major Orders (deacon, priest, bishop)

homily A short lesson delivered at Mass after the gospel. Also called the sermon.

host the consecrated bread of the Eucharist

humeral veil a long cloth, usually silk, worn over the shoulder, when holding some liturgical vessels such as a monstrance. from the Latin word for shoulder.

hymn a song of praise. from the Greek word for song.

hymnal a book containing songs used during church liturgies

IHS a monogram for Jesus, composed using the first 3 letters of "Jesus" in Greek. Also an abbreviation for the Latin phrase "in hoc signo" (by this sign) a sign of power used by the Roman emperor Constantine who believed the symbol of Christ would help him win battles.

incense an aromatic resin, wood, or other organic burned at Mass and other liturgies. The aroma from incense changes the energy in a room, and the rising of its smoke symbolizes the elevation of our minds to God.

introit At Mass, the entrance prayers or song. from the Latin word meaning "enter"

invocabit obs., the first Sunday of Lent

invocation a prayer asking for God's help. At Mass, the priest says an invocation at the start of Mass.

Jesus The proper name of the Son of God, on whose being the religions of Christianity are based. The word is a Greek version of the Hebrew name Joshua.

jewel one of seven stones corresponding to the Seven Rays that are used in Liberal Catholic altar stones, altar candles, and pectoral crosses. The jewels are diamond/quartz, sapphire, emerald,

jasper, topaz, ruby, and amethyst. In practice, the actual "jewel" is rarely more than a grain or particle of the stone.

kyrie At Mass, a short statement that means "Lord, pour forth Thy blessings" that is repeated in the original Greek.

lauds morning prayers and readings

lavabo the part of Mass in which the priest washes his fingers before consecrating the bread and wine. from the Latin word meaning "I wash."

lavabo towel a small finger towel used to dry the priest's fingers after the Lavabo

lay ministries any service to the church done by non-clergy

layman any person (male or female) who is not clergy

lectern a stand used to hold books or papers while the reader stands

lectionary a book containing the readings used at Mass. The lectionary usually (but not always) contains reading for an entire year, and the word usually (but not always) applies to a single book containing both the epistle and gospel readings.

liberal of or pertaining to being free

liturgical relating to liturgy

liturgy a prescribed form used in worship

Lord's Prayer the way Jesus taught his followers to pray, from Matthew 6:9-13. The Global Library has dozens of translations of this prayer, including one translated to English directly from the original Peshita Syriac-Aramaic: <http://www.Global.org/pub/LordsPrayer.asp>

luna a golden holder for a single consecrated host, usually placed inside a monstrance for adoration or solemn benediction

laetare the fourth Sunday of Lent, one of the two days of the year where the liturgical is rose

maniple a small stole-like band hung from the wrist by priests saying Mass. from an Indo-European word meaning "hand"

Mary Magdalene considered by many to be the "apostle's apostle" and by some as the consort of Jesus

Mary, Virgin the mother of Jesus

master of ceremonies the person acting as a kind of stage manager in a formal liturgy

matins prayers and readings said overnight, traditionally at 2:00am

matrimony the sacramental joining of two people into a holy union. from an Old French term meaning to "create a matron," presumably changing a virgin into a mother.

minister one who is the authorized leader of a liturgy or some other church service

miracle an event or episode that cannot be explained in ordinary human or physical terms, an act of God. from the Indo-European word meaning "wonderful"

missal a book with the words and rubrics of a liturgy, usually a large book used by the celebrant. from a Middle Age Latin version of the word "Mass"

missalette a small book with the words of a liturgy intended to be held in ones hand, usually the congregation version of a larger missal

miter a tall, pointed headdress worn by bishops and archbishops at solemn occasions. from the Greek word used to describe the head gear of a Jewish high priest.

mitre British spelling of miter

monastery a community of persons -- monks or nuns -- living a life of prayer, secluded from the mundane world. from the Greek word meaning "live alone"

monk a man who is a member of a community living in a monastery. from the Greek word for "single"

monstrance a receptacle for containing a large consecrated Host. The host is typically contained with a luna(c.v.), which is then fastened inside the monstrance. from the Greek word for show. synonym ostensorium (c.v.).

munda cor meum At Mass, a prayer said by the priest before he reads the gospel N

nave the part of the church were the people sit during services

New Testament the 27 books that makeup the Christian scripture. The term relates to the covenant of God and the people of the earth. Before the term was coined (roughly in the year 280ce), the writings of the church were called "the Gospel and the Apostle" (with the apostle being Paul).

none late afternoon prayers and readings

nun a woman who is a vowed member of a religious order

oblation gifts (money, bread, wine) offered during Mass

oculi obs., the third Sunday of Lent

offertorium at Mass, the initial blessing of bread and wine, prior to consecration

Office, Divine the book of prayers said daily by the faithful

Old Testament the Jewish scripture consisting of 46 books that relate the history, beliefs, customs, and liturgy used by the ancient Jews.. The term relates to a covenant between God and Abraham (Genesis 11:26 to 25:18)

orate fratres An invitation to pray at the beginning of the Prayer of Consecration at Mass. from the Latin phrase mean "Pray, brothers..."

ordain to perform the sacrament of Holy Orders. Only a bishop has the authority to ordain others.

ordinary a bishop who has jurisdiction over a diocese

ostensorium a Latinized word for monstrance (c.v.)

Palm Sunday the Sunday before Easter

parish the geographical area served by a church

parish council an administrative body in a church

Passion Sunday the fifth Sunday of Lent

pastor the chief priest in a church

paten a plate of gold for holding the host at Mass.

pater noster the first two words of the Lord's Prayer in Latin ("Our Father")

peace, salutation of at Mass, a greeting

pectoral cross a large cross suspended over the neck by a chain that is worn by a bishop. The pectoral cross is traditionally adorned with seven jewels, corresponding to the jewels embedded in the altar.

post-communio prayers said after communion

prayer a conversation or petition to God, made individually or by a group of people or by the church as a whole

prayers of intent At Mass, the prayers for the local government, for the church, for those in trouble or sickness, and for the dearly departed

preface At mass, words that introduce the prayer of consecration. Feast days typically have a "proper preface," meaning some or all of the words change from day to day.

prime prayers and readings, traditionally said at 6:00am

procession the solemn entrance at the start of a ritual

processional cross a cross or crucifix carried in solemn processions and recessionals.

proper the part of a liturgy -- especially Mass -- that is specific to a feast day

proselytize to convert someone from one belief to another

province a territory, e.g., the "American Province" refers to the Liberal Catholic Church in North America.

purificator a cloth of linen used to clean the inside of the chalice at Mass

quadragesima the 40 days of Lent

quinquagesima the Sunday before Ash Wednesday

rays, seven one description of the emanation of God's presence on earth, consisting of strength, wisdom, adaptability/tact, beauty/harmony, science, devotion, and ordered service.

reader anyone who reads the epistle at Mass, also one of the ranks of Holy Orders

relic an object associated with a saint or the crucifixion, especially a tiny piece of a saint's body

religion a set of beliefs and/or reference for a supernatural power

religious priest a priest who is the member of an religious order or monastery, not a diocesan priest

reminiscere obs., the second Sunday of Lent

retreat a period of withdrawal, meditation, study, prayer, and contemplation for an individual or group

rite any liturgical practice. from the Sanskrit word for stream or river.

rosary a set of "prayer beads" used to mark time in meditation

rubrics directions in how to perform a ritual, a kind of liturgical choreography. rubrics are included in missals used by the priest, often printed in red to set the rubric apart from the text that is spoken. from the Latin for red. S

sacrament any of the seven rites that were instituted by Christ which impart grace on an individual or group. The rites are baptism, confirmation, eucharist, absolution, matrimony, ordination, and healing.

Sacrament, Blessed (see Eucharist)

sacramental a personal or group ritual of a religious nature, other than the seven sacraments.

sacramentary a large book containing the words and rubrics of the sacraments, typically used by a priest while performing the sacraments

sacristy a room in the church used to store religious articles and vestment (a vestry), and one used by ministers for dressing in vestments or preparing for rituals

sacristy bells bells that signal the start of a religious service, such as Mass. These bells were traditionally hung near the door leading to the sacristy.

sanctuary The area of a church that contains the altar.

sanctus the song that begins "Holy, Holy, Holy" (from the Latin word for "holy")

sanctus bells The bells rung at each "Holy" in the Sanctus song and rung again at the consecration of both bread and wine

see a diocese

seminary a training school for clerics

septuagesima the ninth Sunday before Easter, which is three Sundays before the start of Lent

sermon a short lesson delivered at Mass after the gospel. Also called the homily.

sext noontime prayers and readings

shrine any place used in the veneration of a saint

sign of the cross the invocation that consists of touching the forehead while saying "In the name of the Father", touching the heart while saying "and of the Son", touching the left shoulder while saying "and of the Holy Ghost", and finally touching the right shoulder while saying "Amen."

sister the salutation used in addressing a nun

solemn benediction ritual adoration of the blessed sacrament, including a blessing done by a priest while holding a monstrance (c.v.) with its host.

sprinkler an asperger

stations of the cross 14 or 15 drawings or locations (usually inside a church) that let worshipers follow the milestones of Christ's journey on the day of his crucifixion.

stole a long band worn over the neck that denotes the rank of a cleric. A deacon wears a stole over the left shoulder, bound on the right side. A priest wears a stole crossed in front. A bishop wears a stole that is allowed to drape freely.

subdeacon a rank of cleric that is between the Minor Orders and the Major Orders.

surplice a loose white gown that is worn over cassocks by servers and ministers during church occasions.

sursum corda At Mass an interchange between the priest and congregation that begins "Lift up your hearts"

synod an assembly of church officials. In the Liberal Catholic Church, there is no higher earthly authority than a worldwide synod of bishops. Synods can also be called for all the priests of a diocese or region.

tabernacle a locked case on an altar for storing consecrated hosts. The hosts -- consecrated only during Mass -- are reserved for veneration and for use in taking communion to the sick.

terce late-morning prayers and readings

theology the study of God, religious study

transubstantiation the conversion of the essence of bread into the Body of Christ, and the conversion of the essence of wine into the Blood of Christ. This is a sacramental act performed by a priest during Mass. After the conversion, the "incidentals" or "accidents" (i.e., the appearance and taste) of the bread and wine are unchanged, but the essence has been permanently altered.

tunicle a vestment, similar to a dalmatic, that is worn by a subdeacon at some services

veneration deep respect and reverence. We venerate the cross, but we do not worship it.

versicle a short sentence that is spoken by the priest, followed by another sentence spoken or sung by the congregation

vespers evening prayers and readings

vestment liturgical garments

vestry see Parish Council

vicar the designated representative of a bishop

vimpa veil a long cloth worn over the shoulders by an altar server while carrying a bishop's crosier

vow a solemn promise. "Perpetual vows" are those which last for the rest of one's life.

washing of hands see lavabo

worship reverent love, devotion, and ceremonies directed toward or in praise of God.

zucchetto the skull cap worn by bishops

Agent – A living person who is the focus of poltergeist activity.

Amulet - An object that is thought to bring good luck or have the power to protect from ghosts or spirits and ward off evil.

Apparition - a spectral image of a person that materializes even though a physical body is not present.

Apport – A physical object that can materialize and appear at will in the presence of a medium.

Asport – A physical object that a spirit teleports to another location or makes disappear.

Astral Body – The body that a person occupies during an out-of-body experience.

Astral Plane – A world that is believed to exist above our physical world.

Astral Projection – The intentional act of having the spirit leave the body, whereas an out-of-body experience will happen involuntarily. (See out of body experience).

Astrology - The theory and practice of the positions and aspects of celestial bodies in the belief that they have an influence on the course of natural earthly occurrences and human affairs.

Aura – An invisible emanation of light that seems to surround a person or thing which is often thought to reflect a person's personality.

Automatic Writing – This method of obtaining information from disembodied spirits is used by mediums in which the spirit takes control over the medium causing them to translate unconscious information on paper without being aware of the contents.

Automatism – An unconscious or involuntary muscular movement caused by spirits. (See automatic writing)

Autoscopy – The visual hallucination or image of one's body looking back at themselves from a position outside the body. (See out of body experience).

Ball Lightning - A rare form of lightning in the shape of a glowing red ball that can last anywhere from a few seconds to several minutes. Typically associated with Thunderstorms, these spheres are thought to consist of ionized gas.

Banshee – A wailing spirit or “death omen” that will appear to be in two different places at the same time.

Call – A call is the response that is made by a subject during a card-guessing test or during any other type of ESP test.

Card Guessing – Card guessing is used as an experimental test for ESP in which a subject tries to guess the identity of a set of cards.

Case Study – An in-depth investigation of an individual subject.

Channeling – In this modern day method of spirit communication, a spirit will pass information directly to a medium or channeler who will then relay the information on to the listener(s).

Clairaudience – An auditory form of ESP paranormal information is received outside the range of normal perception through voices, whispers and auditory impressions.

Clairsentience – A general term for clairvoyance and clairaudience. Clairsentience typically occurs in the form of ESP through physical sensations or smells.

Clairvoyance – An acute insight or perceptiveness that enables you to see objects or events that cannot be perceived by the senses in the form of mental imagery and intuition. (See ESP)

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EMF Detector – (See Magnetometer)

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Illusion – A delusional perception between what is perceived and what is reality.

Intuition – Non-paranormal knowledge that is gained through a perceptive insight.

Levitation – To lift or raise a physical object in apparent defiance of gravity.

Life Review – A flashback of a person’s life that is typically associated with near-death experiences.

Lucid Dreaming - A dream state in which one is conscious enough to recognize that one is in the dream state and is then able to control dream events.

Magnetometer (EMF, gaussmeter) - An instrument for measuring the magnitude and direction of a magnetic field typically used by paranormal researchers to detect a ghost’s magnetic energy.

Marian Apparitions – The event in which the Virgin Mary is seen.

Materialization – The act of forming something solid from the air. One of the most difficult and impressive materializations is when part or all of a ghost or spirit can be seen, especially if the face is recognizable.

Medium - Someone who professes to be able communicate with spirits on behalf of another living being, acting as a midway point halfway between the worlds of the living and the dead.

Mesmerism – A hypnotic induction of a sleep or trance State (See Hypnotism).

Mist – A Photographed anomaly that appears as a blanket of light. There is no substantial proof that these are related to paranormal phenomenon.

Motor Automatism – Bodily movement or functions that are accompanied but not controlled by consciousness (See automatic writing).

Near Death Experience (NDE) – An experience that is reported by people who clinically die, or come close to actual death and are revived. These events often include encounters with spirit guides, seeing dead relatives or friends, life review, out-of-body Experiences (OBE), or a moment of decision where they are able to decide or are told to turn back.

Old Hag Syndrome – A nocturnal phenomena that involves a feeling of immobilization, suffocation, odd smells and feelings and is sometimes accompanied my immense fear (See Sleep Paralysis).

Orb – A photographed anomaly that theoretically represents the “spirit” of a deceased person. It will appear as a ball of light on film though in some cases; they are not seen at the time of the photo. Since there are many reasonable circumstances (dust, snow, rain, insects, reflection, lens flare, etc.) orbs still remain a highly controversial subject.

Ouija Board - A pre-printed board with letters, numerals, and words used to receive spirit communications. Typically a planchette is employed to spell out words and point out numbers or letters.

Out-of-body experience (OBE) – A sensation or experience in which ones self or spirit travels to a different location than their physical body (See Astral Projection).

Paranormal – Referring to something that is beyond the range of normal human experience or scientific explanation.

Parapsychology - The study of the evidence for psychological phenomena that are inexplicable by science.

Percipient - A person who sees (i.e., perceives) an apparition.

Phantom - Something that is seen, heard, or sensed, but has no physical reality (See Ghost).

Poltergeist - a non-human spirit entity which literally means "noisy ghost" but is usually more malicious and destructive than ghosts of dead human beings. Traditional poltergeists activities are thumping and banging, levitating or the moving of objects, stone throwing and starting fires. It is thought that poltergeist activity in some instances may be brought on subconsciously by an adolescent agent or females under the age of 25.

Precognition – The ability to predict or have knowledge of something in advance of its occurrence, especially by extrasensory perception (See Clairvoyance).

Psi – A letter in the Greek alphabet that denotes psychic phenomena.

Psychic - A person who is responsive to psychic forces with above average ESP abilities.

Psychokinesis (PK) - The power of the mind to affect matter without physical contact, especially in inanimate and remote objects by the exercise of psychic powers.

Psychometry - The ability or art of divining information about people or events associated with an object solely by touching or being near to it.

Pyrokinesis – The ability to unconsciously control and sometimes in rare cases produce fire with their mind only.

Radio Voice Phenomenon (RVP) - Receiving the voice of a deceased human being through a regular radio.

Reciprocal Apparition - An extremely rare type of spirit phenomenon in which both the agent and percipient are able to see and respond to each other.

Remote Viewing – Used by some psychics, this is a procedure in which the percipient or psychic attempts to become physically aware of the experience of an agent who is at a distant, unknown location through ESP.

Retrocognition – An experience in which a person finds themselves in the past and is able to see and experience events in which they had no prior knowledge.

Séance - A meeting or gathering of people, usually lead by a medium to receive spiritualistic messages, manifestations or communication with the dead.

Shaman – A member of certain tribal societies who acts as a medium between the visible world and an invisible spirit world and who practices magic or sorcery for purposes of healing, divination, and control over natural events.

Sheep – An experiment in which the subject believes in the ability in which they are being tested.

Simulcra – This is a word used to describe the seeing of faces, figures and images in ordinary, everyday object such as rocks, foliage, etc.

Specter – A ghostly apparition; a phantom (See Ghost).

Spiritualism - The belief system that the dead are able to communicate with the living, through an intermediary or medium.

Stigmata – Unexplained bodily marks, sores, or sensations of pain corresponding in location to the crucifixion wounds of Christ.

Subjective Apparitions – Hallucinations of apparitions or other phenomena that are created by our own minds.

Supernatural - Of or relating to existence outside the natural world. As opposed to paranormal, the term "supernatural" often connotes divine or demonic intervention.

Tarot Cards - A set of (usually 72) cards that include 22 cards representing virtues and vices, death and fortune etc. used by fortunetellers to help predict future events.

Telekinesis - The paranormal movement of objects by scientifically inexplicable means.

Telepathy – Communication from one mind to another through means other than the senses.

Teleportation - A method of transportation in which matter or information is dematerialized, usually instantaneously, at one point and recreated at another.

Thought Form – An apparition produced solely by the power of the human mind.

Trance - A hypnotic, cataleptic, or ecstatic state in which one becomes detached from their physical surroundings.

Vortex – An anomaly that appears as a funnel or rope-like image in photographs. These images are sometimes thought to represent ghosts, collections of orbs or gateways which travel to a wormhole in time-space. There has been no substantial scientific evidence to support any of these theories.

White Noise – An Acoustical or electrical noise of which the intensity is the same at all frequencies within a given band.

Zener Cards – A set of 25 cards for use in card-guessing tests of ESP. Each set contains 5 of each of the following cards:

Abductee-Is someone taken, generally against his or her will, by nonhuman beings.

Agent – A living person who is the focus of poltergeist activity.

Agriglyph- is a large design created in a field of vegetation by pressing down parts of the growth. The term is an alternative to Crop Circles. It was introduced to reflect the higher complexity of many such anomalies.

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Autoscopy – The visual hallucination or image of one's body looking back at themselves from a position outside the body. (See out of body experience).

Car Stop- Is coined when a car ceases to run during a UFO sighting. Radios and lights may die as well. The vehicle typically is restored to normal operation when the UFO leaves.

Biped- An animal with two feet

Cattle Mutilation- Is the unexplained alteration of a cow carcass. Such carcasses typically exhibit the removal of organs, a lack of blood, unusual precision of the cuts, and no evidence of the mutilator. Some believe they are the work of aliens.

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EMF Detector – (See Magnetometer)

Extra Sensory Perception (ESP) - Communication or perception by means other than the physical senses.

Extraterrestrial Biological Entity- (EBE) is an alien. The term is reportedly of military derivation.

Exorcism - The banishment of an entity or entities i.e. spirits, ghosts and demons that is thought to possess or haunt a location or human being or animal. The ritual, which can be religious in nature, is conducted by an exorcist who will call upon a Higher Power to cast away any evil forces that may reside there.

False Awakening – The event in which a person believes they are awake but are actually dreaming.

Flap- Is a sudden intense period of time with many sightings (typically of UFOs, but it could be a monster flap). It is often accompanied by news coverage.

Foo Fighter- Was the World War 2 term for UFOs. The "foo" is believed to be derived from a comic strip and may come from the French word for fire.

Ghost – A generic term referring to a form of apparition or supernatural entity which is typically the visual appearance of a deceased human's spirit soul.

Ghost Hunting – A carefully controlled research project in which various methods and equipment are used to investigate reports of ghosts and hauntings.

Ghoul – Demonic or parasitic entity that feeds upon human remains.

Goat – An experiment in which the subject does not believe in the ability for which they are being tested.

Gray or Grey- is an alien type that first became famous in the 1980s. Typically shorter than humans, hairless, with large black eyes

Hallucination – The perception of sights and sounds that are not actually present.

Haunting – Reoccurring ghostly phenomena that returns to a location where no one is physically present. Ghosts generally haunt places and not people.

Hellhound / Black Shuck – A spectral death omen in the form of a ghostly dog.

Hot Reading – A devious or fraudulent reading in which the reader has been given prior knowledge of the sitter.

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Illusion – A delusional perception between what is perceived and what is reality.

Instrumental Transcommunication/ITC- for short is gaining popularity among paranormal groups around the world. Hearing intelligible answers to basic questions on audio devices during investigations has been reported since audio devices were created over 100 years ago, but the phenomenon is not limited to audio devices alone. Computers, Televisions and even fax machines have been reported to receive messages from beyond the grave that suggest it is possible to communicate with our departed loved ones through the use of standard technology.

Intuition – Non-paranormal knowledge that is gained through a perceptive insight.

Jersey Devil- is a monster rumored to occupy the Pine Barrens in New Jersey. Although the creature is traditionally depicted with wings, some believe it to be a hairy biped.

Levitation – To lift or raise a physical object in apparent defiance of gravity.

Life Review – A flashback of a person's life that is typically associated with near-death experiences.

Lost Time- Occurs when a person becomes aware that it is later than his or her memory of events indicates "it should be". For example, a person taking a drive that normally takes one hour, and seemingly did, arrives at the destination three hours after starting. It is often reported in alien abduction cases.

Lucid Dreaming - A dream state in which one is conscious enough to recognize that one is in the dream state and is then able to control dream events.

Lycanthrope- is the ability or power of a human being to undergo transformation into a wolf, or wolf-like characteristics. The term comes from Greek lykánthropos (λυκάνθρωπος): λύκος, lýkos ("wolf") + άνθρωπος, ánthrōpos ("man") (Rose, 230).

Magnetometer (EMF, gaussmeter) - An instrument for measuring the magnitude and direction of a magnetic field typically used by paranormal researchers to detect a ghost's magnetic energy.

Majestic-12- (aka mj-12) is a secret US government group formed following The Roswell Incident to consider issues involving UFOs and ETs.

Marian Apparitions – The event in which the Virgin Mary is seen.

Materialization – The act of forming something solid from the air. One of the most difficult and impressive materializations is when part or all of a ghost or spirit can be seen, especially if the face is recognizable.

Medium - Someone who professes to be able communicate with spirits on behalf of another living being, acting as a midway point halfway between the worlds of the living and the dead.

Mesmerism – A hypnotic induction of a sleep or trance State (See Hypnotism).

Mist – A Photographed anomaly that appears as a blanket of light. There is no substantial proof that these are related to paranormal phenomenon.

Momo- (a contraction of "the Missouri Monster") is a hairy biped that came to prominence in 1972.

Mother Ship-is a craft (typically a UFO) that carries smaller craft that can work independently. Mother Ships may be cigar-shaped. The non-gender specific "Parent Craft" has also been used.

Motor Automatism – Bodily movement or functions that are accompanied but not controlled by consciousness.

Nandi Bear- is a rumored African predatory Cryptid. It is roughly lion-sized and particularly ferocious.

Near Death Experience (NDE) – An experience that is reported by people who clinically die, or come close to actual death and are revived. These events often include encounters with spirit guides, seeing dead relatives or friends and a life review.

Nordic- are a reported alien type that resemble tall, blond, caucasian humans.

Ogopogo- is a lake monster in Canada.

Out-of-Body Experiences (OBE), or a moment of decision where they are able to decide or are told to turn back.

Old Hag Syndrome – A nocturnal phenomena that involves a feeling of immobilization, suffocation, odd smells and feelings and is sometimes accompanied by immense fear (See Sleep Paralysis).

Orb – A photographed anomaly that theoretically represents the “spirit” of a deceased person. It will appear as a ball of light on film though in some cases; they are not seen at the time of the photo. Since there are many reasonable circumstances (dust, snow, rain, insects, reflection, lens flare, etc.) orbs still remain a highly controversial subject.

Out-of-body experience (OBE) – A sensation or experience in which ones self or spirit travels to a different location than their physical body (See Astral Projection).

Paranormal – Referring to something that is beyond the range of normal human experience or scientific explanation.

Parapsychology - The study of the evidence for psychological phenomena that are inexplicable by science.

Pareidolia- Steven Goldstein first coined the term Pareidolia (payr.eye.DOH.lee.uh) in 1994 to describe a psychological phenomenon that involves vague and random stimulus, usually visual or auditory, that is perceived as being significant. Examples of this are mirages, seeing animals, symbols or faces in clouds and in the paranormal arena, in orbs. Pareidolia is a blend of the

prefix para which means something faulty or wrong and eidolon which is a phantom-like or ghostly image.

Phantom - Something that is seen, heard, or sensed, but has no physical reality (See Ghost).

Poltergeist - a non-human spirit entity which in German it means "noisy ghost" but is usually more malicious and destructive than ghosts of dead human beings. Traditional poltergeists activities are thumping and banging, levitating or the moving of objects, stone throwing and starting fires. It is thought that poltergeist activity in some instances may be brought on subconsciously by an adolescent agent or females under the age of 25.

Precognition – The ability to predict or have knowledge of something in advance of its **occurrence**, especially by extrasensory perception (See Clairvoyance).

Psi – A letter in the Greek alphabet that denotes psychic phenomena. **Psychic** - A person who is responsive to psychic forces with above average ESP abilities.

Psychokinesis (PK) - The power of the mind to affect matter without physical contact, especially in inanimate and remote objects by the exercise of psychic powers.

Psychometry - The ability or art of divining information about people or events associated with an object solely by touching or being near to it.

Pyrokinesis – The ability to unconsciously control and sometimes in rare cases produce fire with their mind only.

Percipient - A person who sees (i.e., perceives) an apparition.

Radio Voice Phenomenon (RVP) - Receiving the voice of a deceased human being through a regular radio.

Reciprocal Apparition - An extremely rare type of spirit phenomenon in which both the agent and percipient are able to see and respond to each other.

Recurrent Spontaneous Psychokinesis- (RSPK) is a theory that explains poltergeist activity as the unintentional movement of objects by the subconscious of a person, usually someone under stress and typically an adolescent.

Remote Viewing – Used by some psychics, this is a procedure in which the percipient or psychic attempts to become physically aware of the experience of an agent who is at a distant, unknown location through ESP.

Reptilian- Is a type of entity reported in UFO reports and alien abductions. Although reptile-like, they are bipedal and somewhat humanoid.

Residual Haunting-Probably the most common type of haunting:this is best described as an imprint on the environment:a moment in time,burnt onto the surroundings of a specific location:playing out roles and situations over and over again for centuries at a time.

Retrocognition – An experience in which a person finds themselves in the past and is able to see and experience events in which they had no prior knowledge.

Scientific Method-A systematic approach to observing phenomena, drawing conclusions and testing hypotheses. The scientific Method follows a series of steps: (1) identify a problem you would like to solve, (2) formulate a hypothesis, (3) test the hypotheses, (4) collect and analyze the data, (5) make conclusions.

Séance - A meeting or gathering of people, usually lead by a medium to receive spiritualistic messages, manifestations or communication with the dead.

Sea Monsters- is any large unidentified animal seen in the ocean. Sea serpents are a particular type of sea monster.

Shaman – A member of certain tribal societies who acts as a medium between the visible world and an invisible spirit world and who practices magic or sorcery for purposes of healing, divination, and control over natural events.

Sheep – An experiment in which the subject believes in the ability in which they are being tested.

Simulcra – This is a word used to describe the seeing of faces, figures and images in ordinary, everyday object such as rocks, foliage, etc.

Specter – A ghostly apparition; a phantom (See Ghost).

Spiritualism - The belief system that the dead are able to communicate with the living, through an intermediary or medium.

Stigmata – Unexplained bodily marks, sores, or sensations of pain corresponding in location to the crucifixion wounds of Christ.

Spontaneous Human Combustion-(SHC) is the mysterious ignition of a person's body without any apparent external source of flame.

Subjective Apparitions – Hallucinations of apparitions or other phenomena that are created by our own minds.

Supernatural - Of or relating to existence outside the natural world. As opposed to paranormal, the term "supernatural" often connotes divine or demonic intervention.

Tarot Cards - A set of (usually 72) cards that include 22 cards representing virtues and vices, death and fortune etc. used by fortunetellers to help predict future events.

Telekinesis - The paranormal movement of objects by scientifically inexplicable means.

Telepathy – Communication from one mind to another through means other than the senses.

Teleportation - A method of transportation in which matter or information is dematerialized, usually instantaneously, at one point and recreated at another.

Thought Form – An apparition produced solely by the power of the human mind.

Thoughtography-is the ability to make pictures appear on photographic film at will.

Time Travel Hypothesis- (TTH) states that a UFO is a craft from Earth's future.

Trace Case- are Ufo cases that leave physical evidence.

USO-Unidentified Submarine Object or Unidentified Swimming Object (USO) is used to designate an apparently technological craft of unknown origin seen underwater (or entering or leaving the water), but the term can also refer to a possible Sea Monster.

UFO - An acronym for Unidentified Flying Object , designating any airborne object that does not fit known descriptions of existing aircraft. Unidentified Flying Object Ufonaut- is the entity that operates or travels in a UFO.

Vortex – An anomaly that appears as a funnel or rope-like image in photographs. These images are sometimes thought to represent ghosts, collections of orbs or gateways which travel to a wormhole in time-space. There has been no substantial scientific evidence to support any of these theories.

White Noise – An Acoustical or electrical noise of which the intensity is the same at all frequencies within a given band.

Window- is a region with an unusually high number of paranormal/UFO reports over a significant period of time.

Yeti- Is a Hairy Biped in the Himalayas. The term is the most popular alternative to the mistranslated name Abominable Snowman.

Zener Cards-are a special set of five symbols (star, cross, square, circle, wavy lines) used in Parapsychology experiments.

apparition This is a ghost who interacts with the living, either for better or worse. These are the spirits who can playfully hide objects, sit on your bed and frighten you awake, throw sharp objects, or plea for help. Apparitions such as these are thought to be held over in this world because of unfinished business or due to a violent death and need help from the living to resolve their issues before passing on to the next realm. This is considered “intelligent” haunting because the ghosts appear to be aware of the people around them as well as their surroundings.

apport a physical manifestation of something with symbolic significance to the ghost.

aura A colored outline, or set of contiguous outlines, emanating from the surface of an object. This outline is the spiritual aura or “life force” which surrounds each living thing

banshee A Female Spirit in Irish Mythology usually seen as an Omen of Death or as a messenger from the Other Side. According to legend, a banshee wails around a house if someone in the house is about to die.

blissing of the heart Inviting an ordained priest or minister into the house and have it blessed, will make an earthbound ghost very lethargic and laid back. You will definitely see an improvement. However, it will not make the ghost leave, unless it has only been there a very short period of time. DO NOT obtain holy water and sprinkle it around on your own that will only make the ghost angry. It is all right if an ordained priest or minister uses holy water, but not a lay person. After the service the results will be immediate and last for a month or so.

clairvoyant a form of extra sensory perception which denotes the transference of information about an object, location or physical event through means other than the known human senses. A person said to have the ability of clairvoyance is referred to as a *clairvoyant*.

crossed over spirits Deceased human being spirits that have gone into the light, after their final funeral or memorial service. They are in heaven or whatever your idea or belief is of eternal rest.

deja vu also called **paramnesia** from the Greek word *para* (for parallel and *mnēmē* for memory) describes the experience of feeling that one has witnessed or experienced a new situation previously.

demonic possession in supernatural belief systems, is a form of spiritual possession whereby certain malevolent extra-dimensional entities, demons, gain control over a mortal person's body, which is then used for an evil or destructive purpose. Unlike in channeling or other benign forms of possession, the subject has no control over the possessing entity and so it will persist until forced to leave the victim, usually through a form of exorcism. An example of demonic possession is dramatized in the motion picture, "The Exorcist".

earthbound spirits *Deceased human being spirits that have not crossed over, or gone into the light after their final funeral or memorial service. It was their choice to stay and not to go.*

ghost/ spirits/ entity/ poltergeist/ phantom/ lemur The energy from a deceased human being, it can also be from an deceased animal.

haunting inhabiting, visiting, or appearing to someone in the form of a ghost or other supernatural being.

hex A curse or magical spell cast by a practitioner of the Black Arts

mugwort/ dreams When a ghost crosses over you can have a conversation with that person in a dream. Everyone dreams, but not everybody remembers their dreams. An herb called mugwort can help to clarify your dreams and also to help you to remember them. Make a sachet with one or two teaspoons of the mugwort. Then place the sachet between your pillow and pillowcase. In about three weeks you will start remembering your dreams. If there is some one special that you would like to talk to, say before you fall asleep" if I dream of (their name) tonight we will talk. Repeat that each night until you have the dream, this works really well. This is not recommended for children.

orbs Round circles, white balls, bubbles, all are orbs, they can be clear, white or colored. Some, if looked at closely, have an image. They can be sparkly, glittery, or glitzy. They can be single or in a group or cluster. They do not have to be in each picture, they could be in every other one. These are all pictures of good spirits. Spirits that have crossed over, relatives in for a visit,

guardian angels, spirit guides, all good. These are the kind of spirits that you want to show up in pictures.

smudging This is a Native American ceremony that burns a smudge stick, made out of sage, sweet grass, or a combination of dried plants.

The resulting smoke is fanned around the perimeter of each room in the house. This will make an earthbound ghost very lethargic and laid back. This will make a definite difference in your house.

It will not make an earthbound ghost angry to do this. If you smudge on a regular basis once every three or four weeks, an earthbound ghost will eventually leave, but you have to be persistent. This will also help reduce negative energy in a house.

You should be able to find smudge sticks at some health food stores, some book stores, or any good metaphysical shop. Follow the instructions in the package, or ask for instructions from where you purchase the smudge stick.

White Noise Noise that spirits/ghosts make to communicate with humans. This can be through car radios, mp3 players or most other electrical devices.

Altered States of Consciousness Any state which is significantly different from a normative waking beta wave state. The expression was coined by Charles Tart and describes induced changes in one's mental state, almost always temporary. A synonymous phrase is "altered states of awareness".

Angels An angel is a supernatural being found in many religions. In scripture, they typically act as messengers, as held by the three prominent monotheistic faiths, Christianity, Judaism and Islam.

Apparition An apparition is an appearance to a human of a ghost.

Astral Relating to a subtle body and plane of existence that coexist with and survive the death of the human physical body.

Astral body The astral body refers to the concept of a subtle body which exists alongside the physical body, as a vehicle of the soul or consciousness. It is usually understood as being of an emotional nature and, as such, it is equated to the desire body or emotional body.

Astral plane The astral plane, also called the astral world or desire world, is a plane of existence according to esoteric philosophies, some religious teachings and New Age thought.

Astral Projection Out-of-body experiences (OBEs) achieved either awake or via lucid dreaming, deep meditation, or use of psychotropics. The consciousness or soul has transferred into an astral body which moves in the astral plane.

Aura Energy field emanating from the surface of a person or object. This emanation is visualized as an outline of cascading color and may be held to represent soul vibrations, chakric emergence, or a reflection of surrounding energy fields.

Automatic Writing Automatic writing is the process of writing material that does not come from the conscious thoughts of the writer. The writer's hand forms the message, and the person is

unaware of what will be written. It is sometimes done in a trance state. Other times the writer is aware (not in a trance) of their surroundings but not of the actions of their writing hand.

Chakra Nexus of biophysical energy residing in the human body, aligned in an ascending column from the base of the spine to the top of the head. In various traditions chakras are associated with multiple physiological functions, an aspect of consciousness, a classical element, and other distinguishing characteristics.

Channeling Process of receiving messages or inspiration from invisible beings or spirits.

Christ The word is often misunderstood to be the surname of Jesus due to the numerous mentions of Jesus Christ in the Christian Bible. The word is in fact a title, hence its common reciprocal use Christ Jesus, meaning The Anointed One, Jesus. Followers of Jesus became known as Christians because they believed that Jesus was the Christ, or Messiah, prophesied about in the Tanakh (which Christians term the Old Testament).

Clairvoyance Extra-sensory perception whereas a person perceives distant objects, persons, or events, including perceiving an image hidden behind opaque objects and the detection of types of energy not normally perceptible to humans. Typically, such perception is reported in visual terms, but may also include auditory impressions (sometimes called clairaudience) or kinesthetic impressions.

Demon In religion, folklore, and mythology a demon (or daemon) is a supernatural being that has generally been described as a malevolent spirit, and in Christian terms it generally understood as an angel not following God.

Demonology Demonology is the systematic study of demons or beliefs about demons. Insofar as it involves exegesis, demonology is an orthodox branch of theology.

Devil The Devil is a title given to the supernatural entity, who, in Christianity, Islam, and other religions, is a powerful, evil entity and the tempter of humankind. The Devil commands a force of lesser evil spirits, commonly known as demons.

Ectoplasm Form of dense bio-energy liberated by the materialisation of ghosts. Also, a substance supposed to emanate from the body of the medium during a trance.

EMF (Electro-magnetic Field) Classically, the electromagnetic field is a physical influence (a field) that permeates through all of space, and which arises from electrically charged objects and describes one of the four fundamental forces of nature - electromagnetism. Ghosts activities can sometimes causes changes in the electro-magnetic field and measured with an EMF meter.

Empath Possesses the ability to sense the emotions of other sentient life forms.

Entity An entity is something that has a distinct, separate existence.

Esoteric (Esotericism) The term Esotericism refers to the doctrines or practices of esoteric knowledge, or otherwise the quality or state of being described as esoteric, or obscure. Esoteric knowledge is that which is specialised or advanced in nature, available only to a narrow circle of "enlightened", "initiated", or highly educated people. In contrast, exoteric knowledge is knowledge that is well-known or public.

ESP (Extra Sensory Perception) Perception that involves awareness of information about something (such as a person or event) not gained through the senses and not deducible from previous experience. Classic forms of ESP include telepathy, clairvoyance, and precognition.

Etheric plane In Theosophy, the etheric plane is related to the Prana principle and is understood as the vital, life-sustaining force of living beings and the vital energy in all natural processes of the universe.

Etheric body The etheric body, or vital body is one of the subtle bodies in esoteric philosophies, in some religious teachings and in New Age thought. It is understood as a sort of life force body or aura that constitutes the "blueprint" of the physical body, and which sustains the physical body.

Evil In religion and ethics, evil refers to the morally or ethically objectionable behaviour or thought; behavior or thought which is hateful, cruel, excessively sexual, or violent, devoid of conscience.

EVP (Electronic Voice Phenomena) Electronic voice phenomena (EVP) is the communication by spirits through radios, tape recorders, or other electronic audio devices. Also, when anomalous voices of supernatural origin, are heard on audio recordings.

Exorcism The practice of evicting demons or other evil spiritual entities which have possessed a person or object. The practice is quite ancient and still part of the belief system of many religions. The person performing the exorcism, known as an exorcist, is often a priest, or an individual thought to be graced with special powers or skills. The exorcist may use religious material, such as prayers and set formulas, gestures, symbols, icons, amulets, etc. The exorcist often invokes some supernatural power to actually perform the task.

Ghost A ghost is a non-corporeal manifestation of the spirit or soul of a dead person which has remained on Earth after death.

Ghost Hunting Ghost hunting is the process of investigating an alleged haunting. Typically, a 'hunting party' will involve 4-8 individuals who work as a team to collect evidence of paranormal activity. Each team member performs duties that are related to their particular field of expertise or interest. It is common practice for ghost hunters to behave in a scientific manner as they observe and record data using a variety of electronic gadgets, such as; EMF Meters, digital thermometers, infrared and night vision cameras, handheld video cameras, digital audio recorders, and computers.

God The name God refers to the deity held by monotheists to be the supreme reality. God is generally regarded as the sole creator of the universe. Theologians have ascribed certain attributes to God, including omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence, perfect goodness, divine simplicity, and eternal and necessary existence.

Guardian Spirit (Guardian Angel) A guardian angel is a spirit who protects and guides a particular person.

Haunting To inhabit, visit, or appear to in the form of a ghost or other supernatural being.

Heaven Heaven is a plane of existence in religions and spiritual philosophies, typically described as the holiest possible place, accessible by people according to various standards of divinity (goodness, piety, etc.) Christians generally hold that it is the afterlife destination of those who have accepted Jesus Christ as their savior.

Hell Hell, according to many religious beliefs, is an afterlife of suffering where the wicked or unrighteous dead are punished. Hells are almost always depicted as underground. Christianity and Islam traditionally depict hell as fiery, Hells from other traditions, however, are sometimes cold and gloomy.

Hypnagogia (Hypnogogic) Hypnagogia are the experiences a person can go through in the hypnagogic (or hypnogogic) state, the period of falling asleep. Hypnagogic sensations collectively describe the vivid dream-like auditory, visual, or tactile sensations that can be experienced in a hypnagogic or hypnopompic state.

Hypnosis Psychological condition of altered state of consciousness in which some people may be induced to show various differences in behaviour and thinking, like heightened suggestibility and receptivity to direction.

Hypnotherapy Hypnotherapy is therapy that is undertaken with a subject in hypnosis. A person who is hypnotized displays certain unusual characteristics and propensities, compared with a non-hypnotized subject, most notably hyper-suggestibility, which some authorities have considered a sine qua non of hypnosis.

Incarnation Incarnation, which literally means enfleshment, refers to the conception, and live birth of a sentient creature (generally human being) who is the material manifestation of an entity or force whose original nature is immaterial.

Incorporeal Incorporeal, from Latin, means without the nature of a body or substance. The idea of the incorporeal refers to the notion that there is an incorporeal realm or place, that is distinct from the corporeal or material world.

Intuition Intuition is an immediate form of knowledge in which the knower is directly acquainted with the object of knowledge. Intuition differs from all forms of mediated knowledge, which generally involve conceptualizing the object of knowledge by means of rational/analytical thought processes.

Intuitive A person sensitive to the feelings of other life forms, as well as signals of nature.

Jinn Genie is the English term for the Arabic (jinn). In pre-Islamic Arabian mythology and in Islam, a jinni (also "djinni" or "djini") is a member of the jinn (or "djinn"), a race of supernatural creatures.

Karma Karma is the concept of "action" or "deed" in Dharmic religions understood as denoting the entire cycle of cause and effect described in Hindu, Jain, Sikh and Buddhist philosophies. Karma is believed to be a sum of all that an individual has done, is currently doing and will do. The effects of all deeds actively create past, present and future experiences, thus making one responsible for one's own life, and the pain and joy it brings to others.

Kirlian photography Kirlian photography refers to a form of contact print photography, theoretically associated with high-voltage. It is named after Semyon Kirlian, who in 1939 accidentally discovered that if an object on a photographic plate is connected to a source of high voltage, small corona discharges (created by the strong electric field at the edges of the object) create an image on the plate.

Magic Magic and sorcery are the influencing of events, objects, people and physical phenomena by mystical, paranormal or supernatural means. The terms can also refer to the practices employed by a person to wield this influence, and to beliefs that explain various events and phenomena in such terms.

Manifestation The materialized form of a spirit.

Medium A person who possess the ability to communicate with spirits of deceased people (and sometimes pets). Some mediums claim to be able to channel the spirit, by allowing the deceased to speak or write messages using the medium's body.

Metaphysics Metaphysics is the branch of philosophy concerned with explaining the ultimate nature of reality, being, and the world. More recently, the term "metaphysics" has also been used more loosely to refer to "subjects that are beyond the physical world".

Near-death experience A near-death experience (NDE) is an experience reported by a person who nearly died, or who experienced clinical death and then revived. The experience has become more common in recent times, especially since the development of cardiac resuscitation techniques. Popular interest in near-death experiences was sparked by Raymond Moody Jr's 1975 book *Life after Life* and the founding of the International Association for Near-death Studies (IANDS) in 1978.

Occult The word has many uses in the English language, popularly meaning 'knowledge of the paranormal'. For most practicing occultists it is simply the study of a deeper spiritual "reality" that extends beyond pure reason and the physical sciences.

Orb Name given to typically circular anomalies appearing in photographs. In photography and video, orbs appear to be balls, diamonds, or smears of light with an apparent size in the image ranging from a golfball to a basketball. Orbs sometimes appear to be in motion, leaving a trail behind them.

Ouija Ouija refers to the belief that one can receive messages during a séance by the use of a Ouija board (also called a talking board or spirit board) and planchette. The fingers of the participants are placed on the planchette which then moves about a board covered with numbers, letters and symbols so as to spell out messages. Ouija Board is a trademark for a talking board currently sold by Parker Brothers. The term "Ouija" is derived from the French "oui" (for "yes") and the German/Dutch "ja" (also for "yes").

Out-of-body experience An out-of-body experience (OBE or sometimes OOB) is an experience that typically involves a sensation of floating outside of one's body and, in some cases, seeing one's physical body from a place outside one's body.

Paranormal Paranormal is an umbrella term used to describe a wide variety of reported anomalous phenomena. According to the *Journal of Parapsychology*, the term paranormal

describes "any phenomenon that in one or more respects exceeds the limits of what is deemed physically possible according to current scientific assumptions."

Parapsychology Parapsychology is the study of seeming mental awareness of or influence upon external objects, without any physical or energetic means of causation which scientists currently understand. Most objects of study fall within the realm of "mind-to-mind" influence (such as extra-sensory perception and telepathy), "mind-to-environment" influence (such as psychokinesis) and "environment-to-mind" (such as hauntings). Collectively, these abilities are often referred to as "psionics". Another definition of parapsychology is the scientific study of paranormal phenomena.

Past life regression (therapy) Past life regression is a technique used by some hypnotherapists to try to get clients to remember their past lives. Implicit in this procedure is the spiritual belief that souls exist and come back many times, living in different times and places, experiencing different genders, races, social classes and so forth in an attempt to learn.

Prayer Prayer is an active effort to communicate with a deity or spirit either to offer praise, to make a request, seek guidance, confess sins, or simply to express one's thoughts and emotions.

Poltergeist Spirit or ghost that manifests by moving and influencing inanimate objects (rather than through visible presence or vocalization). Stories featuring poltergeists typically focus heavily on raps, thumps, knocks, footsteps, and bed-shaking, all without a discernable point of origin or physical reason for occurrence. Many accounts of poltergeist activity detail objects being thrown about the room, furniture being moved, and even people being levitated.

Possession Concept of supernatural and/or superstitious belief systems whereby gods, demons or other disincarnate entities may temporarily take control of a human body, resulting in noticeable changes in behaviour. The concept of spiritual possession exists in many contemporary religions and can also be seen in the mythology and folklore of many cultures. Various forms and denominations of Christianity have developed practices for driving out spirit, most notably Roman Catholicism; there exists a Roman Catholic International Association of Exorcists.

Portal A doorway, entrance, or gate between two worlds, the physical and the spiritual.

Psychic person who possess extra-sensory abilities, including: clairvoyance, psychometry and precognition, who can sometimes communicate with spirits, ghosts or entities.

Quantum mechanics Fundamental branch of physics with wide applications in experimental physics and theoretical physics that replaces classical mechanics and classical electromagnetism at the atomic and subatomic levels.

Reality The term reality, in its widest sense, includes everything that is, whether it is observable, comprehensible, or apparently self-contradictory by science, philosophy, or any other system of analysis. Reality in this sense may include both being and nothingness, whereas existence is often restricted to being (compare with nature).

Reincarnation Reincarnation, literally "to be made flesh again", is a doctrine or mystical belief that some essential part of a living being survives death to be reborn in a new body. According to

such beliefs, a new personality is developed during each life in the physical world, but some part of the being remains constantly present throughout these successive lives as well.

Religion A religion is a set of beliefs and practices generally held by a community, involving adherence to codified beliefs and rituals and study of ancestral or cultural traditions, writings, history, and mythology, as well as personal faith and mystic experience.

Residual Haunting Experiences from the living that are imprinted in a specific location and are replaying on a cyclical basis, like the playback of a movie, such as apparitions doing the same things or voices and sounds being heard at always the same time of the day. Many hauntings can be of this sort and not necessarily animated by conscious spirits.

Ritual A ritual is actually the words of a "rite", which are said as a part of a ceremony which is a set of actions, performed mainly for their symbolic value, which is prescribed by a religion or by the traditions of a community.

Sacred (Holiness) Holiness, or sanctity, is the state of being holy or sacred, that is, set apart for the worship or service of God or gods. It is most usually ascribed to people, but can be and often is ascribed to objects, times, or places. The word holy is related to the word whole.

Satan Satan, from the Hebrew word for "adversary", is a term that originates from the Abrahamic faiths, being traditionally applied to an angel. Religious belief systems other than Judaism relate this term to a demon, a rebellious fallen angel, devil, minor god and idolatry, or as an allegory for evil

Séance A séance is an attempt to communicate with the dead. The séance, or sitting, is led by a person known as a medium who will usually go into a trance that theoretically allows the dead to communicate through him or her. The word séance comes from the French word for 'seat', 'session', from Old French seoir, 'to sit.' In English, the word came to be used specifically for a meeting of people to receive spiritualistic messages.

Seminar A seminar is, generally, a form of academic instruction, either at a university or offered by a commercial or professional organization. It has the function of bringing together small groups for recurring meetings, focusing each time on some particular subject, in which everyone present is requested to actively participate.

Sleep paralysis Sleep paralysis is a condition characterized by temporary paralysis of the body shortly after waking up (known as hypnopompic paralysis) or, less often, shortly before falling asleep (known as hypnagogic paralysis).

Soul The soul, according to many religious and philosophical traditions, is the self-aware essence unique to a particular living being. In these traditions the soul is thought to incorporate the inner essence of each living being, and to be the true basis for sapience.

Smudging A smudge stick is a bundle of dried herbs, most commonly white sage. Often other herbs or plants are used or added and the leaves are usually bound with string in a small bundle and dried. Ojibway and Cree ceremonies often use smudges of sage, sweet grass, and/or juniper to cleanse with, and to give prayers to the Creator, or Gitche Manitou.

Spirit Guides Term used by mediums and spirituals to describe an entity that remains a disincarnate spirit in order to act as a spiritual counsellor or protector to a living incarnated human being.

Spiritism Spiritism is a philosophical doctrine akin to Spiritualism, established in France in the mid 19th Century, which has become a sort of religious movement. Like Spiritualists, Spiritists believe in the survival of the souls after death and the importance of eventual communications received from them. Spiritism derives most of its principles from works by the French educator Hippolyte Léon Denizard Rivail written under the pseudonym Allan Kardec.

Spiritualism Spiritualism is a religious movement, prominent from the 1840s to the 1920s, found primarily in English-speaking countries. The movement's distinguishing feature is the belief that the spirits of the dead can be contacted by mediums. These spirits are believed to lie on a higher spiritual plane than humans, and are therefore capable of providing guidance in both worldly and spiritual matters. Spiritualism is closely related to Spiritism, a religious movement that originated in France, and is today widespread in Brazil and other Latin countries.

Spirituality Spirituality, in a narrow sense, concerns itself with matters of the spirit. The spiritual, involving (as it may) perceived eternal verities regarding humankind's ultimate nature, often contrasts with the temporal, with the material, or with the worldly. Spirituality often focuses on personal experience. Many spiritual traditions share a common spiritual theme: the "path", "work", practice, or tradition of perceiving and internalizing one's "true" nature and relationship to the rest of existence (God, creation (the universe), or life), and of becoming free of the lesser egoic self (or ego) in favor of being more fully one's "true" "Self".

Spiritual healing Use of spiritual means in treating disease. Spiritual healing can also refer to the self-empowerment or self-actualization process or steps within those processes that often occurs with individuals seeking enlightenment or meaning in their lives.

Supernatural The supernatural refers to forces and phenomena which are not observed in nature, and therefore beyond verifiable measurement.

Thanatology Thanatology is the academic, and often scientific, study of death among human beings. It investigates the circumstances surrounding a person's death, the grief experienced by the deceased's loved ones, and larger social attitudes towards death such as ritual and memorialization.

Telepathy Communication of information from one mind to another by means other than the known perceptual senses.

Theology Theology finds its scholars pursuing the understanding of and providing reasoned discourse of religion, spirituality and God or the gods.

Tibetan Book of the Dead (Bardo Thodol) The Bardo Thodol is a funerary text that describes the experiences of the consciousness after death during the interval known as bardo between death and rebirth. The Bardo Thodol is recited by lamas over a dying or recently deceased person, or sometimes over an effigy of the deceased.

Trance An altered state of consciousness is any state which is significantly different from a normative waking beta wave state. A synonymous phrase is "altered states of awareness".

Wicca Wicca is a religion found in various countries throughout the world. It was first popularised in 1954 by a retired British civil servant named Gerald Gardner after the British Witchcraft Act was repealed. He claimed that the religion, of which he was an initiate, was a modern survival of an old witchcraft religion, which had existed in secret for hundreds of years, originating in the pre-Christian Paganism of Europe.

Witchcraft Witchcraft is the use of certain kinds of alleged supernatural or magical powers. A witch is a practitioner of witchcraft. While the term "witchcraft" can have positive or negative connotations depending on cultural context, most contemporary people who self-identify as witches see it as beneficent and morally positive. The term witch is typically feminine, masculine equivalents include wizard, sorcerer, warlock and magician.

Akashic Records: In Jungian psychology, the *collective unconscious*. That part of the Earth's aura on which impressions of every person who ever lived, including their thoughts and feelings; every event, no matter how minor; and all possible concepts are completely and permanently impressed. Many clairvoyants who tune into the past, including a lot of psychic detectives, read the Akashic records in order to get their information.

Alchemy: The science of creating perfection, whether involving substances on the material plane or, on a higher level, the soul of a living being. An alchemist working with base metals concentrates on transmuting them to their purest and highest possible form: gold. When working with the human body, the alchemist aspired to draw upon the ideal body that exists on the Astral Plane, to create or reveal a flawless body on Earth. Some alchemists extended this aspiration towards purifying the human soul. The word *alchemy* is derived from the Arabic "al-kimia," which in turn developed from the Coptic "khem" that describes the fertile black soil of the Nile delta. Esoterically, this is an oblique reference to the dark mystery of the primordial Universe (the Khem), from which all creation came into being. Alchemy, then, is a human effort to duplicate the work of the Divine, thus refining this tangled substance, whether it be manifest as metal, human health, the cosmos, or the souls of living beings.

Altar: A small table or other area where sacred objects are displayed, including religious symbols such as crosses, holy water, statues or pictures of gods, saints, avatars or gurus, Bibles and other sacred books, or anything that inspires the individual to concentrate on the spiritual rather than the physical. Items are often laid out for meditation and contemplation. Altars range from the very large (as in big cathedrals and temples) to the very small (little foldaway altars designed for travel that fit into a suitcase). The larger generally consist of items considered sacred by one specific school of thought, while the smaller ones are designed by and for specific individuals and their own approach to the Path.

Amulet: A talisman designed to be worn, usually in the form of a necklace, bracelet, brooch, and sometimes even a belt buckle. Talismans are usually designed for one specific purpose or individual. A necklace comprised of a gold chain and a diamond pendant, even though the wearer may not be aware of it, is an amulet combining the esoteric effect of the diamond (protection, inspiration, love, purity, clarity of thought, and courage, with the esoteric effect of the gold (healing, spirituality, understanding). Talismans can also be made of simpler materials. An amulet composed of a leather thong harnesses the energy and power of the animal whose skin it was made from - and if you tie a feather to it, you channel the ability of the bird to soar into the higher realms.

Angel cards: Among others, there are three popular decks of cards used for giving readings.

They are the Angel's Oracle, the Angel's Tarot, and Healing with the Angels. Each embraces a different concept. The idea behind them, however, is the same. When a reader uses these cards, he or she is appealing to the angels for advice or guidance, or both, for the client. Some angel card decks are designed to reveal which angel, or which type of angel, is actually channeling the message.

Angel message: People who receive messages from the angels can get them in one of many different ways. First of all, they can appear in dreams. Secondly, they can work through a psychic reader - or they can manipulate such tools as rune stones or Tarot cards. Or, for the highly evolved, they can actually appear in their own angelic forms. Angel messages can impart valuable advice, spiritual instruction, comfort, or, in extreme cases, warnings.

Angels: Messengers from God. Angels were created at the beginning of time. They don't die, and never will until the end of the present Universe. Angels are ageless and sexless, although they can take male or female forms when necessary - or they can take the forms of animals. Their purpose on earth is to bring messages from the Absolute to all earthly life forms, and provide aid and assistance when necessary. Contrary to popular belief, human beings do NOT become angels when they die. They become transcendent human beings. Angels are a totally different life form.

Animal Totem: An animal that serves as a spirit guide to either a tribe or group, or to an individual. Animal totems enable a person to get in touch with specific qualities found in an animal to which the individual is attracted or feels a deep kinship. Often the nature of the animal represents a trait that the person lacks. For example, someone whose nature is timid and fearful may require the aggressiveness, anger, and even viciousness of Badger in order to get through life without being made into a victim. Yet a foolhardy person who has a way of courting danger may have Rabbit as his totem. Rabbits are known primarily for their fear and timidity - and thus this type of person really needs a good strong dose of "rabbit medicine" in order to keep himself from getting himself trampled. In times of great stress, a person can call on his animal totem to give him or her whatever is needed to get through the crisis.

Ankh: An ancient Egyptian symbol for life, composed of a circle set atop a T-cross formation. The origins of the ankh are lost in the shadows of antiquity. It is possible that the symbol may have been taken from a knot, which had been endowed with some specific religious or mythical significance. Some believe that it represents the life-giving elements of air and water. It was often shown being held to the lips of the pharaoh as a symbol of the "breath of life." Ritual vessels which held the water used in religious ceremonies were often either emblazoned with ankhs or actually shaped into the likeness of an ankh. When Howard Carter discovered the tomb of Tutankhamen in the 1920's, the explorers discovered a gilded mirror case in the shape of an ankh.

Astral Plane: In this Solar System, there are five major planes of consciousness. The first is the *physical*, material, or earthly plane on which we and any other physical life forms in this Solar System make our home. The second is the emotional or *astral* plane, which is a plane of existence that bears a striking resemblance to the earthly plane. The lower levels of the astral plane (sometimes called the *etheric* plane) are where we find ghosts, unevolved spirits, the souls of those who died suddenly or violently, and, according to some sensitives, the spirits of those whose bodies are being kept alive by artificial means. The *higher* astral planes are where the more evolved souls rest and regather their resources, and sometimes study with Masters in order

to prepare for their next incarnation. The planes beyond the astral are the mental, the Buddhic, the Atmic, and the plane of full solar consciousness.

Astral Projection: Popularly known as the "out-of-body experience." When the body is unconscious, whether from sleep or from accident or illness, the person's astral Self can leave the body and travel just about anywhere in the Universe. The soul is attached to the body by what appears to be a silver cord. If the silver cord breaks, it is said, the person dies. This only happens, however, when the person is near death to begin with. The best-known books on astral projection are those written by Robert A. Monroe.

Astro-Dice: A set of three dice: one featuring the planets, one featuring the twelve signs of the zodiac, and one featuring the twelve houses of the astrological chart. The game involves asking a question and then throwing the dice. One die reveals what is happening (the planet), another how it feels to you (the sign) and the third which area of your life is being affected (the house). From the three different factors, the question is deemed to be answered.

Astrology: The science of mapping the positions of the planets, the twelve signs of the zodiac that contain them, and the twelve mathematically-calculated houses of the horoscope at the exact moment of birth in order to discern the lifetime potential of the individual involved. The process can be continued through *progressing* the planets in order to discern the possibilities of events and personal development unfolding after birth. The earliest evidence of astrological thought dates back to a carving of the phases of the Moon dating from about 25,000 B.C. There are a number of different schools of astrology, among them natal astrology, which marks the development of an individual; mundane astrology, which marks the unfolding of world events; event astrology, used for planning important events such as weddings, job changes, the opening of businesses, and even presidential inaugurations. A new school of astrology, only developed in the past few decades, is heliocentric astrology, which places the Sun instead of the Earth at the center of the chart. The most recent type of astrology, fired by recent discoveries in quantum physics and cosmology, is galactic astrology, which embraces the concept that the life of a human being is inseparable from the life of one's planet, the life of one's star, and the life of one's galaxy. See the **Astrological Glossary** for more details.

Atlantis: An ancient continent first mentioned by Plato, which is believed to have been located along the mid-Atlantic ridge in the Atlantic Ocean and which underwent vast geologic upheavals that resulted in its sinking beneath the ocean in roughly 10,000 BC. The Canary Islands and the Azores are said to be the highest mountain ranges of that continent. While much evidence has been discovered supporting the theory of Atlantis having been located in the Atlantic, some archaeologists believe that they have discovered evidence indicating that it actually was located in the Mediterranean Sea. Still, most confirmed Atlantis researchers insist that Plato was right, and continue to search in the Atlantic. However, if in fact Atlantis did sink as long ago as 10,000 BC, it's unlikely that much more will be found. Too much has happened to the ocean floor during those millennia to obscure the evidence.

Aura Colors: The colors contained in the aura which reveal the basic nature of the soul, the emotions, or, in auric healing, the nature of any dysfunctions taking place in the physical body.
Inner Aura: RED: Vitality, energy, strength, creativity, passion. ORANGE: Freedom, individualism, wisdom, healing, transmutation. YELLOW: Intelligence, motivation, joy, the life force, self-confidence. GREEN: Strength, balance, harmony, life, growth on all levels. BLUE: Spirituality, meditation, rising consciousness, peace, altruism. INDIGO: Physical and higher vision, enlightenment, oneness, serenity, devotion. VIOLET: Stimulation, purification,

inspiration, high ideals, God consciousness.

Outer Aura: RED: Sexual passion, attraction, anger, frustration, physical and mental vitality. Related health problems: Anemia, iron deficiency, chronic fatigue syndrome, paralysis, and colds. ORANGE: New ideas, tolerance, cheerfulness, futility, lack of purpose. Related health problems: Asthma, bronchitis, kidney troubles, spleen dysfunctions, epilepsy. YELLOW: Courage or lack of it, curiosity, knowledge, self-confidence or the lack of it, communication. Related health problems: Heartburn, indigestion, liver problems, diabetes, exhaustion. GREEN: Prosperity consciousness, health, strength, generosity or miserliness, jealousy. Related health problems: Heart problems, high blood pressure, ulcers, cancer, influenza. BLUE: Comfort, interest in science, loyalty or the lack of it, inner peace or the lack of it, truthfulness or the lack of it. Related health problems: Sore throats, thyroid troubles, goiter, fevers and epilepsy. INDIGO: Comprehension, understanding or the lack of it; the ability to listen; withdrawal from the world, humanitarianism. Related health problems: Eye problems, hearing loss, pneumonia, cerebral palsy, and inner ear troubles. VIOLET: Artistic talent, creativity, hypersensitivity, alienation, the Highest Wisdom. Related health problems: Nervous and mental disorders, headaches, kidney and liver troubles, meningitis. *Other Colors and their influence:* WHITE: Purity, protection, luminosity, the all-seeing eye, clarity. Related health problems. None. White is a color of healing. PINK: Love, affection, the desire to do well, or the lack of it. Related health problems: None known. GRAY: Fear, paranoia, survival instinct or the lack of it. Related health problems: Anything that can be exacerbated by fear. BROWN: Brown is the color of illness, and the deeper the shade, the more serious the illness. If even the slightest tinge of brown appears in a person's aura, that person needs to see a doctor immediately. BLACK: If black appears in a person's aura, that person doesn't have long to live.

Aura Reading: A reading given by a skilled clairvoyant, or aura specialist, in which the person's personality, possible future, and level of health and spiritual development are determined depending on what colors are dominant in the individual's inner and outer auras.

Aura: The electromagnetic field that surrounds every living being. People with keen psychic abilities often can see auras. The auric field around human beings is shaped like a gigantic egg, with the narrow part of the egg at the head area and the widest part at the feet. An aura can be any one of the seven colors of the rainbow, and some experts say that there can also be a few in-between colors, such as pink. Most people have a fixed inner aura color that remains constant, depending on their personality and basic nature. However, there are many layers to the aura, and the color of the outer aura changes temporarily with the individual's mood.

Balancing: A term used by psychic and energy healers. According to this concept, illness is the result of the *imbalance* of the humors and energies of the body. Even serious illnesses can be healed if the humors and energies that created the condition are balanced. As with any other type of healing, however, serious illnesses need to be treated early in their development. Otherwise, more radical procedures than balancing are vital. Yet balancing can still help if combined with allopathic treatment. There are several different methods of balancing. The shamanic method, herbal or homeopathic treatments, Reiki, and the Radiance Method are just a few examples. Some people use one only, some prefer to combine them. In most cases, they all seem to work, so it's up to the individual to choose the right one for him or her.

Candles: Candles of all kinds are, like cards, used for meditation, magic, or during rituals. They are preferred over other sources of light such as electric lamps because the light is softer and easier on the eyes, and also because of the tradition surrounding them. Candle burning is simple because the candle alone is the only requirement, and no other ceremonial object is necessary.

However, one can choose to supplement the candle with flowers, images, or other artifacts if he or she so chooses. The size and shape of the candles one uses is unimportant, but their colors are. For example, if one is meditating for health or prosperity, green is the true color; if for love, pink is preferable. See **Aura Colors**.

Cards: Ever since the invention of paper, cards have been used for learning, for meditation focusing, and also for games. Some believe that it is only recently that cards have been used for divination, but we don't really know that for sure. The most popular card system for divination and for meditation is the Tarot, and some decks, based on specific cultures and/or mythologies, are also valuable learning materials. Other card systems include a number of oracles - the I-Ching cards, the Faeries' Oracle, the Druidic Animal Oracle, Goddesses of the New Light, and the Medicine Cards - not to mention ordinary playing cards. These, like the Tarot, can be used for divination, for learning, and for meditation focus. See **Divination**.

Cayce, Edgar (1877-1945): One of the most famous of twentieth-century psychics, Cayce was the first known channel that could dictate diets, drugs, herbal concoctions and poultices, and other healing methods while in a trance. He cured a lot of people, and careful records have been kept of his ideas in order to enable people today to cure themselves using the same techniques that helped others many decades ago. By accident, in one of his medical readings he mentioned that the patient "was once a monk," and this fired interest in reincarnation. As a result, he gave thousands of what he called "life readings," and many of the case details in question were checked out and verified historically. Cayce was not a happy man, however. His Christian upbringing caused him to constantly question the truth and the advisability of what he was doing, plus he was unable to control his smoking, drinking, and bad diet, which bothered him. He worked too many hours reading for people because he wanted to help them, but in the end he burned himself out. He died - exhausted and weak - in 1945 at the age of 67. Now, however, he is believed to be back in the person of David Wilcock, a 32-year-old mystic who channels metaphysical information in almost the same way Cayce did.

Cellular Memory: A theory proposing that human body cells, as well as the brain, contain keys to our personalities, tastes and histories. This means that at the physical level of a single cell, the body records all our life experiences, and thus lays the groundwork for the future. Illness, blindness and other physical problems as well as psychological conditions may result, but that isn't all that can happen. Cellular memory affects just about everything we might do in life, often in a very dysfunctional way. Therapists use Cellular Memory Release (CMR), a specialized form of kinesiology, to access the healing energy contained in all of us and thus start the healing process that will set everything right.

Chakra: One of the eight energy centers placed at various points along the spine of any living vertebrate. In human beings, the *root chakra* is posited at the base of the spine, and is related to the survival instinct and body consciousness. The *sacral chakra* is located in the groin area, and is associated with creativity, emotions and sexuality - as well as for gratification of pleasures. The *power chakra* is located at the solar plexus, and is associated with our own personal power, ego and will. The *heart chakra* is located, obviously, at the heart, and is associated with love, compassion, and self-acceptance. The *throat chakra* is located at the throat, and rules communication, speech, and creativity. The *third eye chakra* is located between the eyebrows and is associated with sight of all kinds, including both physical and psychic vision. The *crown chakra* is located at the top of the head and is associated with knowledge, wisdom, and higher awareness. The eighth chakra, or *alta major center*, is located at the base of the skull, where the skull connects with the spinal cord. This is the most powerful chakra of all, associated with the final ascendant of the entity to God consciousness, or enlightenment.

Chamalongo: An African form of divination using coconut shells, believed to reveal how the divine forces work in our lives, and how well we are attaining our life's purpose. The shells also uncover ways for us to channel those forces in ways that benefit us, and also to remove any blocks in the attainment of our destiny.

Channel Medium: A sensitive and often very psychic person who has been chosen by a specific otherworldly entity to take that entity's message to other living human beings.

Channeling: A phenomenon that occurs when a disembodied entity speaks through a living human being. Such an entity can be an angel (usually Michael or Gabriel), an Ascended Master (e.g. Ramtha or Lazaris), or simply a wise and aware human being who has departed this earth (e.g. Matthew Ward). Usually these human beings are very psychic and already in touch with the other worlds, but sometimes they have a familial or other close connection with the entity in question and thus have been chosen to be that entity's channel. The entity being channeled can use speech, automatic writing, or, in rare cases, tools such as Ouija boards. It is important, however, that the channeler become well acquainted with the entity being channeled before conveying that entity's message to others.

Chiromancy: An ancient name for palmistry. See **Palmistry**.

Clairaudience: A form of channeling. Usually clairaudience is defined as the perception of messages in thought forms from an entity that exists in another realm. The person receiving these messages "hears" the messages in their mind. Though words or songs may actually be heard the same way one "hears" a phrase or song running through their heads, the thought itself may be all that's transmitted. For the budding clairaudient: Be sure you share the messages obtained through clairaudience only with people who understand. Clairaudience is often confused with schizophrenia. See **Channeling**.

Clairsentience: Also known as **Psychometry**. The ability to touch or hold an object, stand in a specific place, and/or touch the body of a person and sense the energy encircling that person, place or thing. Energies can be light or heavy, joyful or foreboding, tough or gentle, peaceful or angry, good or evil, and are judged by the emotional impact on the clairsentient. A *clairsentient* or *clairsentient medium* is an empathic person who is able to experience and translate all kinds of energies. When picking up on negative emotions, a clairsentient may feel sick, while a positive experience may feel like sheer joy, or feeling safe and secure. The messages are usually more complicated than that alone, and can be of great assistance when one must make significant decisions in life.

Clairvoyance: Literally, "clear sight." The psychic ability or power to acquire information, or to see objects, animals or people, in spite of any distance involved, and, in the case of a person or animal, to judge its present condition or emotional state. The clairvoyant can also pick up on past or future events. Clairvoyance is often used as a general term encompassing phenomena such as telepathy, second sight, prophetic visions, and dreams.

Clairvoyant:

A psychic with the ability to use clairvoyance.

Coffee Grounds: Like tea leaves, coffee grounds remaining in the bottom of a person's cup after the coffee has been consumed can be read to judge the individual's immediate future. The shape

of the coffee grounds, as well as how they are distributed throughout the cup, serve as focuses for the reader's psychic abilities.

Color Therapy: Psychic and energy healers often work with color. The premise is that if we concentrate our thoughts on certain colors, we can cause the energy associated with those colors to reach the parts of the body that need healing. White light is believed to be cleansing and can balance the body's entire system. Yellow arouses the mental faculties and generates a positive attitude, and thus can combat depression. Green, which has a calming and restful effect, can alleviate cardiovascular conditions. Pink is said to create smooth skin and youthfulness. Some healers shine colored lights on their clients so as to both assist the person's own concentration and to add a little extra oomph to the effect. Color meditations, wherein the individual simply meditates on the colors and the parts of the body they want to heal, are also popular.

Colorgenics: An area of study associating colors with specific feelings. According to practitioners of colorgenics, colors have a very strong influence not only on our feelings, but on ourselves. Blue is calming, while red is exciting and stimulating. Yellow is an upbeat color that boosts our love of life. Green grounds us and makes us feel connected with the earth. Violet awakens love and kindness. See **Aura Colors**.

Comparison Astrology: Also called **Synastry**. An astrological practice designed to discern whether or not two people are compatible by analyzing the connections between the Natal Chart of one and the Natal Chart of another. The connections indicate whether the two people would make good business partners, friends, creative partners, or marital partners. The analysis can explain strengths in the relationship as well as differences, and can also help to suggest ways to resolve those differences, in just about any relationship.

Cowry Shell Divination: Also called **Diloggun**. An African form of divination, which makes use of cowry shells that have been blessed and sanctified through ritual. They are believed to reveal the will of the Orishas (Angelic spirits) and also to disclose the will of the Divine through the intervention of the diviner or priest, as well as the path the individual is destined to follow.

Crop Circle: A name given to huge geometric patterns, usually circular in nature, appearing in fields of ripe grain overnight, with no known creator. The patterns are formed by the flattening of the grain plants in the field. Until recently, most of the crop circles have appeared in England. There have been records of crop circles for centuries, though it seems as if it's only been in the past two decades that they have appeared in vast numbers, all over the world. Some are very complex and quite beautiful. The grains seem to have suffered no damage from the flattening process and are still edible and nourishing. No one knows for sure who creates the crop circles, though theories range from aliens to Earth spirits to hoaxers. There are a few admitted hoaxers, some of whom claim to be responsible for all the crop circles, but even the skeptics admit that it would be impossible to credit them with all the crop circles. There are too many of them appearing these days - and too far apart - for all the admitted hoaxers to have produced them all. The general rule of thumb is that any crop circle that has actually damaged the grain is a hoax, while those in which the grain is still undamaged are true crop circles.

Crossover Reading: A type of reading wherein the reader uses at least two and sometimes more disciplines in order to give the client every advantage. Many readers use astrology, clairvoyance and Tarot all in one reading, and other disciplines often combined with these are numerology, palmistry, and the runes.

Crystal Ball: A ball made usually of quartz crystal that enables certain psychics to focus their clairvoyance and come up with visions or the answers to a client's question. Some clairvoyants report actually seeing visions within the crystal. This is another type of discipline that can be incorporated into a crossover reading.

Crystal Healing: It is believed that crystals carry a high level of innate power and can be used to augment energy-healing methods such as Reiki, Chi Gong, polarity balancing and therapeutic touch or healing touch. Energy healing work can be instantaneous if the healer is skilled and in tune with the infinite, and if the patient is receptive and believes in both the healer and in the methods he or she uses. Yet most of us still have a modicum of doubt or fear, and thus it often helps to use crystals both to give the patient a sense of security and to help focus the energy generated by the healer. The usual method of doing this is to place crystals or gemstones of the right color and energy at the corresponding chakra points on the patient's body. This cleanses and energizes the chakras, and also sends an intensified level of energy to the parts of the body that require healing. This includes the mind and the psyche.

Diloggun: See Cowry Shell Divination.

Divination: Seeing the future, involving any discipline - astrology, tarot cards, clairvoyance, numerology, channeling, or any other method.

Dowsing: A technique in which a specialized psychic - called the *dowser* - uses a rod, stick, pendulum or other tool to locate such things as underground water, hidden metals, buried treasure, oil, or sometimes lost persons or objects. Even though this ancient practice is not based upon any known scientific laws, the fact that so many dowsers succeed has led to theorizing and scientific experiments, some of which support the idea. Research, however, is continuing.

Dream Interpretation: A practice that analyzes the symbols appearing in dreams in order to sort out a problem, put the dreamer in touch with his or her inner self, discern repressed thoughts, diagnose possible illnesses, unscramble a warning, or foretell the future. The practice of dream interpretation goes all the way back to ancient times. Perhaps the most well-known interpreter of dreams was the Hebrew patriarch Joseph.

Dreams: The images, stories, and emotions that come to us when we're sleeping. They are like a movie running in our own brain, premiering for us alone, and can range from the vague to the elaborately detailed, from the serious to the ludicrous, from the hilarious to the frightening. Since ancient times, they have been viewed as messages from the Divine. See **Dream Interpretation**.

Empath: A person who has the ability to sense and/or understand emotions from another person or animal, which includes stimulation to any or all of the five senses, as well as the sixth sense, without being verbally informed and/or without palpable visual clues. Many empaths are able to tune into people in places far away from them.

Empathic Dream Interpretation: A method of dream analysis through the use of empathy. The analyst tunes into the individual's emotions and interprets the symbols in the dream in light of the dreamer's current emotional state. For example, if the dreamer is currently uneasy because of fear or some other sort of upset, the interpretation will reflect that upset. Many dream psychologists combine both the classic sort of dream interpretation with the empathic method.

Energetics: A method of holistic healing based on the principle that energy of all kinds, from subatomic to organic, has a significant influence on the well-being of the total organism. The theory is that for every physical manifestation in the body, there is an energetic correspondence. Every life form has an individual energetic constitution different from that of any other. It derives from the interaction of the being's genetic background, unique physiology, nutritional and environmental circumstances, psycho-emotional influences, and subtle physical and karmic conditions, in addition to further systems and connections which we don't yet know about. The observations and resulting traditions go back to ancient times. The alchemists were aware of the principles behind energetics. Healing through energetics draws on all levels of the person's consciousness - physical, mental, emotional, spiritual - to enable him or her to release energy blockages that can cause illness, psychological problems, or emotional upset.

ESP (Extrasensory Perception): The ability to pick up on thoughts, emotions, events, locations, and illnesses that aren't readily apparent on a visual, auditory, or other sensory level. Telepathy, clairvoyance, clairaudience, and other phenomena such as channeling or automatic writing are often classified under the category of ESP. See **Clairaudience; Clairvoyance; Empath; Telepathy.**

Exorcism: A ritual used when a person is possessed by a disembodied entity to cast that entity out of the person's body and thus heal the person. Though there are other practitioners that perform exorcisms, the best-known rites of exorcism are those practiced by the Roman Catholic Church.

Fate Line: In chiromancy or palmistry, the line that determines a person's life path, which is usually placed in the middle of the palm. Strong fate lines reflect a person who settles into his chosen life path at a young age, while weak fate lines indicate people who never really find their true calling. Long fate lines indicate people who continue to follow their chosen course well into old age. Sometimes the fate line is missing; this means that the individual lacks stability. Often alcoholics and drug addicts lack a fate line. See **Chiromancy, Palmistry.**

Feng Shui: Literally, "the forces of the universe." A method of interior design incorporating these natural forces in order to raise our quality of life. Few are aware that we are being bombarded daily by electromagnetic fields that we cannot see or feel. The use of Feng Shui in arranging the furniture, appliances, artwork, and other household objects in our homes channels these electromagnetic energies into compatible layouts that can prevent clashes between the energies, and thus will enable us to take control of our lives and attain our goals. Feng Shui methods concentrate on prosperity, relationships, helpful people, new knowledge, family, children, fame and career success.

Geomancy: An ancient form of divination in which handfuls of soil or other materials taken from the earth were sprinkled on the ground, or when arbitrary markings were scratched into the earth or sand, to generate an assortment of dotted patterns, which could then be "read" by a seer.

Ghost: (1) The spirit of a person, who has died on the material plane, yet does not move on to the higher realms. Ghosts sometimes stay behind because (a) they have died suddenly and/or violently and don't know they're dead; (b) feel too attached to places where they were happy; and/or (c) are still looking or waiting for people who have also died, but have moved on. (2) An image or imprint on the ethers of a traumatic and violent event, which keeps repeating itself again and again, like a video tape. (3) A person who has died and moved on to the higher planes,

yet comes back to warn or otherwise look after someone whom they loved who is now in trouble. See **Spirit, Haunting**.

God-realization, God Consciousness: The point in the evolution of living earthly beings where they attain the state of total and continuous awareness that they are one with God. God-realized beings don't always pass immediately to the Higher Realms, however. Often they remain in earthly incarnation for a while in order to assist others along the path to God-realization. In extreme cases, these God-realized beings take on the role of the Bodhisattva, a being who does not move on to total union with God until every being on a certain planet has reached God-realization.

Graphology: The technique of interpreting one's handwriting in order to discern personality characteristics.

Hands: Many techniques of healing and divination are dependent on the use of the hands. Palmistry, massage, Reiki healing, shamanic healing, acupuncture, and other disciplines are dependent on skilled use of the hands. The main benefits of these disciplines are said to be the release and proper channeling of the body's energies, but many psychologists feel that there are great

Handwriting: Analysis of an individual's handwriting, specifically the details of how the letters are formed, that enables the analyst to deduce specific personality traits. The factors most often considered are pen pressure, the slant of the writing, and the way the letters are formed. For example: Large, sweeping capital letters are usually considered a sign of an outgoing and joyful nature, while tiny handwriting often reveals a poor self-image. Heavy pen pressure is believed by some to reveal a dominating nature.

Haunting: A phenomenon occurring when, for one reason or another, the spirit of a dead person or animal does NOT move on to the higher planes, but remains in a place where he or she feels comfortable, was happy, or isn't ready to leave yet. See **Ghost, Spirit**.

Head line: In palmistry, or chiromancy, the head line runs horizontally from the middle of the palm to the heart line. The head line reveals how a person thinks, though it does not measure intelligence. See **Chiromancy, Palmistry**.

Heart line: In palmistry, or chiromancy, the heart line is the line that stretches from the side of the hand directly under the little finger to the area between the middle and index fingers. The heart line reveals how a person relates to other people, particularly romantic partners. See **Chiromancy, Palmistry**.

Higher Self: The God-Self, that part of every living being that is immortal and has, to some degree, attained God Consciousness. While the Higher Self possesses a greater degree of wisdom and knowledge than the human self, it has not yet returned to the Absolute, and thus is still evolving. Therefore, when one acquires the ability to tune into his or her own Higher Self, it must be borne in mind that even the Higher Self at times misses the mark.

Hypnosis: An induced sleeplike state enabling the therapist to tap into the deepest recesses of the subject's mind. The source of any traumas from the past can thus be uncovered that could be affecting the subject in a negative way - thereby facilitating the release of trauma and freeing the subject from any obstacles the past trauma could be throwing in his or her way. Hypnosis is

often used to explore the subject's past-life history and its effects on the present life, to harness the power of the mind in healing illness and injury, and also to access the individual's superconscious, or God-Self, and attain insights on how the person should approach life, relationships, and other matters in a more enlightened way.

I-Ching: An ancient Chinese oracle. Dating back approximately 4,000 years, the I-Ching is both the oldest known book in the world *and* the earliest surviving method for intuitive decision-making. It is usually presented in the form of a book, sometimes illustrated with sketches and charts, and is accessed by throwing stalks or coins. There are a number of different translations of the I-Ching in book form, as well as a beautifully illustrated card deck and several websites. The oracle itself consists of 64 chapters illustrating universal principles, and tossing the stalks or coins indicates which principles are working in the individual's life at present.

Incantation: A spell or verbal charm used in religious or magical rituals. They vary from culture to culture, tradition to tradition, and as to what end is sought by the ritual. Often they are sung, or recited while music plays in the background. The power, it is believed, lies not only in the appeal to whatever deity the worshipper calls upon, but in the mind of the worshipper himself. Because he is thinking the incantation; saying the incantation; and hearing the incantation - and in rituals where the incantation is read, also seeing the incantation - its power is reinforced; thus it is more likely that the worshipper's desires will be fulfilled.

Intuitive: A person who can pick up on the thoughts and feelings of other life forms, as well as signals of nature. While all psychics are intuitives, not all intuitives are psychics. Psychics tend to get more specific detail, while intuitives work primarily with emotions. Intuitives are also often healers. They can prove invaluable in cases where there's no discernible cause for pain or discomfort because they can sense what exactly is going on and thus are in a better position to know what the healer should focus on.

Kabbalah: An ancient esoteric tradition believed to have been given to Moses directly from Yahweh at Mount Sinai. Kabbalah is also referred to as Jewish mysticism, or esoteric Judaism. The source of Kabbalistic philosophy is the *Sefir-na-Zohar*, an ancient book of twenty-three volumes which expounds at length upon the nature of the Divine, Creation, the origin and fate of the soul, and the responsibilities of human beings. The Zohar also contains detailed descriptions of basic philosophies, meditations, and devotional, mystical and magical rituals. In the beginning, this wisdom was revealed only to a secret inner circle, but is now available to all - Jews and non-Jews alike - through books, videos, workshops, and other sources. The main symbols associated with Kabbalah are the figures of Adam Kadmon, the Universal Man, and the Tree of Life.

Karma: Literally, "action." Karma is a word describing the belief among ancient religious traditions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Kabbalism and many pagan sects, which basically states that "what goes around, comes around," from incarnation to incarnation. This philosophy is stated in the Christian Bible as, "As ye sow, so shall ye reap... He who kills with the sword must die by the sword." According to modern esoteric philosophy, karma can be "good" karma, or it can be "bad karma," and there are many forms of both. One, of course, is *boomerang karma*, which means that if in one life, you blind somebody, in the next, you may be born blind or be made blind in the course of that lifetime. Another form of karma is *symbolic karma*. A good example of this type of karma is the case of a man who was a soldier in one past life and shed a lot of blood, and then in a future life he was plagued by anemia. An example of good karma includes the story of a nun who used her hands to faithfully care for the sick, and then in a future

life was born as a woman with exceptionally beautiful hands. Karma is a much more complex phenomenon than can be outlined briefly. There are many fine books out on the subject.

Kirlian Photography: A photographic process that appears to capture the *auras*, or biofields, of persons or objects depicted in the photograph. Invented by Seymon Kirlian, an amateur inventor and electrician from Krasnodar, Russia, the aura effect is produced by photographing people, animals, or objects in the midst of a high-frequency, high-voltage, low-amperage electrical field, which reveals colorful and glowing exudations called auras, or biofields. Though it has been known and experimented with since the 1930's, it is still controversial. Some who have worked with it believe it reveals a physical form of psychic energy; others believe it shows the etheric body. Some believe that more study of this phenomenon can enable humanity to obtain important insights in psychology, psychic healing, and medicine.

Kola Nut Readings: An African divinatory tradition which is used to obtain knowledge and guidance from one or more specific nature spirits.

Life line: In palmistry, or chiromancy, the life line is the line that stretches from the base of the palm to an area just above the thumb. Generally, the rule is that the longer the life line, the longer the person will live, but a short thick life line indicates not only long life, but robust health. Events in the individual's life are judged by circles, squares, stars, grids, and other lines that cross the life line. See **Chiromancy, Palmistry**.

Major Arcana: The twenty-two Tarot trumps, starting with The Fool and climaxing with The World. Drawn upon ancient archetypes and compiled into a system in the Middle Ages, the Major Arcana illustrate various individuals, concepts, and life situations that most people will have to encounter at some point in their lives. In a Tarot reading, the trumps are generally related to the most important life events - those involving humanity, the world and its life forms, customs, laws, and other major sociological issues. It used to be believed that the Tarot deck developed first, and then the trumps gradually were dropped from the game pack. Now, however, Tarot scholars believe that the Major Arcana, with all their esoteric and religious symbols, developed separately from the game pack, and were joined into one deck around 1400.

Medium via Guides: A medium who does not communicate directly with the dead, but who works through a *guide*. A guide is a spirit who has passed on but who remains close to the earthly plane in order to assist humanity along the way. When working with a medium, the guide communicates with the departed spirit and then acts as a go-between in getting messages from that spirit to the medium.

Medium: Now more popularly called a **Channel**. See **Channeling**. A person whose mind can pierce the veil between this world and the next, and talk to the dead, though some mediums also claim to talk to angels and Ascended Masters. Mediums are most often called upon by people who wish to seek guidance or comfort from friends, relatives, or, in some cases, spiritual leaders who have passed on. Often mediums are consulted in order to clear haunted buildings of spirits who are earthbound - who either aren't ready to leave the earth or don't know that they are dead. In a few cases, there have been murder victims who have helped to solve their own murders through mediums.

Minor Arcana: The fifty-six Tarot cards outside of the Major Arcana, including the Court Cards, and categorized in terms of the four suits and numbered from one (Ace) to ten. The Minor Arcana descended from the original game pack, which is believed to have arisen in China, where

paper was invented, in about 800 A.D. The idea of playing cards entered Europe from China via India and via the Middle East in medieval times. There are a number of records from the late fourteenth century that refer to an Arabic card game called "naib." When the game pack was combined with the Major Arcana and the practice of card divination became widespread, the Minor Arcana began to represent events in the course of the life of the individual. This continues to be the practice even today.

Near-Death Experience: An experience where a person either comes close to death, or actually dies, and then returns to the body. Many people who have gone through this report hearing and seeing things in the room while they were supposedly dead - and in some cases they actually had been declared brain-dead before they returned to their bodies. Others report etheric spiritual experiences such as passing through a tunnel of light and being greeted by dead friends, relatives, or pets, or by angels or spiritual leaders such as Jesus Christ, the Virgin Mary, or the Buddha. Though most so-called scientists dismiss such experiences as the last gasp of a dying brain, some impressive experiments strongly indicate that near-death experiences, or NDE's, are real. See *Body Mind Spirit* by Charles T. Tart, MD.

Numbers: It is said that all things stem from numbers, and the discoveries of modern science bear out that conclusion. It is not known when the human animal first discovered the science of numbers, but ancient rock carvings strongly indicates that numbers were known and understood as early as 35,000 years ago, and perhaps even earlier. Numbers were considered magical until the dawn of the Age of Reason, and in some cultures still are. The science of numerology is only one outgrowth of the original magical tradition. Astrology uses so many numbers that in the Middle Ages, it was considered nothing more than applied mathematics, as was music. In recent times, another form of numbers considered significant is the number that appears at the top of every Tarot card.

Numerology: The study of numbers and their occult meanings. The science of numerology is based on the premise that the full name a person was given at birth, as well as the day, month, and year that person was born, exert a strong influence on character, personality and events occurring during the course of your lifetime. There are two well-known systems of numerology. The older is the Chaldean system, which dates back to ancient Babylonia and is often called mystic numerology because it concentrates more on the occult or mystical rather than the mundane. It makes use of the numbers 1 through 8, and concentrates on the name by which the individual is most well known. The name of the inventor of this system has been lost in the sands of time. The Pythagorean system is more widely used than the Chaldean, having been invented around 600 BC possibly by the father of mathematics, Pythagoras. This system uses the numbers 1 through 9, derived from the full name given at birth, and concentrates on worldly matters more than on the occult. Some modern numerologists use only one system, some use both, and others combine them.

Omen, Bad Luck: Omens that augur stressful events in the life of the observer, or which serve as warnings. Some bad luck omens include sudden storms, the moon surrounded by a ring, the appearance of ravens, crows, or other carrion birds, having a stone fall nearby or thrown at you, and seeing a tree fall. These are not universal symbols, however; it is important to note that events considered bad omens vary between cultures.

Omen, Good Luck: Omens that augur fortunate events in the life of the observer: seeing the sun breaking through the clouds after a storm; a star twinkling between the horns of the New Moon; the sudden appearance of any strong or friendly animal; ripples in a clear lake; colored fish; the

first robin in spring; and the spotting of a butterfly, dove, or swan. As with the bad luck omens, events considered good luck omens vary between cultures.

Omen: An event taking place in the natural world that is said to presage a far more important event in the life of the observer, for better or for worse. An omen can be a dream, a cloud, a rainstorm, the sudden perception of a plant or flower, the appearance of an animal or bird, or a natural event such as a falling stone. Whether the omen is good or bad depends on the tradition in which the observer has been raised.

Other Side, The: See **Astral Plane**. The next level of existence above the physical, where living beings still involved with the cycle of reincarnation and evolution study, rest, and learn in preparation for their next incarnation. The term "other side" comes from the idea that a "veil" clouds the perception of the Astral Plane by earthly beings, and that only Masters, competent yogis, extremely gifted psychics, and those who have passed on can see through to "the Other Side of the Veil." > Back to top

Palmistry: The science of determining personality characteristics and the overall life potential of a human being by reading the lines and other characteristics of their hands. The left hand is said to reflect the individual's potential, while the right hand shows what the person does with that potential. When giving a reading, a palmist reads the shape of the hands and fingers, the length of the fingers, AND the lines. Palmistry may have been invented as early as prehistoric times; the vast number of handprints on the walls of caves demonstrate that at the very least, early humans were fascinated by the hands. Information on palmistry and its methods have been found in ancient Vedic scripts, the Bible, and ancient Greek manuscripts. Aristotle is said to have discovered a treatise on palmistry on an altar to the Greek God Hermes. See **Chiromancy, Fate Line, Head Line, Heart Line and Life Line**.

Paranormal: Literally, "outside the normal." An adjective that describes anything that cannot be explained in light of present knowledge, including ghosts, extrasensory perception, dowsing, astral projection, etc.

Parapsychology: The scientific study of the paranormal, especially extrasensory perception. Many major universities now have separate departments devoted to the study of parapsychology. Perhaps the best known scientific experiments of ESP, telepathy, clairvoyance, and so on, were done in the early part of the twentieth century by Dr. Joseph Rhine and his wife Louisa at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina, USA. The most recent experiments, however, using tighter controls than any ever used in any experiment, are covered by Dr. Dean Radin in *The Conscious Universe* and Dr. Gary Schwartz in *The Afterlife Experiments*.

Past Lives: Many cultures all over the world have, for millennia, accepted the notion that we have lived before, and, after we die, will live again, reborn in different bodies. The concept was popularized in the 19th and early 20th centuries by sensitives such as Mme. H. P. Blavatsky and the psychic Edgar Cayce. In the later decades of the 20th century, much research was done by historians, psychologists and psychiatrists, and other researchers, and a significant amount of evidence was uncovered that supports the idea. Now physicists and cosmologists - who historically have been skeptical of the idea of any sort of afterlife - have, because of their observations of subatomic particles in the science of quantum physics, started to rethink the idea of past lives. See **Karma; Reincarnation**.

Pendulum: A divination practice used to answer YES or NO questions. The diviner hangs a pendulum, usually a necklace with a crystal hanging from it, holds it still, asks the pendulum a YES or NO question, then gently lets go of it. If the pendulum swings from front to back, the answer is YES, and if it swings from left to right, the answer is NO.

Pet Psychic: A clairvoyant whose specialty is telepathic communication with animals. The first pet psychic that attained a high level of renown was Fred Kimball, who displayed an uncanny level of accuracy when communicating with cats, dogs and horses about their families, their homes, and their communities. Two current pet psychics who are rapidly becoming known for their work are Sonya Fitzpatrick of England, who has her own TV show on the Animal Planet channel, and Penelope Smith of northern California, who has published several books on the subject of animal communication.

Poltergeist: Literally, "noisy ghost." Whenever strange physical phenomena occur, such as objects flying through the air for no apparent reason, windows becoming blackened by an indefinable substance, or lights going on and off with no human hand controlling them, this is known as "poltergeist phenomena." Usually, parapsychologists consider poltergeist phenomena less the work of actual ghosts than the frustrated psychic energy of unhappy children or younger adolescents. The story of the Amityville Horror was considered poltergeist phenomena until it was revealed to be a hoax.

Possession: The taking over of the body of a living person by a demon, angel, or departed soul, for whatever purpose. Channelers often leave themselves open to possession, at least for a limited amount of time, whenever they allow their spirit guides to speak through them. Demonic possession is rare, but there are those who believe that some forms of insanity are actually cases of this phenomenon. The Roman Catholic Church has a rite for the exorcism of demons from the bodies of human beings, but it is rarely used.

Premonition: A powerful intuitive feeling that something momentous and important is going to happen. The individual experiencing a premonition does not necessarily have to be psychic, or clairvoyant, or even a lesser intuitive. It is believed that important events sometimes send powerful emanations back into the past, which if believed could enable the people involved to prepare either for the best or for the worst. The vast number of letters and phone calls to the White Star ocean line on the day before the launch of the Titanic, or to the White House in Washington, DC in the last few days before President Kennedy left for Dallas, were NOT from actual psychics, but from ordinary people who simply had an overwhelming feeling of oncoming tragedy.

Psychic: From Greek "psyche," meaning soul. An individual with exceptional gifts for telepathy, clairvoyance, mediumship or prophecy. A sensitive who can intuit and reveal the future, or facts, thoughts, and feelings unknown to him or her. In the past, most people have been skeptical or even hostile in their opinions about psychics, but psychics are now being vindicated by carefully controlled scientific experiments. See **Parapsychology**.

Reading: A consultation with an astrologer, Tarot reader, psychic, or medium that involves looking into the client's past, present, and future, as well as the client's psychological situation and motivations, in order to provide insight and guidance.

Rebirthing: A technique of healing which involves taking the individual back to the moment of birth and reexperiencing birth trauma. The practice makes use of conscious breathwork,

balancing inhaling and exhaling, in order to fill the body with oxygen and thus release toxins from the cells, tissues and muscles, and also mental and emotional blockages, which keep them from living life fully. Oftentimes the breathwork alone is enough to ensure an intense shift in consciousness and releases much of the trauma and negative behavior patterns.

Reiki: One of the more widely known methods of energy healing, involving the direct channeling of the Universal life force, called *chi* by the Chinese mystics, into a client's aura with the intention of healing any illness or other malaise that the client may be experiencing. It is not the only school of energy healing (there are, among others, also *Chi Gong*, *Pranic Healing*, and *Polarity Balancing*) - but it is by far the simplest. If someone wants to become a Reiki healer, he or she must receive *attunements* from an initiated Reiki master. Then, whenever the healer wants to perform a healing, he simply puts his hands on the client's body, visualizes *chi* flowing from the Universe through his hands and into the client's aura. Reiki is believed to be an ancient Tibetan healing method that was lost for many years until it was rediscovered around the turn of the 20th century in Japan by Dr. Mikao Usui.

Runes: An ancient Germanic alphabet dating from roughly 200 BC, believed to have been derived from the Roman or Greek alphabet. Yet, to think of the runes as just another writing system is not only limiting, but also inaccurate. The ancient Teutons inculcated into these letters symbolic meanings drawn from their tribal culture and religion that were kept secret from other peoples. The very word "rune" means "mystery" in a number of Indo-European languages. In ancient times, when the runes were used for divination or spells, they were cut into the branches of fruit-bearing trees, and for this reason it is even now considered best to write or carve them only on natural materials. Nowadays, rune oracles can be found with the symbols cut into crystals or small pieces of wood, and there are also card decks featuring the runes.

Sance (or Seance): A session with a medium (see **Medium**) involving at least one participant and sometimes more than a dozen, for the purpose of contacting dead friends and relatives. Some mediums make use of magical rituals to invoke the dead, while others don't bother. The noted medium George Anderson prefers just to sit, talk, and draw pictures. Near-Death Experience (NDE - see **Near-Death Experience**) researcher Raymond Moody, MD, has a giant mirror in which he asks his subjects to gaze, and most of them have reported making some kind of contact with departed loved ones through the mirror. Generally, researchers report that the more elaborate and affected the ritual, the less likely the medium is to be on the level. Scientific experiments with not only double-blind, but triple-blind safeguards strongly indicate that there are actually mediums out there who do communicate with the dead. See *The Afterlife Experiments* by Gary E. Schwartz, Ph.D.

Shaman: A person with powerful intuitive, psychic, and sometimes healing and telekinetic abilities who is very much attuned to the forces of nature. Many can predict the weather, communicate telepathically with animals, and sense when the energies are out of balance in the bodies or psyches of living beings. Some believe that the vastness and richness of our herbal pharmacopoeia is owed to the intuition of long-ago shamans who observed the effects of certain plants on animals and began to use the healing herbs to help their fellow tribesmen. The term is traditionally applied to the sorcerers and medicine men or women of primitive tribes, but in recent decades a significant number of Westerners have rebelled against the artificial complexity of modern religion, employment, and medicine, adopted the shamanic practices of yore, and begun calling themselves shamans.

Shamanism: The psychic abilities, rites, rituals, healing methods, and respect for nature and its forces typical of the practices of shamans.

Shell: One of the many natural objects used for divination. See **Chamalongo, Cowry Shell Divination, and Kola Nut Readings.**

Silver Thread: See **Astral Projection.** When a person is having an out-of-body experience, the astral body is said to be connected to the physical body by a silver thread, or cord. It doesn't matter if the person astrally projects across the street or on the other side of the galaxy - the silver cord is always there to enable it to return to the body. If the silver cord breaks for any reason, the soul cannot return to the body, and thus the person dies.

Spirit Guides: Spirits who have passed on and have attained a high degree of wisdom and spiritual awareness, yet remain close to the earthly plane and its people so as to guide certain individuals along the path to God-realization. Spirit guides, however, are still evolving, and thus should not be regarded as infallible. The best of them know this and make sure that those they guide know it as well.

Spirit: (1) The divine spark, or God-essence, that drives and animates every life form. The spirit is not to be confused with the soul, however. The spirit is the driving force for one incarnation, one personality, and is primarily of the earth, while the soul's domain is in the higher realms, and the spirit and the human personality represent only one facet of the soul. See **Higher Self.** (2) A disembodied but still earthbound being who remains on earth rather than move on to the higher planes. (3) The animating essence of any life form, be it human, animal, vegetable, mineral, or force of nature. Some gifted shamans have the ability to communicate with spirits of all kinds.

Spiritual Adviser: A psychic counselor, priest, minister, guru, swami, shaman, or other student of metaphysics and spirituality who can zero in on what's troubling a particular individual and can intuitively sense the best ways for the person to resolve their problems. Spiritual advisers also can instruct Seekers in the best way for them to approach the realm of higher consciousness.

Spiritual Astrologer: An astrological counselor whose specialty is advising clients on the best spiritual path for them as revealed in the Natal Chart, and how best to follow it.

Superstition: A belief or practice believed to stem from ignorance, fear of the unknown, or a mistaken concept of causation. Common surviving superstitions based on ancient lore are the idea that knocking on wood will stave off bad luck. This superstition is said to have grown out of the prehistoric idea that friendly spirits dwelt in trees, and if someone was afraid something bad would happen to him, knocking on a tree would let the friendly spirits know that he needed help.

Tarot Reader: A psychic or intuitive who uses Tarot cards as his or her primary focus when giving a reading. The cards serve as stimuli for the reader's insights and ability to give advice.

Tarot Spread, or Layout: A pattern in which Tarot cards are laid out in order to give a particular type of reading. Usually, each position in the spread is associated with a specific meaning, and the sense of the card placed there is blended with the implication of the position it's in. Popular Tarot spreads include the Celtic Cross, the Three Card Spread, the Tree of Life spread, and the Astrological (Twelve House) Spread.

Tarot: A collection of 78 images representing ancient and universal archetypes, as well as situations that might arise in the course of the lifetime of an individual. This collection is arranged in the form of a pack of cards and is used to gain insights into psychology and metaphysics, as well as foretelling the future. The true origins of the Tarot are controversial, having long been lost in antiquity. There are a number of theories, but most scholars agree that its present form originated in the Middle Ages. Until the mid-1900's, there was only one Tarot deck readily available: the Rider-Waite. Now, however, there is a vast number of beautiful and intense Tarot card deck designs available to readers. See **Cards**.

Tea Leaves: A type of divination using the patterns formed in a cup by tea leaves. Also called *tasseomancy*, this form of reading is believed to have developed several hundred years ago in England, probably by the Gypsies who live there. To prepare for a reading, the client drinks a cup of tea, leaving a small amount in the bottom of the cup. The cup is then turned upside down on its saucer. The diviner then picks up the cup and studies the designs formed by the tea leaves left in the bottom and on the sides in order to zero in on the client's problems, find ways to resolve them, and also to predict the future.

Telepathy: The process of communication - without words or gestures - of reading the minds of others. Identical twins, or married couples who have been together for many years, sometimes report being able to communicate telepathically. The more gifted telepaths, however, can read the minds of strangers whom they pass on the street.

Trance: A deep sleeplike state, such as that attained in deep hypnosis. Some psychics or mediums deliberately induce trance states in order to either allow spirit guides or ascended Masters to speak through them, or to leave their bodies through astral projection and explore the Higher Realms in search of advanced knowledge and wisdom.

Afterlife Life after death or a continuation of existence.

Anomaly A condition or occurrence that is not 'normal'.

Apparition The manifestation of an entity with distinct features that enables one to recognize it as a person or object. Most commonly associated with 'Residual Hauntings'..

Banshee A female death omen and probably one of the most feared spirits normally manifesting to warn of an approaching death in the family.

Battlefield ghost Most battlefield hauntings are residual hauntings where parts of battle are played over and over again. These are often caused by spirits who fell they cannot cross over due to the nature of their death.

Calling ghost Ghosts that call out names of the living to get their attention and ultimately lure them to their death.

Charm Used around the world for protection against evil forces, similar to amulets.

Clairvoyant A living person who can 'see' visions of paranormal objects, events, places and people who are not visible via normal sight.

Crossroad A symbolic term denoting the union and joining of paths. The association of the crossroad with witchcraft goes back to ancient Greek and Roman times. The classic crossroad is a point where three roads join. 1) The balance of opposites, 2) the meeting of time, 3) the meeting of space. Crossroads in the paranormal world are often "a locus of paranormal activity".

Demon Typically associated with a hostile entity, reportedly non-human and more animal-like.

Divining rod or Dowsing rod Rods typically in an 'L' shape reportedly can pick up on spiritual energy. Available in many forms, these devices are inexpensive and have been around for many years (with different uses). Diving rods in the past have been shown to help find lost articles or in the very far past locate water.

Ectoplasm Vaporous substance that takes the form of a 'fog' sometimes looking like faces, limbs or bodies.

Elemental An angry or malicious spirit.

EMF detector/ meter These devices measure electromagnetic field fluctuations.

Entity A common word to describe any ghost, spirit, demon, poltergeist, etc.

ESP : AKA extra sensory perception The ability to sense sound, taste, smell and touch without physically doing anything.

EVP Electronic Voice Phenomena - is a mysterious event in which human-sounding voices from an unknown source are heard on a recorded tape, in an untuned radio station (non-air channel) or sometimes on an untuned TV channel (snow). The most common form of EVP are captured on tape. EVP voices are not heard at the time of recording; it is only when the tape is played back that the voices are heard. EVP results vary greatly, some are more easily heard and understood than others. EVPs have been gaining popularity since the movie release of "White Noise". They can be both male & female, be any age and emotion. EVPs are typically spoken in single-words and short sentences. Sometimes they are simply just grunts or groans.

Ghost: Aka apparition, spirit Can best be described as the energy, soul or personality of a person who has died and has gotten stuck between this plane of existence and the next. Many researchers feel these 'ghosts' do not know they are dead. Usually, they will have died under traumatic or highly emotional circumstances. Ghosts are commonly detected by the living in a number of ways: through sights, sounds, smells and sometimes thru a "6th sense".

Ghost hunt/ ghost hunter A group of people (normally 4 to 8) investigating reports of ghosts, sightings and hauntings to determine their authenticity. The collection of paranormal 'evidence'.

Grey Lady Ghosts of women who died violently for the sake of love or from a loss of love. Grey lady gets its name from the color it typically appears as, however, they can also appear to be wearing white, brown and black clothing.

Guardian spirit A spirit who guides or helps (protects). Believed to look out for it's possessor keeping them safe from harm. It is said that everyone has a guardian spirit, however we may not realise it.

Haunting: Aka infestation Hauntings can best be summarized as the manifestations of ghostly presences. There are a few different levels of hauntings, including: poltergeist (typically evil), residual (like the looping of a video that replays again and again - these entities are often unaware of their living observers), demonic (non-human) and intelligent (those that can interact with the living). Hauntings are commonly attached to a particular environment, including houses, buildings or locations where strongly emotional or traumatic events may have occurred. It is, for many, believed that the presence of a certain person/persons can trigger these 'events'.

Infrared light Is not visible to the naked human eye, but with the use of night vision and cameras that can 'see' infrared light it is visible. This type of lighting allows viewing of objects in total darkness while providing camcorders enough light to see everything. You can test your digital camera/camcorder by pointing a TV remote at the lens - look at the screen, and while doing this, press a button on the remote, you should see the light(s) in the end of the remote illuminating. Spiritual energies have been known to cross into the infrared spectrum, making cameras/camcorders that can see this type of light a valuable asset to the ghost hunting community.

Instrumental transcommunication: AKA ITC ITC is a method for attempting to record spirit or transdimensional images on your TV using a video camcorder. By setting up the camcorder directly in front of the TV, it will create what is known as a loopback event. It is said that this produces a frequency to which ghosts are found to be visible on. The entire method is rather simple to deploy and is very close to that of an EVP, only this method employs audio and video.

Levitation A phenomenon typically associated with poltergeist activity where solid objects are lifted by unknown/unseen forces. These solid objects can be furniture and even humans.

Mediums Much like psychics, mediums claim to have extra sensory abilities, however these people typically obtain information from spirits or dead people. Mediums in a non-official manner are also more likely to be 'possessed' for short periods of time, claiming the spirit was controlling their body and speech.

Mirror Mirrors have many lores based on the part of the world you live in. Ancient times - mirrors were believed to reflect the soul and must be protected. Some believe mirrors are a creation from the devil, stating that mirrors can draw souls out of the body. Some also believe mirrors and other shiny surfaces must be covered in a house after a death to stop the recently deceased from taking a living soul with it. It is widely believed that mirrors should be removed from rooms of the sick. It is considered bad for the sick to see themselves as it puts them at a greater risk of dying. It is also considered foolish to look into a mirror at night or by candlelight, as one may see a ghost, which some believe signifies inevitable death.

Moon Every 28 days the moon 'dies' and is 'reborn', it is often thought of as a temporary stopping place for souls after death. The earth's moon, for years has been reported to cause emotional changes in human behavior also. Typically, when a full moon is present violence, crime and abnormal or psychotic behavior is at it's highest levels. Although this theory has been attempted to be disproven, many folks will agree, full moon brings out the loonies.

Night vision Allows the human eyes to 'see in the dark' - ORBs can commonly be seen while viewing possible haunted areas with night vision goggles. This is very similar to the infrared light the camcorders/cameras can use to 'see in the dark'.

Ouja : Aka Ouja board A form of divining consisting typically of a platform with letters, numbers and other various symbols printed on it. Also containing a 'plancette' which participants place 2 fingers along the edges of. This device is designed to 'glide' across the smooth platform or board and spell out messages to the users. This device can be made from household items or purchased at many major toy and discount stores. Although marketed as a game/toy, the OUIJA device (pronounced WEE-JEE) is believed by experts to be an extremely dangerous tool that can lead to possible invitation of unwanted, unpredictable and possibly invasive forces.

ORB Usually a round, semi translucent object that appears 'floating' in photographs and video recordings. ORB's typically are white in color, but some may show blue and red tints. Some say the color of an orb may indicate it's level of evil, as related to the paranormal world. True paranormal based ORB's are also reported to be invisible to the human eye due to their high IR content. Many older 'film' based cameras did not have the ability to see infrared light. With this in mind, ORB's are more common in today's world due to the fact that digital cameras are more sensitive to infrared light than old 'film' style cameras. ORB's can be misleading though, many will agree that both bugs, moisture and dust can form what appears to be an ORB. ORBs can be different in color, here are the most common colors and their meanings (not scientifically proven accurate): RED = RESTLESSNESS, STRESSED, DARK RED = ANGER, PAIN OR SOME FORM OF IMPAIRMENT, TRANSPARENT RED = HIGH ENERGY LEVEL, ORANGE = HEALING ENERGY, YELLOW = CAUTION, PINK = OPENNESS, LAVENDER = AT PEACE (WITH GOD), GREEN = HEALING, FERTILITY, RECOVERY, SAFE, DARK BLUE = SHYNESS, SHIELDING, BROWN = CONNECTION TO THE EARTH, WHITE = HIGH FREQUENCY, SHIELDING, PROTECTION, SILVER = TELEKINETIC POWER

Paranormal Any occurrence or phenomena that is not accustomed to or is uncategorized by standard academia (unexplainable events).

Pentagram: Pentacle Traditional 5-pointed star design representing both spirituality and protection when point is up. When inverted it is said to signify diabolism.

Pendulum Used to find spirit energy, usually the pendulum is attached to some form of string and will begin swaying back and forth upon a spiritual encounter.

Poltergeist Poltergeist, just like in the movie typically centers around a single person more commonly a child or adolescent. This word actually originates from a German word meaning "noisy spirit". It is believed that poltergeists are caused by the subconscious mind of that individual, see also psychokinetic activity. This 'person' is often under emotional or physical stress. Common signs of this type of intrusion include noises and thumps on walls, ceilings and floors, it may also include physical movement of objects and have abnormal effects on lights, tvs, radios and other susceptible electronic appliances.

Possession Invasion of the human mind by either a spiritual or demonic entity. Lasting for an undetermined amount of time, can influence the personality of the 'host' causing abnormal and often rude behaviors.

Psychic A psychic is a person who claims to have extra sensory abilities, including clairvoyance and precognition. Psychics are often attacked by critics as being fakes, but many seem to be able to more easily communicate with the next plane of existence.

Psychokinesis A phenomenon where objects are displaced or moved around without being touched. It is reported that the power of the mind causes the item(s) to move.

Reciprocal apparition A rare type of encounter when the spirit and witnesses can see each other and interact.

Retrocognition A displacement in time where one apparently sees into the past.

Seance A group effort in which the living attempt to group power to contact the spirit world. Typical seance's include a group of people holding hands or with hands palm down flat on the table's surface with fingertips touching adjacent partners. Seances vary in design, normally a candle will be lit for light and often an article or belonging to a once living person the group is attempting to reach will be brought into the room. It is thought that the bringing of an item that the once living person owned or cherished will enhance the ability to communicate. Seance's are potentially dangerous and are not recommended to try without professional assistance.

Shadow people/ Shadow ghost These entities are typically not evil or demonic, but simply represent a different configuration pattern than the previously documents ORBs, vapors, ectoplasms, etc. Spirits of the dead may manifest in many configuration patterns according to what they choose. It does take more energy to be displayed as a full body apparition than being a ball of light or a vapor of energy.

Spirit Discarnate being, essence or supernatural force.

Stigmata The process by which physical marks appear on a body, without any reasonable explanation.

Table tipping An experiment in psychokinesis where three or more participants lightly place fingers along the edges of a small table top. Normally associated with a unison chant "table move... table move" - it is reported that with enough concentration and participant cooperation the table will begin to wobble and possibly move out of place. Extreme cases have shown the table moving around an entire room or elevating slightly on one side.

Talisman, see also Amulet A design or inscription that is either worn or carried for invoking strength, power and protection.

Thermal scanner This device measures the ambient air temperature and can indicate a change in air temperature.

Urban legend A story too good to be true, usually consists of a strange story of a supposedly real event.

Vortex An anomaly which often will show up in photographs as a translucent tube or funnel shaped object. They are relatively rare in appearance but can normally be seen in photographs taken at the site of a suspected haunting. Researchers believe the vortex is an entry point into the spiritual world or dimension.

White noise White noise is a signal that has a flat frequency spectrum. The signal has equal power in any band. A white noise signal combines every possible tone humans can possibly hear (20,000) in to one audible 'noise'. Since it contains all frequencies it is often used to mask other sounds. Tune in to your FM radio in between stations, that "static" you hear is actually a close form of white noise.

Witching hour A time of night when it is believed that the 'other world' can come to the mortal plain. The witching hour is defined as falling at midnight on the night of a full moon. The time window for the strongest witching hours are said to be between 12am and 3am.

Banishing — Formal, ceremonial procedure effected to cast an invisible presence or influence out of an area.

Continuance — Commonly referred to as life after death, survival of the psyche post-cessation of the biological organism that had generated it.

Demonologist — A person, usually a member of the clergy, who studies and catalogs demons.

Digital audio — Refers to the small digital sound recorders used in investigations or to a recording media.

Digital infrared camera — Captures images invisible to people. Images are feed processed by a computer for examination.

Dowsing rod — A Y-shaped rod or two L-shaped rods; used in searches for underground water, discovering the location of unmarked graves, determining the sex of unborn children and locating ghosts.

Ectoplasm — A filmy, quasi-solid substance reported to issue from a medium's the mouth, nostrils, eyes, ears, navel or nipples during trance states. In photographs, this phenomenon seems to resemble soaked muslin fabric. Whether it has ever been genuine, virtually no ectoplasm has been reported in the past 50 years.

Electromagnetism (also, electromagnetic field, or EMF) — A force given off by electric charges; found in anything that uses electricity. Some believe spikes in electromagnetism can be tied to paranormal activity.

Entity — A disembodied consciousness commonly referred to as a ghost, spirit or demon.

EVP (electronic voice phenomena) — Disembodied voices and sounds picked up by recording devices.

Exorcism — Ceremonial expulsion of invading entities from a person or dwelling.

Orb — Spherical image, usually translucent white, though sometimes reddish or bluish, which inexplicably registers on film and videotape.

Hi-8 — A kind of portable video-tape camcorders.

Intelligent haunting — An incident in which a ghost knows interacts with the living. The entity might be trying to win a person's assistance on something or just trying to scare the crap out of him.

K-2 meter — A device, specially calibrated for paranormal investigations, that measures magnetic fields. Some believe it can be used to train a spirit to intensify its magnetic field as a form of communication.

Matrixing — The tendency for people to interpret sensory input as something familiar or more easily understood and accepted.

Medium — 1. A person saying she can sense emotions of those dead or alive, and/or is sensitive to electrical fields around people and entities.

MiniDV — A small digital video recorder that records.

Psychic cleansing — A less ritualized form of exorcism wherein a site is purified and malevolent influences banished through prayers.

Residual haunting — Psychic imprint of an incident that is repeatedly played out and witnessed by someone living. Ghosts in these time-displacements often seem unaware of observers.

Silky — A female ghost attired in a rustling silk garment (sometimes seen, other times just heard), who performs domestic chores for a household after the occupants have retired for the night.

Smudge sticks — Traditional Native American tools used for purification, healing, clearing, cleansing and spiritual ceremonies. Their smoke is believed to balance or eliminate negative energy.

Thermal-imaging digital camera — Records images of long-wavelength infrared (IR) radiation, sometimes referred to as heat, which is invisible to people. This allows the capture of images in even total darkness, or through smoke or fog.

Vortex — A gateway that opens from the spirit world letting entities into ours.

Afreet: In Arabic lore, the vengeful spirit of a murdered person which arises from the victim's shed blood.

Akashic Records: Originally a Hindu concept of a vast, and ever increasing, psychic repository of every thought and emotion - human or otherwise - which has ever been, and into which some individuals seem able to tap.

Alchemy: The exploration and application of the sciences, particularly chemistry and the pseudo science of astrology, such as they were understood during the middle ages and early Renaissance period. Alchemists were chiefly dedicated to the worthy pursuit of producing gold from baser metals and various materials.

Allee, John Dewey: (b. March 8, 1951) Occult author and founder of a "Satanic Church" in Salem, MA, and New England's version of [Aleister Crowley](#). Note: On May 1st, 2003, Dewey's organization reported he'd expired; it turns out he's merely retired.

Alma: Russian wildman encountered in Siberia and northern China, generally described as being covered in hair and powerfully built, though shorter in stature and more human appearing than the [Yeti](#). Some researchers have suggested that Almas may be descended from Neandertals (*Homo Neandertalensis*).

See also: [Bigfoot](#), [Yeti](#)

Amulet: A symbol with magical significance, which is worn as a pendant or ring.

See also: [Icon](#), [Pentacle](#), [Rune](#), [Talisman](#)

Anomaly: An occurrence or condition removed from ordinarily understood experience.

See also: [Paranormal](#)

Anthropomorphize: The humanocentric tendency of imposing human perceptions and priorities upon spirits and other wordly creatures or forces, assuming that all consciousnesses must be akin to ours on some basic levels. (This is a logical assumption when applied to the survival instinct and perhaps to physical procreation; anything more is merely a guess.)

Apparition: The projection or manifestation of a quasi-physical entity.

Astral Travel: Belief or theory that a person's spiritual awareness can temporarily detach itself from the physical body, remaining connected by what is called the "silver cord," and experience things in other locations, time frames or dimensional planes. Some refer to this as "Astral Projection" or "Mind Projection."

Atavism: Reversion to an earlier, ancestral type.

Aura-world: A reflection of our own sphere of existence, composed of the electromagnetic emanations of physical matter, and probably influenced by thought and emotion. It is another dimensional plane proceeding from one in which we exist.

Avatar: Hindu belief in divine incarnation.

Baphomet: Demon character supposedly worshiped by the Knights Templar in 14th century France. Some present day practitioners of the black arts regard Baphomet as a "god" of lust and regeneration, or as symbolic of the Devil. See also: [Sigil of Baphomet](#)

Banishing: Formal, ceremonial, procedure effected to cast an invisible presence or influence out from an area. This term can refer either to a spiritual [cleansing](#), or the closing of a magical rite, when the invoked powers are dismissed.

Bigfoot: A bulky, hair covered, bipedal humanoid which appears to possess both human and ape-like characteristics. Also known as Sasquatch and Yeti, depending upon locale. Sightings of these creatures have for centuries been widely reported.

Bogey(-Man): A grim spectral figure who delights in menacing mortals with rather gruesome pranks and abductions. Although the lore of this character has degenerated into a familiar device

used to threaten rambunctious children, the 'Bogey' was formerly soundly dreaded in Celtic regions, and was said to prowl the stretches of fields, marshes, and moors, looking for hikers and travelers who had strayed from their paths.

Cabot, , Laurie: (b. 1933) Wicca spokesperson, author, and for the past thirty years, recognized as the official High Priestess of the Witches of Salem, MA.

Carcosa: A mysterious nether region or outer-world containing the mythical lake called "Hali," which appears in the fiction of authors Ambrose G. Bierce ("An Inhabitant of Carcosa") and Robert W. Chambers ("The King in Yellow" : "Cassilda's Song"). There are students of arcane, mystical lore who believe that Carcosa may truly exist, which is why it is included with this roster of terms.

Chupacabra: Spanish for Goat sucker. In Puerto Rico, for twenty some years, numerous livestock and stray pets have been found with throats torn out, drained of blood and bearing mysterious puncture wounds. On the scene sightings of the creature supposed responsible are exceedingly rare, and descriptions always include "glowing red eyes." Locale and the absence of distinct tracks rule out either wolverines or monitor lizards, both of which always drag off their prey. The most feasible suggestion is a coyote or feral dog, but again, the behavior doesn't match. Whatever is the true culprit, Chupacabra has become a popular sensation on the island. See also: [Lurking Enigma](#)

Construct, Psychic: It has been theorised, and experimentation has been conducted to support this premise, that through directed psychic energies a responsive spirit-like entity can be created, continuing for a time to exist independently.

Continuance: Commonly referred to as life-after-death, survival of the psyche post cessation of the biological organism which had generated it.

Cleansing (Psychic): A less ritualized form of exorcism, where-in a dwelling or site is purified and malevolent influences are banished through prayers, spoken as the petitioner moves through the area.

Crop Circles: During the past three centuries, throughout the British Isles but with a particular concentration in the southern region of England, circular impressions spanning sometimes several hundred feet in diameter and often quite intricate in design, have frequently and inexplicably been appearing overnight in wheat and grain fields. Sometimes the source can be traced to hoaxsters; sometimes the details do not allow for any satisfactory, mundane explanation. Much documentation, as well as speculation, regarding this topic is available.

Crowley, Aleister (Edward Alexander): (b. 1875, d.1947) Scottish-born occultist, metaphysician, sorcerer, adventurer, poet and author of many occult treatises and manuals, including 'Magick In Theory And Practice.' Crowley once dubbed himself "The Great Beast 666," one of the few of his many monikers which stayed with him, and the press referred to him as "The Wickedest Man in the World." Although in some respects brilliant, Crowley gave himself over to excess, amorality and eventual dissipation. His writings are still studied and analyzed by many present day, serious students of the magic(k)al arts.

Crypto-zoology: The branch of paranormal research which deals with the exploration of legendary creatures such as Bigfoot, lake and sea monsters, thunderbirds, etc. It should be noted

that the Giant Squid (the "Kraken"), orangutans (the "Red Men of the Forest"), Komodo Dragons and gigantic Nepalese elephants all were formerly included in the roster of fabled creatures!

Crystal Skulls: Five human skull models, exquisitely crafted in antiquity from solid quartz crystal, have been found in various locations throughout Latin America, the best known of these being the 'Mitchell-Hedges Skull,' discovered in 1924 in the Balese Jungle of Labuton by Anna Mitchell-Hedges while on an expedition with her father, and still in her possession in Canada. The others are kept in collections in Guadamala, Texas, the Smithsonian and the British Museum. Mayan legend tells that eight more crystal skulls remain, and that by the time all thirteen are united, mankind will have learned how to extract and decipher the vital information, history and revelations, which they contain.

C'thulu: A creation of author H.P. Lovecraft and a favorite of horror/science fiction enthusiasts, C'thulu' (pronunciation is interpretive) is described as a kind of demon-god from another world, a monstrosity resembling a gigantic squid or octopus who "sleeps and dreams" in his lair at the bottom of the Arctic ocean, biding his time until some foolhardy "diciples" find means to call him to rise and reclaim dominion of the earth. Doubtlessly, some are actually trying! See also: [H.P. Lovecraft](#) and [Necronomicon](#).

Dee, Doctor John: (b. 1527, d. 1608) Alchemist, astrologer, seer and advisor to Queen Elizabeth I of England who, along with his somewhat unscrupulous associate Edward Kelly, supposedly devised a method of deciphering an angelic language, known as the "[Enochian Calls](#)."

Demon: Hostile and resentful entity, supposedly of non-human origin, which some believe to be "fallen (from grace) angels." [\[Read More\]](#)

Doppelganger: German for "Double-goer." A person's duplicate or identical counterpart, seen as a result of bi-locational or astral travel. This phenomenon has been overshadowed by the more modern (and viable) concept of cloning, with its speculative ramifications.

Druid: A Celtic priest of the Bronze or Iron Age, trained in healing, divination and astronomy, whose tradition was passed on to successors by oral tradition.

Empath: An individual who is particularly sensitive to the psychic emanations of his or her surroundings, even to a degree of telepathically receiving and experiencing the emotions of others in their proximity. Obviously, psychic empathy can be regarded as a mixed blessing, and the empath must learn to gain a measure of control over this ability.

Enochian: A magical, "angelic" language first translated by Dr. John Dee, and used in the rituals of both the "Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn" in the 19th century and the "First Church of Satan" in the 20th century. See also: [Dee, Doctor John](#)

Entity: A disembodied "consciousness" commonly referred to as ghost, spirit or (if of an apparently malicious or resentful nature) demon.

Entropy: The observation that everything in the material Universe will eventually, inevitably wind-down, burn-out, fall apart ... well, I'm sure you get the (dismal) picture.

E.V.P: 'Electronic Voice Phenomena.' Disembodied "voices" and sounds imprinted on audio recording devices.

Faustus, Doctor Johann: (b. circa 1455, d. 1540) Scholar, physician and alchemist from Wittenburg, Germany, who was renowned for his proficiency in treating victims of the plague contagion (to which the Doctor seemed strangely resistant), and the basis for the stories by Johann Wolfgang Goethe and Christopher Marlowe about a learned man who sold his soul to the devil through his infernal agent Mephistopheles in exchange for "four and twenty years" of knowledge, youth and power.

Fetch: A spectral double of a living person.

See also: [Doppelganger](#) and [Wraith](#)

Fetish: Aside from the modern sexual connotation, a fetish is a shamanistic tool in the form of a figurine, animal part or a pouch containing items with magical associations.

Floating Orb: Spherical image, usually translucent white, though sometimes of a reddish or bluish hue, which inexplicably registers on photographic film and videotape, also known as "[Globule](#)."

Globule: An anomaly where-in floating, circular forms appear on photographs or videotape, which seem indicative of spirit activity. Globules are a natural containment formation of the meniscus of liquid, as in gas containing bubbles; perhaps the interaction of energy and a quasi-physical substance produced by spiritual manifestations results in a similar effect, the globules being an initial containment of energy. Presently, all we know is that they continue to appear, and extraneous possible causes such as moisture, light refraction or emulsion seepage, etc., have been considered and ruled out.

Golden-rod: A rare anomaly seen in videotape recorded at the site of a suspected haunting, appearing as bright, white or yellowish lines rapidly moving across a room. See Also: [Globule](#), [Vortex](#)

Grey: The most frequently reported visitor from an alien world, described as having greyish skin, a bulbous cranium, tapered chin, straight, unmoving, horizontal line for a mouth, slits substituting for a nose, slanted eyes, and a slight body. In some accounts, it has three fingers plus an opposable thumb on each hand. Supposedly, such beings were encountered by Betty and (the late) Barney Hill during their abduction in New Hampshire in September, 1961. See Also: [Apparition](#)

Hallowe'en: 'The Eve of All Hallows,' also known by Pagan Celts and Wiccans as 'Samhain' (pronounced, 'Sow'-an'), October 31, the night preceding the Catholic Church's 'All Saints Day.' For a millennium, in much of Europe and the British Isles, this was held to be the night when departed relatives were especially remembered, and the veil separating the realms of the living and the dead was rendered thinner than usual. Jack-o' lanterns were placed on stoops and window-sills to frighten off malicious spirits. Hallowe'en is presently celebrated as a night of revels and masquerading, and in Mexico it is part of a traditional annual festival known as 'El Dia De Los Muertos' ('The Day of the Dead').

Haunting: The manifestation of a ghostly presence, or presences, attached to a specific locale. Hauntings can be categorized into four (usually) distinct types, these being [Intelligent](#) (responsive), Poltergeist (likely initiated by pent-up stress on a subconscious level), [Residual](#) (replay) and Demonic (non-human origin). See also "[Infestation](#)."

Hex: A magical working, or "spell," cast to influence a person's will or fate, most often referring to a curse rather than a blessing or healing.

Hobgoblin: Mischievous sprite (fairy, spirit) who delights in perpetrating pranks upon hapless humans, once widely believed in and dreaded throughout Europe and Celtic regions. (Caution: It is theorized that these diminutive denizens of the netherworld will, upon occasion, interfere in psychic investigations by devices such as misplacing directions and telephone numbers, draining flashlight and camera batteries, and even pulling keys right out of investigators' pockets!) I assume that anyone who reads the preceding caution will realize it is farcical!

Homunculus: A form of miniature human supposedly produced (for purposes unknown) in the laboratories of medieval alchemists. See also: [Alchemy](#)

Hypnosis: A state of profound mental focus, actually self-induced although an external agent - a "hypnotist" - often acts as the catalyst, or director, for the subject entering this state. Also known as "Mesmerism" after Franz Anton Mesmer who first popularized this practice (utilizing magnets as his props) during the last two decades of the 18th century. As concerns paranormal investigation, hypnosis is sometimes used as a vehicle for "past lives regression" and memory restoration in suspected (alien?) abduction cases.

Icon: A rendering or image of particular (often religious) significance.

Imbolc: In the Wiccan calendar, February 2nd is celebrated as the day when winter's end is in sight, and the return of the sun's warmth is anticipated. Also known as Candlemas and the familiar Ground Hog Day. See also: [Wicca](#)

Incubus: Stemming from medieval lore, a demonic entity capable of sexually arousing and sometimes assaulting human females. Cases of apparent incubus attacks continue to be documented, suggesting a germ of reality behind the myth.

Infestation: Repeated and persistent paranormal phenomena, generally centered around a particular location or person(s). Also known as a haunting.

Influence: An invisible entity of undetermined nature, effecting the inhabitants of a dwelling. This may initially manifest as an inexplicable feeling of uneasiness, then be followed by more definite signs which reveal a [haunting](#).

Jersey Devil: In the Pine Barrens region of northern New Jersey and New York, for more than two and a half centuries there have been reports of a very strange and singular creature described as having an equine head, glowing, reddish eyes, stork's legs, forelimbs with claw-bearing paws, a pointed tail and membranous, bat-like wings. It emits a shrill, piercing scream, and has been sighted rifling through garbage, standing in paths and roads, and flying just above the tree tops. One rather indistinct photo of this Jersey Devil has produced, but to the best of my knowledge, no one has yet recorded its ear-splitting cry. See also: [Lurking Enigma](#)

Kirlian Photography: Named after Semyon Kirlian who, in 1939, discovered - reportedly by accident - that when an organic or nonliving object is placed upon a photographic plate and subjected to a high electric current, a glowing "aura" forms around the object and is imprinted on the film. It is more accurate to say that rather than revealing a natural aura, this process produces

such. However, fluctuations in the magnetic fields surrounding the subjects can be detected in this way, and Kirlian photography, the technique having been improved upon through the years, has recently come into use as a medical diagnostic device. It also has a popular market at psychic fairs as a sort of high-tech, more expansive version of the mood ring. Kirlian photography does produce some beautiful and interesting effects.

LaVey, Anton Szandor: (b. April 23, 1930, d. Oct. 29, 1997) Birth name was Howard Stanton Levey. One of the major figures of the occult revival of the 1960's and 70's. Charismatic and self-promoting, LaVey formed the 'First Church of Satan' in 1966 and his 'The Satanic Bible' was published by Avon Books in 1968. LaVey's version of Satan was allegorical, symbolizing "the Spirit of Rebellion" as well as an unknown, , but potentially implementable "force of nature." The ceremonies he devised were entertaining psychodrama, and his Satanic philosophy was based on rational self-interest, albeit with overtly diabolical trappings.

Lepke: A very unique and interesting type of spiritual manifestation, a ghost which has the appearance of a solid, living person, may even converse with someone, then suddenly vanishes. "We were talking, I turned to face her again, and she was just gone!" Such apparitions are most often reported to have been encountered within, or immediately outside of cemeteries.

Lycanthrope: A person who projects a frenzied display of their innate savagery for periodic episodes, believing themselves to be overcome by the spirit of a beast.

Manzee: Hypothesized hybrid of *Homo sapiens* (human) and *pan troglodyte* (chimpanzee), also referred to as a "sport". A disturbing notion, is it not? See also: [Cryptozoology](#)

Metaphysics: Said to have been instituted by Aristotle, the line of philosophical thought which seeks the "why and wherefore," the intrinsic meaning of existence and human endeavor.

Miracle: A wondrous and beneficial event, apparently brought about by supernatural/divine agent.

Materialization: A ghost appearing visually, suddenly or gradually, sometimes indistinct, sometimes seemingly quite solid.

Matrixing: The natural tendency for the human mind to interpret sensory input, what is perceived visually, audibly or tactilely, as something familiar or more easily understood and accepted, in effect mentally "filling in the blanks."

Moon Madness: As the Lunar cycle waxes to its full point, incidents of psychotic behavior, violence and crime seem to escalate. To a lesser degree, the phase of the New Moon seems correlated to a rash of abnormal behavior. Current understanding of human psychology and physiology refutes the observation that our moon can exert significant influence on the human mind, 'though statistics support it. (Hence the term "lunatic" for crazy person.) Naturally, it is during the nights of the full Moon when cult activities will be at their zenith. Also, there are those pesky [werewolves](#) to contend with!

Mumiai: Native American Indian spirit which behaves in the manner of a Poltergeist. See also: [Poltergeist](#)

Nanteos Cup: During the Reformation in the 1520's, when King Henry VIII ordered the closing and destruction of England's Catholic monasteries, the monks of Glastonbury Abbey bequeathed a small, unassuming vessel made of olive wood to the stewardship of a certain family in Wales, saying only that it was their greatest treasure. The remnant of this bowl is now in the keeping of the last living member of this family. Many believe this to be the actual 'Holy Grail,' the cup of which Christ partook at the Last Supper, and whice, the legend tells us, was conveyed to Cornwall in A.D. 37 by Joseph of Arithamathea (who, as a prosperous tin merchant, would have been familiar with this trade route). Healings have been attributed to the Nanteos Cup.

Nazca Lines: In the Nazca Valley of southern Peru are etched enormous tracings of figures of a club wielding man, a splendid spider, a horse, a duck and other figures. Estimated to have been painstakingly etched into the rocky soul more than a millenia ago, these enigmatic representations can be beheld in their entirety only from an arial viewpoint (by ancient, sub-equatorial balloonists. perhaps?).

Necronomicon: A grimoire (that is, collection) of ancient sigils and incantations of nebulous origins, discovered in the 8th century by the "Mad Arab," Abdul Alhazred, said to be capable of opening a chasm to the "Dread Dimension" and unleashing the wrathful power of the timeless "Elder Gods." Although some occultists believe this tome to be at least derived from genuine (and nefarious) sources, we are fairly confident that it sprang from the fiction of Providence, Rhode Island-born horror author, Howard Phillips (H.P.) Lovecraft (b. 1890, d. 1937).

Necronomicon Spellbook: A toned-down, elegantly printed companion book to the ['Necronomicon'](#), also by Avon Books.

Nexus: The transitional, or joining point connecting physical matter (which, in a sense, is energy condensed) and pure energy, and containing properties of both definites, i.e. the physical brain producing a mind through its network of dendrites and firing axions, or the body's connection to the spirit. The concept of the Nexus is the basis for much conjecture and postulating.

Non-religionist: A materialist, one who embraces no formal religious beliefs; a more descriptive term than atheist or agnostic.

Nosferatu: Slavic, old world term for vampire, meaning "undead."

Oracle: A prophet, seer and visionary, especially one of renown. Also, a special device whice aids in prognostication, such as a crystal ball. (i.e. "The Mystifying Oracle" of William Fuld's Ouija Board.)

Pact: The belief, prevalent in the late middle ages through the Renaissance, that someone could trade his or her soul in return for wordly gain. See also: [Faustus, Doctor Johann](#)

Paranormal: The realm of occurances and phenomena removed from those to which people are accustomed and comprehend, and presently uncategorized by standard academia.

Parapsychology: The avenue of paranormal studies and research relating chiefly to psychic abilities (e.s.p., telepathy) and spiritual phenomena.

Pentacle/Pentagram: The traditional five-pointed star design, with its interior pentagon dilineated, generally representing both spirituality and protection when point "up"; when inverted, it is said to signify diabolism.

Phantom Lights: Sometimes they can be attributed to blue methane flame produced by swamp gas, or electrical discharges in the form of what is termed ball lightning or perhaps even misplaced fireflies. Yet, in other instances, the phenomenon of floating lights observed over water, the edge of woods, , lonely backroads and in the windows of darkened houses just can't be dismissed by ordinary explanations. These might be globules which coalesce and intensify in luminosity to the point where they become visible in dark surroundings.

Philosopher's Stone: A wonderous beacon of sublime wisdom and awesome revelation, a powerful conjurer's device, perhaps even an extraterrestrial gem encoded with unimagined, otherworldly knowledge. For centuries alchemists, mystics, learned men and seekers of truth questted for the fabled Philosopher's Stone, ,not really knowing where or even precisely what it was. Oncee obtained, it would impart the wisdom of the world and of the angels. Should this actually exist and is in someone's possession, ,it may well be regarded as one more enigmatic artifact, since it is unlikely to include instructions!

Poltergiest: German for "noisy ghost." This is an extremely rare occurance wherein random objects are moved and sounds produced by an unseen force, the sole purpose of which seems to be to draw attention to itself. The phenomenon always involves a specific individual, frequently a child or adolescent. [\[Read More\]](#)

Possession: Invasion of the human mind by a spiritual or demonic entity, where the invading agent for a span of time, influences or entirely subverts the personality of the human host. It is in these instances that the boundaries of psychology, religion and spiritualism are rendered less distinct.

Precognition: The psychic perception of future events or conditions.

Psychic: Relating to the *psyche*, of the mind or soul, rather than the mundane. Psychic is the most familiar and bandied-about term encountered in paranormal research ("a psychic," "psychic investigation," etc.).

Psychic Vampire: This is a term for individuals who seem to instinctively draw and absorb the psychic energies from others, usually while conversing with (or at) them.

Psychokinesis: A psychic pnemomenon where-in objects are remotely inprinted or displaced and moved around, solely by the powers of the mind (psychic force).

Quabbala (also Cabbala, Kabbala): A very ancient and complex system of Jewish mysticism, probably influenced by Assyrian-Babylonian and Macedonian beliefs and existing as the basis of an underground cult during much of the middle ages.

Radiant Child: The apparition of a child which is seen glowing or surrounded by a bright aura.

Regents: In medieval Eurpean lore, chief spirits who preside over the four regions of the earth: 'Oriens' is Regent of the east, 'Amemon' is Regent of the south, 'Boul' is Regent of the west, 'Eltzen' is Regent of the north.

Reincarnation: The belief that a person's soul will, following bodily death, inhabit a new body in a long cycle of rebirths, purportedly for the soul's evolution through gaining experience.

Residual (Haunting): Psychic imprint of a scene which is repeatedly played out, where the witness of such phenomenon essentially is peering into the past. The ghostly participants of these time-displacements often seem unaware of their living observers. (Read more about [Residual Hauntings Here.](#))

Retrocognition: The psychic perception of past events or conditions.

Revenant: An entity which projects an appearance of being distressed or misplaced.

Sanguinor: A person exhibiting vampiric tendencies (the desire to ingest blood) and attributes. These may be either contrived or pathological.

Satan: Hebraic term for "Adversary," the "Tester" in the Biblical Book of Job, the most familiar name of the Devil, the "Falled Angel" and the "Evil One." Investigators sometimes come across evidence of the activities of Satanic cults, who perform animal sacrifices and apparently believe that desecrations and obscenities are devotions to their dark lord.

Séance: A group effort to contact the spirit world. In standardized format, the lighting of the chamber in which the séance is conducted is subdued, and the participants sit around the table, either holding hands or with hands palm down, flat against the table's surface and with fingertips touching those of the adjacent partners. A candle generally is set on the center of the table. The appointed director or "medium" addresses the spirit(s) with whom contact is sought, and then it's "We await a sign..." TAPS Note: We do not endorse the use of séances.

Shade: An entity resembling a once-living being (human or animal).

Shuck: ('Black Shuck,' 'Old Shuck') A phantom black dog with glowing yellow eyes. Hikers in the British Isles who encounter this spectral creature by lonely roadsides and paths are said to be doomed to die within a year of the sighting. It is from this legend that Sir Arthur Conan Doyle drew his inspiration for his Sherlock Holmes adventure, 'The Hound of the Baskervilles' (1902).

Sidhe: (pronounced Shee) Irish term for Fairy folk, the "little people" who sequester themselves in woodlands and caverns. See also: [TAPS Nature Spirit Dept.](#)

Sigil of Baphomet: Leit-motif if Satanism, this emblem is composed of an inverted pentagram containing a goat head, ancompassed by two, concentric circles, in between which are placed five Hebraic characters.

Signet: A ring bearing a personal or family emblem.

Silky: A female ghost which is attired in a rustling silk garment (sometimes seen, other times just heard) and performs domestic chores for a household after the occupants have retired for the night.

Spirit: Existence apart from, or transcending, the purely physical; also, the life-force of an organism. A spirit commonly refers to a ghost.

Spirit Rescue: Attempting contact with entities, intended to alleviate the entities' distress and aid them in the resolution of their conflicts, and in "crossing over" to a higher, spiritual plane.

Spook: Benevolent spirit exclusively of America which comes from the legends of the Red Indians.

Spunkies: The sad spirits of unnamed, unchristened or unbaptized children, believed by old Gaelic and English tradition to wander country roads in search of someone who will name them.

Stigmata: Persons have been observed periodically bleeding from points on their bodies corresponding to the wounds of the Crucifixion. Although the physiological mechanisms which produce this effect are not understood, it is apparently an externalization of religious fervor. Stigmata has been thought to be an indication of sanctity. St. Francis of Assisi was said to have displayed the stigmatic bleeding, and the best documented case is that of Padre Pio (b. 1887, d. 1968).

Succubus: "Female" counterpart of the incubus, a demonic entity said to inspire lust in men (and most inconveniently!), sometimes capable of physically attacking and inflicting injuries (bruises & slashes). Following a nocturnal visitation from a succubus, the human victim will always feel ill and depleted of vitality, and inexplicably "un-clean."

Synchronicity: Unexplained system of causal interaction which binds together events, actions and thought, manifesting as uncanny coincidences. Term for and existence of this phenomenon was first proposed by pioneering psycho-analyst, Carl Gustav Jung (a contemporary of Sigmund Freud). Synchronicity indicates there is more to the Universe than our understanding of simple cause and effect, and that the subtleties of the mind and matter are somehow interconnected.

Table-tipping: An experiment in psychokinesis which can fairly easily be replicated. Three or four participants lightly place their fingers along the edges of a small table top, then in unison chant "table move, table move..." With sufficient cooperation and concentration, and after several minutes of chanting, the table should start to wobble, pivot on its legs and possibly even lead the participants on a scurry about the room.

Tash: Irish name for a ghost which can appear in either human or animal form. Also called Thevshi.

Telekenisis: A psychic phenomenon where-in objects are remotely displaced and moved around, solely by the powers of the mind.

Thought Transference: Telepathic transmitting of images and messages from the mind of one person to that of another.

Thunderbird: Prevalent among the Amer-Indian peoples, particularly the Algonquin and Cheyene, are legends telling of immense birds, and raging storms that would come in their wake. Interestingly, reported sightings of birds of truly monstrous proportions persist, most frequently through the vicinity of the Sierra Madre mountain range in Mexico. In the Miocene era, approximately eight to ten million years ago, a species of bird, discovered in only 1979 and dubbed "Argentavis Magnificens," (which means 'Magnificent Bird of Argentina') soared

through South American skies, with a wing-span of 25 feet and weighing perhaps 200 lbs! Just maybe...?

Time-displacement: The experience of a time span separate from the native time span of the observer. The phenomenon is sometimes merely viewed and not participated in; sometimes a person seems to actually time-travel to another era.

Ultra-terrestrials: Beings who appear human and visit our plane of existence with some form of message or mission, then inexplicably vanish. Speculation abounds!

Vorthr: Norse guardian spirit. This name is the source of the word Wraith.

Warlock: Term originally meant "deceiver" or "one who misleads," in more modern parlance has become associated with a male witch.

Wizard: A male sorcerer and conjurer who is especially adept and experienced in his craft.

Wraith/Wrayth: The image of a person appearing shortly before or after his or her death; term can also be applied to a ghost.

See also: [Apparition](#), [Ghost](#)

Xenobiology: From the Greek word "Xeno" = strange, the observation/speculation of the biology of very uncommon or unverified creatures. This term has usage in the research categories of cryptozoology and otherworldly aliens.

Xenophobia: A pronounced aversion to people, or beings, of foreign origins.

Yaweh: (pronounced "Yah-vay") According to ancient Hebrew and Quaballistic teaching, the name of God abbreviated to "YHWH," (in Hebrew, pronounced "*Yud-hey vav hey*"), which is the *Tetragrammaton*, whence is derived "Jehova." It was deemed forbidden to pronounce, or even seek to learn, the full, true name of the Absolute. (The more archeological evidence uncovered which tends to support Biblical accounts, the more arises suggestion and speculation that, approx. 3,000 years ago, a powerful extra-terrestrial presence took a particular interest in a nomadic, mercantile, tribal group of desert dwellers who would come to be known as the Israelites, the "People of God.")

Zarcanor - A malevolent spirit which attacks people while they're asleep, inspiring nightmares, and sometimes even inflicting minor injuries such as scratches, bruises and what appear to be finger marks. The name is possibly of Slavic origin.

Zephyr: Spirit borne upon, governing, or manifesting as the western wind.

Afreet: In Arabic lore, the vengeful spirit of a murdered person which arises from the victim's shed blood.

Akashic Records: Originally a Hindu concept of a vast, and ever increasing, psychic repository of every thought and emotion - human or otherwise - which has ever been, and into which some individuals seem able to tap.

Alchemy: The exploration and application of the sciences, particularly chemistry and the pseudo

science of astrology, such as they were understood during the middle ages and early Renaissance period. Alchemists were chiefly dedicated to the worthy pursuit of producing gold from baser metals and various materials.

Allee, John Dewey: (b. March 8, 1951) Occult author and founder of a "Satanic Church" in Salem, MA, and New England's version of Aleister Crowley. Note: On May 1st, 2003, Dewey's organization reported he'd expired; it turns out he's merely retired.

Alma: Russian wildman encountered in Siberia and northern China, generally described as being covered in hair and powerfully built, though shorter in stature and more human appearing than the Yeti. Some researchers have suggested that Almas may be descended from Neandertals (*Homo Neandertalensis*).

See also: Bigfoot, Yeti

Amulet: A symbol with magical significance, which is worn as a pendant or ring.

See also: Icon, Pentacle, Rune, Talisman

Angel: "Messenger of God," a celestial being, benevolent in nature and if visible, appearing in human form, and possessing miraculous abilities such as teleportation, healing powers and knowledge of future events. There have been accounts of angels aiding people in times of crisis throughout the ages, albeit with no real consistency to their 'modus operandi.'

Anomaly: An occurrence or condition removed from ordinarily understood experience.

See also: Paranormal

Anthropomorphize: The humanocentric tendency of imposing human perceptions and priorities upon spirits and other wordly creatures or forces, assuming that all consciousnesses must be akin to ours on some basic levels. (This is a logical assumption when applied to the survival instinct and perhaps to physical procreation; anything more is merely a guess.)

Apparition: The projection or manifestation of a quasi-physical entity.

Astral Travel: Belief or theory that a person's spiritual awareness can temporarily detach itself from the physical body, remaining connected by what is called the "silver cord," and experience things in other locations, time frames or dimensional planes. Some refer to this as "Astral Projection" or "Mind Projection."

Atavism: Reversion to an earlier, ancestral type.

Aura-world: A reflection of our own sphere of existence, composed of the electromagnetic emanations of physical matter, and probably influenced by thought and emotion. It is another dimensional plane proceeding from one in which we exist.

Avatar: Hindu belief in divine incarnation.

Baphomet: Demon character supposedly worshiped by the Knights Templar in 14th century France. Some present day practitioners of the black arts regard Baphomet as a "god" of lust and regeneration, or as symbolic of the Devil.

See also: Sigil of Baphomet

Banishing: Formal, ceremonial, procedure effected to cast an invisible presence or influence out from an area. This term can refer either to a spiritual cleansing, or the closing of a magical rite, when the invoked powers are dismissed.

Bigfoot: A bulky, hair covered, bipedal humanoid which appears to possess both human and ape-like characteristics. Also known as Sasquatch and Yeti, depending upon locale. Sightings of these creatures have for centuries been widely reported.

Bogey(-Man): A grim spectral figure who delights in menacing mortals with rather gruesome pranks and abductions. Although the lore of this character has degenerated into a familiar device used to threaten rambunctious children, the 'Bogey' was formerly soundly dreaded in Celtic regions, and was said to prowl the stretches of fields, marshes, and moors, looking for hikers and travelers who had strayed from their paths.

Cabot, , Laurie: (b. 1933) Wicca spokesperson, author, and for the past thirty years, recognized as the official High Priestess of the Witches of Salem, MA.

Carcosa: A mysterious nether region or outer-world containing the mythical lake called "Hali," which appears in the fiction of authors Ambrose G. Bierce ("An Inhabitant of Carcosa") and Robert W. Chambers ("The King in Yellow" : "Cassilda's Song"). There are students of arcane, mystical lore who believe that Carcosa may truly exist, which is why it is included with this roster of terms.

Chupacabra: Spanish for Goat sucker. In Puerto Rico, for twenty some years, numerous livestock and stray pets have been found with throats torn out, drained of blood and bearing mysterious puncture wounds. On the scene sightings of the creature supposed responsible are exceedingly rare, and descriptions always include "glowing red eyes." Locale and the absence of distinct tracks rule out either wolverines or monitor lizards, both of which always drag off their prey. The most feasible suggestion is a coyote or feral dog, but again, the behavior doesn't match. Whatever is the true culprit, Chupacabra has become a popular sensation on the island.
See also: Lurking Enigma

Construct, Psychic: It has been theorised, and experimentation has been conducted to support this premise, that through directed psychic energies a responsive spirit-like entity can be created, continuing for a time to exist independently.

Continuance: Commonly referred to as life-after-death, survival of the psyche post cessation of the biological organism which had generated it.

Cleansing (Psychic): A less ritualized form of exorcism, where-in a dwelling or site is purified and malevolent influences are banished through prayers, spoken as the petitioner moves through the area.

Crop Circles: During the past three centuries, throughout the British Isles but with a particular concentration in the southern region of England, circular impressions spanning sometimes several hundred feet in diameter and often quite intricate in design, have frequently and inexplicably been appearing overnight in wheat and grain fields. Sometimes the source can be traced to hoaxsters; sometimes the details do not allow for any satisfactory, mundane explanation. Much documentation, as well as speculation, regarding this topic is available.

Crowley, Aleister (Edward Alexander): (b. 1875, d.1947) Scottish-born occultist, metaphysician, sorcerer, adventurer, poet and author of many occult treatises and manuals, including 'Magick In Theory And Practice.' Crowley once dubbed himself "The Great Beast 666," one of the few of his many monikers which stayed with him, and the press referred to him as "The Wickedest Man in the World." Although in some respects brilliant, Crowley gave himself over to excess, amorality and eventual dissipation. His writings are still studied and analyzed by many present day, serious students of the magic(k)al arts.

Crypto-zoology: The branch of paranormal research which deals with the exploration of legendary creatures such as Bigfoot, lake and sea monsters, thunderbirds, etc. It should be noted that the Giant Squid (the "Kraken"), orangutans (the "Red Men of the Forest"), Komodo Dragons and gigantic Nepalese elephants all were formerly included in the roster of fabled creatures!

Crystal Skulls: Five human skull models, exquisitely crafted in antiquity from solid quartz crystal, have been found in various locations throughout Latin America, the best known of these being the 'Mitchell-Hedges Skull,' discovered in 1924 in the Balese Jungle of Labuton by Anna Mitchell-Hedges while on an expedition with her father, and still in her possession in Canada. The others are kept in collections in Guadamala, Texas, the Smithsonian and the British Museum. Mayan legend tells that eight more crystal skulls remain, and that by the time all thirteen are united, mankind will have learned how to extract and decipher the vital information, history and revelations, which they contain.

C'thulu: A creation of author H.P. Lovecraft and a favorite of horror/science fiction enthusiasts, C'thulu' (pronunciation is interpretive) is described as a kind of demon-god from another world, a monstrosity resembling a gigantic squid or octopus who "sleeps and dreams" in his lair at the bottom of the Arctic ocean, biding his time until some foolhardy "diciples" find means to call him to rise and reclaim dominion of the earth. Doubtlessly, some are actually trying! See also: H.P. Lovecraft and Necronomicon.

Dee, Doctor John: (b. 1527, d. 1608) Alchemist, astrologer, seer and advisor to Queen Elizabeth I of England who, along with his somewhat unscrupulous associate Edward Kelly, supposedly devised a method of deciphering an angelic language, known as the "Enochian Calls."

Demon: Hostile and resentful entity, supposedly of non-human origin, which some believe to be "fallen (from grace) angels." [Read More]

Doppelganger: German for "Double-goer." A person's duplicate or identical counterpart, seen as a result of bi-locational or astral travel. This phenomenon has been overshadowed by the more modern (and viable) concept of cloning, with its speculative ramifications.

Druid: A Celtic priest of the Bronze or Iron Age, trained in healing, divination and astronomy, whose tradition was passed on to successors by oral tradition.

Empath: An individual who is particularly sensitive to the psychic emanations of his or her surroundings, even to a degree of telepathically receiving and experiencing the emotions of others in their proximity. Obviously, psychic empathy can be regarded as a mixed blessing, and the empath must learn to gain a measure of control over this ability.

Enochian: A magical, "angelic" language first translated by Dr. John Dee, and used in the rituals of both the "Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn" in the 19th century and the "First Church of

Satan" in the 20th century.
See also: Dee, Doctor John

Entity: A disembodied "consciousness" commonly referred to as ghost, spirit or (if of an apparently malicious or resentful nature) demon.

Entropy: The observation that everything in the material Universe will eventually, inevitably wind-down, burn-out, fall apart ... well, I'm sure you get the (dismal) picture.

Faustus, Doctor Johann: (b. circa 1455, d. 1540) Scholar, physician and alchemist from Wittenburg, Germany, who was renowned for his proficiency in treating victims of the plague contagion (to which the Doctor seemed strangely resistant), and the basis for the stories by Johann Wolfgang Goethe and Christopher Marlowe about a learned man who sold his soul to the devil through his infernal agent Mephistopheles in exchange for "four and twenty years" of knowledge, youth and power.

Fetch: A spectral double of a living person.
See also: Doppelganger and Wraith

Fetish: Aside from the modern sexual connotation, a fetish is a shamanistic tool in the form of a figurine, animal part or a pouch containing items with magical associations.

Floating Orb: Spherical image, usually translucent white, though sometimes of a reddish or bluish hue, which inexplicably registers on photographic film and videotape, also known as "Globule."

Globule: An anomaly where-in floating, circular forms appear on photographs or videotape, which seem indicative of spirit activity. Globules are a natural containment formation of the meniscus of liquid, as in gas containing bubbles; perhaps the interaction of energy and a quasi-physical substance produced by spiritual manifestations results in a similar effect, the globules being an initial containment of energy. Presently, all we know is that they continue to appear, and extraneous possible causes such as moisture, light refraction or emulsion seepage, etc., have been considered and ruled out.

Golden-rod: A rare anomaly seen in videotape recorded at the site of a suspected haunting, appearing as bright, white or yellowish lines rapidly moving across a room.
See Also: Globule, Vortex

Grey: The most frequently reported visitor from an alien world, described as having greyish skin, a bulbous cranium, tapered chin, straight, unmoving, horizontal line for a mouth, slits substituting for a nose, slanted eyes, and a slight body. In some accounts, it has three fingers plus an opposable thumb on each hand. Supposedly, such beings were encountered by Betty and (the late) Barney Hill during their abduction in New Hampshire in September, 1961.
See Also: Apparition

Hallowe'en: 'The Eve of All Hallows,' also known by Pagan Celts and Wiccans as 'Samhain' (pronounced, 'Sow'-an'), October 31, the night preceding the Catholic Church's 'All Saints Day.' For a millennium, in much of Europe and the British Isles, this was held to be the night when departed relatives were especially remembered, and the veil separating the realms of the living and the dead was rendered thinner than usual. Jack-o'-lanterns were placed on stoops and

window-sills to frightened off malicious spirits. Hallowe'en is presently celebrated as a night of revels and masquerading, and in Mexico it is part of a traditional annual festival known as 'El Dia De Los Muertos' ('The Day of the Dead').

Haunting: The manifestation of a ghostly presence, or presences, attached to a specific locale. Hauntings can be categorized into four (usually) distinct types, these being Intelligent (responsive), Poltergeist (likely initiated by pent-up stress on a subconscious level), Residual (replay) and Demonic (non-human origin).
See also "Infestation."

Hex: A magical working, or "spell," cast to influence a person's will or fate, most often referring to a curse rather than a blessing or healing.

Hobgoblin: Mischievous sprite (fairy, spirit) who delights in perpetrating pranks upon hapless humans, once widely believed in and dreaded throughout Europe and Celtic regions. (Caution: It is theorized that these diminutive denizens of the netherworld will, upon occasion, interfere in psychic investigations by devices such as misplacing directions and telephone numbers, draining flashlight and camera batteries, and even pulling keys right out of investigators' pockets!) I assume that anyone who reads the preceding caution will realize it is farcical!

Homunculus: A form of miniature human supposedly produced (for purposes unknown) in the laboratories of medieval alchemists.
See also: Alchemy

Hypnosis: A state of profound mental focus, actually self-induced although an external agent - a "hypnotist" - often acts as the catalyst, or director, for the subject entering this state. Also known as "Mesmerism" after Franz Anton Mesmer who first popularized this practice (utilizing magnets as his props) during the last two decades of the 18th century. As concerns paranormal investigation, hypnosis is sometimes used as a vehicle for "past lives regression" and memory restoration in suspected (alien?) abduction cases.

Imbolc: In the Wiccan calendar, February 2nd is celebrated as the day when winter's end is in sight, and the return of the sun's warmth is anticipated. Also known as Candlemas and the familiar Ground Hog Day.
See also: Wicca

Incubus: Stemming from medieval lore, a demonic entity capable of sexually arousing and sometimes assaulting human females. Cases of apparent incubus attacks continue to be documented, suggesting a germ of reality behind the myth.

Infestation: Repeated and persistent paranormal phenomena, generally centered around a particular location or person(s). Also known as a haunting.

Influence: An invisible entity of undetermined nature, effecting the inhabitants of a dwelling. This may initially manifest as an inexplicable feeling of uneasiness, then be followed by more definite signs which reveal a haunting.

Jersey Devil: In the Pine Barrens region of northern New Jersey and New York, for more than two and a half centuries there have been reports of a very strange and singular creature described as having an equine head, glowing, reddish eyes, stork's legs, forelimbs with claw-bearing paws,

a pointed tail and membranous, bat-like wings. It emits a shrill, piercing scream, and has been sighted rifling through garbage, standing in paths and roads, and flying just above the tree tops. One rather indistinct photo of this Jersey Devil has produced, but to the best of my knowledge, no one has yet recorded its ear-splitting cry. See also: Lurking Enigma

Lepke: A very unique and interesting type of spiritual manifestation, a ghost which has the appearance of a solid, living person, may even converse with someone, then suddenly vanishes. "We were talking, I turned to face her again, and she was just gone!" Such apparitions are most often reported to have been encountered within, or immediately outside of cemeteries.

Lilith: Devil of Sumerian origin and later included in Hebrew beliefs, believed by Quabbalists to have been the first wife of Adam, later excluded from the Talmud, and held by some occultists to be a vampire goddess and a powerful succubus.
See also: Succubus, Vampire

Lore: Collective beliefs and legendry relating to a subject, as in "vampire lore".

Lovecraft, Howard Phillips "H.P.": (b. 1890, d. 1937) Horror fiction writer from Providence, Rhode Island, whose prose apparently is so haunting and convincing that some present day cults practice rituals based on what is termed as Lovecraft's "C'thulu Mythos."
See also: C'thulu and Necronomicon

Lucifer: Name taken from the Latin "luci" (light) and "ferre" (to bear), originally a Roman lesser deity, "Son of the Morning," formerly the name for the planet Venus when observed at dawn, in Christian theology identified with the Devil: arch regent of fallen angels. Lucifer is sometimes called upon in pagan ceremonies and rituals. (See also Satan)

Lurking Enigma: "Lurk" means to furtively move about, and I can think of no more appropriate term to describe this phenomenon - a type of entity which can be visible to human observers, yet appears in distorted, unidentifiable forms. Common traits reported by witnesses include glowing red or silver eyes, dark color (fur or feathers), startling speed and agility, in some cases winged and capable of flight, as with the 'Jersey Devil.' Although such nebulous creatures seem to mean us no harm, encounters with them can be terrifying, and provoke much curiosity. As one would expect, they are extremely elusive.

Lycanthrope: A person who projects a frenzied display of their innate savagery for periodic episodes, believing themselves to be overcome by the spirit of a beast.

Manzee: Hypothesized hybrid of Homo sapiens (human) and pan troglodyte (chimpanzee), also referred to as a "sport". A disturbing notion, is it not?
See also: Cryptozoology

Metaphysics: Said to have been instituted by Aristotle, the line of philosophical thought which seeks the "why and wherefore," the intrinsic meaning of existence and human endeavor.

Miracle: A wondrous and beneficial event, apparently brought about by supernatural/divine agent.

Materialization: A ghost appearing visually, suddenly or gradually, sometimes indistinct, sometimes seemingly quite solid.

Matrixing: The natural tendency for the human mind to interpret sensory input, what is perceived visually, audibly or tactilely, as something familiar or more easily understood and accepted, in effect mentally "filling in the blanks."

Nanteos Cup: During the Reformation in the 1520's, when King Henry VIII ordered the closing and destruction of England's Catholic monasteries, the monks of Glastonbury Abbey bequeathed a small, unassuming vessel made of olive wood to the stewardship of a certain family in Wales, saying only that it was their greatest treasure. The remnant of this bowl is now in the keeping of the last living member of this family. Many believe this to be the actual 'Holy Grail,' the cup of which Christ partook at the Last Supper, and whice, the legend tells us, was conveyed to Cornwall in A.D. 37 by Joseph of Arithamathea (who, as a prosperous tin merchant, would have been familiar with this trade route). Healings have been attributed to the Nanteos Cup.

Necronomicon: A grimoire (that is, collection) of ancient sigils and incantations of nebulous origins, discovered in the 8th century by the "Mad Arab," Abdul Alhazred, said to be capable of opening a chasm to the "Dread Dimension" and unleashing the wrathful power of the timeless "Elder Gods." Although some occultists believe this tome to be at least derived from genuine (and nefarious) sources, we are fairly confident that it sprang from the fiction of Providence, Rhode Island-born horror author, Howard Phillips (H.P.) Lovecraft (b. 1890, d. 1937).

Necronomicon Spellbook: A toned-down, elegantly printed companion book to the 'Necronomicon,' also by Avon Books.

Pact: The belief, prevalent in the late middle ages through the Renaissance, that someone could trade his or her soul in return for worldly gain.
See also: Faustus, Doctor Johann

Paranormal: The realm of occurrences and phenomena removed from those to which people are accustomed and comprehend, and presently uncategorized by standard academia.

Parapsychology: The avenue of paranormal studies and research relating chiefly to psychic abilities (e.s.p., telepathy) and spiritual phenomena.

Sanguinor: A person exhibiting vampiric tendencies (the desire to ingest blood) and attributes. These may be either contrived or pathological.

Satan: Hebraic term for "Adversary," the "Tester" in the Biblical Book of Job, the most familiar name of the Devil, the "Falled Angel" and the "Evil One." Investigators sometimes come across evidence of the activities of Satanic cults, who perform animal sacrifices and apparently believe that desecrations and obscenities are devotions to their dark lord.

Shade: An entity resembling a once-living being (human or animal).

Shuck: ('Black Shuck,' 'Old Shuck') A phantom black dog with glowing yellow eyes. Hikers in the British Isles who encounter this spectral creature by lonely roadsides and paths are said to be doomed to die within a year of the sighting. It is from this legend that Sir Arthur Conan Doyle drew his inspiration for his Sherlock Holmes adventure, 'The Hound of the Baskervilles' (1902).

Sidhe: (pronounced Shee) Irish term for Fairy folk, the "little people" who sequester themselves

in woodlands and caverns.

See also: TAPS Nature Spirit Dept.

Spunkies: The sad spirits of unnamed, unchristened or unbaptized children, believed by old Gaelic and English tradition to wander country roads in search of someone who will name them.

Synchronicity: Unexplained system of causal interaction which binds together events, actions and thought, manifesting as uncanny coincidences. Term for and existence of this phenomenon was first proposed by pioneering psycho-analyst, Carl Gustav Jung (a contemporary of Sigmund Freud). Synchronicity indicates there is more to the Universe than our understanding of simple cause and effect, and that the subtleties of the mind and matter are somehow interconnected.

Tash: Irish name for a ghost which can appear in either human or animal form. Also called Thevshi.

Telekenisis: A psychic phenomenon where-in objects are remotely displaced and moved around, solely by the powers of the mind.

Thought Transference: Telepathic transmitting of images and messages from the mind of one person to that of another.

Time-displacement: The experience of a time span separate from the native time span of the observer. The phenomenon is sometimes merely viewed and not participated in; sometimes a person seems to actually time-travel to another era.

Ultra-terrestrials: Beings who appear human and visit our plane of existence with some form of message or mission, then inexplicably vanish. Speculation abounds!

Vampire: A demonic (?) entity in the form of a diseased person, which perpetuates itself by draining the blood or psychic energy of the living.

Zarcanor - A malevolent spirit which attacks people while they're asleep, inspiring nightmares, and sometimes even inflicting minor injuries such as scratches, bruises and what appear to be finger marks. The name is possibly of Slavic origin.

Zephyr: Spirit borne upon, governing, or manifesting as the western wind.

Black: Opposite of white and purity; judgment of God; death; famine; sin; ignorance; darkness; demonic army; Jesus' death on the cross. (Rev. 6: 2-12; Lam. 4: 8; Jer. 8: 21; Matt 27: 45; Ps. 18: 9, 11; 97:2; 104: 2; Ex. 20: 21; Zeph. 1: 15; Joel 2: 2)

Blue: The Holy Spirit; heaven; heavenly visitation. (Numbers 15: 38; Ex. 28; Num. 4)

Brown (or Tan): Green life turns this color (withers) when dead; born again; without spirit; repentance or turning from dead works. (1 Peter 1: 24; Ps. 37: 2)

Gold: See Metals.

Gray: See Metals. **Silver:** Mixture of black and white; deception; compromise; truth mixed with

tradition. See also Silver in Metals section. (Hosea 7: 9)

Green: Life; can be good or evil life; life of the flesh;. provision; rest and peace. (1 Peter 1: 24; Gen. 1: 30; 9: 3; Ps. 23: 2)

Orange: Also Peach and Tan: If Halloween orange or warning street sign, orange can mean: Great danger; forceful power; warning; caution. Strong anointing as in fire of God; Holy Spirit in fire; God's protection; . purification; persecution; love; God's vengeance; angels. (Prov. 6: 27; Acts 2: 3; Zech. 5: 2; Is. 6: 5-7; Luke 12: 49-53; Song 8: 6; Heb. 12: 29; Heb. 1:7)

Pink: See Red, Tan and Orange (Peach.) It can mean flesh; can be watered down blood, or a watered down gospel, or lack of passion for gospel; can also mean a combination of purity (white) and the blood of Jesus (red). (Rev. 6: 7, 17: 3-6; Ex. 26: 14)

Purple: Kingly; wealth; prince; authority; political power and wealth in the sense of dishonesty and wickedness (Babylon); royalty; majesty power in wealth and royalty; expensive to buy. (Dan. 7: 5, 16, 29; Judges 8: 26; John 19: 2, 5; Rev. 17: 4; 18: 16; Acts 16: 14; Prov. 6: 27; Acts 2: 3; Zech. 5: 2; Is. 6: 5-7; Luke 12: 49-53; Song 8: 6; Heb. 12: 29; Heb. 1:7)

Red: Also Scarlet and Crimson: The blood of Jesus; warfare; sacrifice; passion; strong emotion; forgiveness; cleansing; zealousness; deep sins; conquest; wine; complexion. (Lev. 4: 7; Prov. 23: 31; Rev. 6: 4-7, 12: 3; 17: 3-6; Ex. 26: 14; 2 Kings 3: 22; Lev. 14: 4, 6, 49-52; Heb. 9: 11; Is. 1: 18; Na. 2: 3; Josh 2: 18, 21)

Silver: See Metals.

White: Purity that dispels the darkness; righteousness; God's majesty; blameless; washed white by the blood; redeemed; God's glory; white is associated with light and the new heavens and earth; victory; completion; can also be purely evil. (Rev. 1: 14; 2: 17, 3: 4; 6: 2, 11; 20: 11; Is. 1: 18; Dan. 7: 9; John 4: 35; Mark 16: 4)

Yellow: See Metals. Gold: Something good; honor; infirmity; sin. (Ps. 68: 13)

One: Also First: New; beginning; unity; timing; position or order primacy; deity; sufficiency. (**Du. 6:4; John 17: 21; Matt. 6: 33; Ex. 20: 3; Rev. 1: 11, 17; 2: 8; Is. 44: 6; 45: 5-6**)

Two: Witnessing; separation; discernment; wholeness in marriage; division; enmity; opposition; dividing light and darkness; relationship between God and man is closely tied to our relationship with man. (**Gen. 1: 6-8, 27; 2: 24; 16: 21; Ex. 31: 18; Ecc. 4: 9-10; Matt. 19: 5-6; 22: 37-40; 1 Tim. 5: 19; John 8: 17; Rev. 11: 2-4**)

Three and Third: Complete; perfection; witness; divine fullness; solid attributes; Godhead; conform; resurrection power over sin; divine fullness. (**Romans 3: 9; 6: 9; 1 Sam. 3: 8; Jonah 1: 16-17; 20: 1-9; 1 John 5: 6-7; Col. 2: 9; Eph. 3: 19; 4: 13; John 1: 16**)

Four: World; earth; creation; creative work; four winds; four seasons; four corners of the earth; rule and reign over the earth; global implications such as east, west, north, south; territorial specific realm implications. (**Gen. 2: 10; 41: 34; Rev. 5: 9; 7: 1, 9; 13: 7; Is. 58: 6-10; Ez. 42: 20; 46: 21; Lev. 11: 20-27; 27: 31; John 8: 34; 1 Cor. 15: 39**)

Five: Grace; atonement; fivefold ministry; service (five fingers on the hand); bondage; complete wellness. (Is. 1: 12-14; Matt. 25: 2; Eph. 4: 11; Mark 6: 38-40; Luke 9: 13-16; Gen. 1: 20-23)

Six: Man; beast; Satan; flesh; carnal; toil and strain of the flesh or natural realm; work; sorrow; secular completeness. (Rev. 13: 18; 1 Sam. 17: 4-7; Gen. 1: 26-31; 4: 17-18; 2 Peter 3: 8; 2 Sam. 21: 20; Num. 35: 15)

Seven: Completion; finished work; perfection; rest; perfection in the Spirit. (Gen. 2: 1-3; Lev. 14: 7; 16: 14, 19; Matt. 18: 21-22; Jude 14; Rev. 2: 1; 8: 2; 12: 3)

Eight: Circumcision of the flesh; liberty; salvation; new beginning; resurrection life; die to self. (Gen. 17: 12; 1 Peter 3: 20-21; 2 Chron. 29: 17; 2 Peter 1: 14)

Nine: Fruit of the Spirit; gifts of the Spirit; finality; harvest; fullness of development. (Matt. 27: 45; Judges 4: 1-3; Gal. 5: 22-23; 1 Cor. 12: 4-11)

Ten: Government; law (commandments); order; tithes; measure; trial; testing. (Lev. 27: 32; Ex. 34: 28; Rev. 2: 10; 12: 3; Matt. 25: 1-13)

Eleven: End; finish; final; incomplete; disorder; lawlessness. (Gen. 27: 9; 32: 33; Du. 11: 8; Ex. 26: 7; Matt. 20: 9-12)

Twelve: Divine government and election; apostolic fullness; discipleship; The Church; people of God; united; oversight. (Gen. 49: 28; Numbers 13: 1-16; Matt. 3: 14; Luke 9: 1-2; 22: 30; Rev. 12: 1; 21: 12; Rev. 22: 2; Ex. 15: 27; 29: 15; 1 Cor. 1: 10)

Thirteen: Rebellion; rejection; backsliding. (Gen. 14: 4; Esther 9: 11; 1 King 7: 1)

Fourteen: Passover; recreate, reproduce; servant. (Ex. 12: 6; 1 Kings 8: 65; Num. 9: 5; Gen. 31: 41)

Fifteen: Deliverance; grace; freedom; rest. (Lev. 23: 6-7; Hos. 3: 2; Gen. 7: 20; 2 Kings 20: 6)

Sixteen: Not under the law because of love; free; salvation. (Acts 27: 34; 37-38)

Seventeen: Spiritual order; incomplete; immature. (Gen. 37: 2; 1 Chron. 25: 5; Jer. 32: 9)

Eighteen: Bondage; judgment; destruction; captivity. (Judges 10: 7-8; Luke 13: 11-16)

Nineteen: Faith; void of self-righteousness; ashamed; barren of flesh or of Spirit; repentance. (2 Samuel 2: 30; Rom. 6: 21)

Twenty: Holy; redemption. (Ex. 30: 12-14; Rev. 4: 4)

Twenty-four: Perfection in government; priesthood; consecration; maturity. (Rev. 4: 4-10; Josh. 4: 2-9; 1 Chron. 24: 3-5; 25: 1-12; 1 Kings 19: 19)

Thirty: Beginning of ministry; maturity for ministry; blood of Christ. (Luke 3: 23; Gen. 41: 16; Num. 4: 3)

Forty: Trials; testing. (Matt. 4: 2; Num. 13: 25; 14: 33-34; Ex. 34:27-28; Matt. 26: 15; Acts 1: 6; 7: 30)

Fifty: Pentecost; Holy Spirit; jubilee; liberty; freedom. (Lev. 23: 16; 25: 10-11; Ex. 26: 5-6; 2 Kings 2: 7; Num. 8: 21)

Seventy: Transference of God's Spirit; multitude; increase; restoration. (Num. 11: 16-29; Gen. 4: 24; 11: 26; 46: 27; Ex. 1: 5-6; 15: 27; 24: 1-9; Luke 10: 1)

Seventy-five: Cleansing and purifying; separating. (Gen. 12: 4; **Dan. 12: 5-13**)

One hundred: Fullness; people of promise. (Mark 5: 20; 10: 30; Gen. 26: 12)

One hundred and Twenty: Start of life in the Spirit; end of flesh life. (Acts 1: 5; 2 Chron. 3: 4; 5: 12; Gen. 6: 3; Du. 34: 7)

One hundred and forty-four: God's fullness in all He has creation. (Rev. 7: 1-6; 14: 1-3; 21: 17; 1 Chron. 25: 7)

One hundred and Fifty: End of the judgment by water. (Gen. 8: 3)

One hundred and Fifty-three: Bringing in the harvest; revival. (John 21: 6-4)

Two Hundred: Inadequacy of needs being met in the natural and/or in the Spirit. (2 Sam. 14: 26; Josh. 7: 21; John 6: 7; Gen. 11: 19)

Three hundred: God's chosen; God's remnant. (Judges 7 & 8; 15: 4; Gen. 5: 22; 6: 15)

Three hundred ninety: God's chosen; God's remnant as in the nation of Israel. (Is. 7: 8; Ez. 4: 5)

Six-Six-Six: Antichrist; Satan; number of man; mark of the beast. (Rev. 13: 18; Dan. 3: 17)

Thousands: Coming to maturity. (Joshua 3: 3-4; 1 Sam. 17: 5, 33; Eph. 4: 13; Rev. 12: 18; 14: 9-11)

Two Thousand: Church age ending in resurrection. (Joshua 3: 4)

Ten Thousand: God's army taught and led by God. (Du. 33: 2-3, Jude 14)

Twelve Thousand: The Lords mighty army. (Rev. 7: 5-8)

One hundred and forty-four thousand: The salvation of the world. (Rev. 7: 4)

Brass: Judgment of sin; hardness of heart; Word of God; strength; Christ's glory; willful disobedience; judged; man's word; replacement. (**Ex. 26: 19; Num. 21: 9; Rev. 1: 15; Is. 48: 4; Heb. 13: 10-13; Ex. 27: 13; 1 Corinthians; 13: 1; 2 Chron. 12: 10**)

Gold: See Colors (Yellow).The riches of the glory of God; enduring capacity of the believer as

overcomer; unchanging holiness; wisdom; glory; righteousness; glorifying self when used as adornment or as idol worship. (**Lam. 4: 2; Ps. 19: 10, 119: 72; Rev. 3: 18, 21: 18, 21; 1 Cor. 3: 12; Ex. 20: 23; Is. 40: 19; Job 22: 25**)

Iron: Also Steel: **Power; strongholds; stubborn; strength; blight; strict rules; crushing power; judgment.** (Rev. 2: 27; Du. 28: 23; 48; Dan. 2: 40)

Lead: Heaviness; burden; sinfulness. (**Zech. 5: 8; Ex. 15: 10**)

Silver: See Colors (Gray). Understanding; knowledge; purity; cleanliness; redemption; idolatry; Words of God; promises of God; worldly knowledge; cleansed and ready for use; very precious to God; used as betrayal; furnace of adversity. (**Proverbs 2: 3-4; Ex. 26: 19; Gen. 37: 28; Judges 17: 4; 1 Kings 7: 51; Ez. 7: 19-20; Matt. 26: 15; Is. 1: 22; Acts 19: 24; 1 Cor. 3: 12; Job 28: 1; Ps. 12: 6**)

Tin: Cheap; flimsy; imitation; dross. (**Is. 1: 25; 51: 17-22; Ez. 22: 18-19; Ps. 75: 8; 119: 119**)

Alligator: See Leviathan, Also Crocodile and Dinosaur: Bending; crooked; meandering; snake; monster; devious; distorted; ancient demon; large, evil creature that cannot be tamed with the natural strength of man; principality; evil spirit; ancient demonic control; only the Lord has power over; dragon. (**Is. 27: 1; 51: 9; Job 7: 12; 26: 12-13; 41: 1-10; Ps. 74: 14; 104: 26; Rev. 6: 7; 9: 1-19; 13: 1-18**)

Ant: Hardworking: ability to prepare; wisdom. (**Prov. 6: 6-8; 30:25**)

Bat: Night dweller; thought of to suck blood; unclean; flying creature often related to witchcraft and vampires. (**Du. 14: 18; Is. 2: 19-21; Lev. 11: 19**)

Bear: Evil men; danger (if one plays dead, a bear will not pursue them, so be crucified and die daily); Russia; wicked ruler over poor people, vindictiveness that is severe; antichrist of the last days; end time dominion and rule; financial matters as in: bear market. (**2 Sam. 17: 8; Dan. 7: 5; Is. 11: 7; Rev. 13: 2; Amos 5: 19; 2 Kings 2: 23-24; Prov. 17: 12**)

Bees: Busy bodies; gossip; group of people; can produce sweet honey, or sting and wound; enemies that crowd around us. (**1 Tim. 5: 13; Judges 14: 8; Du. 1: 44; Psalms 118: 12**)

Bird: Holy Spirit; evil spirits; wicked rulers; nations that are hostile; Kingdom of God; a mother's love; God's provision. (**Matt. 6: 29; 13: 32; 23: 37; Is. 46: 11**)

Crane: Alone. (**Is. 38: 14; Hos. 7: 11**)

Camel: A servant's heart; to bear the load. (**Gen. 24: 10, 31-32**)

Cat: Also Tigers, Leopards and Cheetahs: Unclean spirit; danger lying in wait; crafty; mysterious, strong self will; witchcraft; someone that is unattainable; unless personal pet. In the case of a personal pet, a cat can mean something or someone dear to your heart. A personal pet that is a leopard, the Lord could be a pet sin! (**Jer. 5:6, 13: 23; Hos. 13: 7**)

Cheetahs: Also Tigers, Leopards and Cats: Unclean.

Chicken: Also Hen, Rooster, and Chick: A gatherer; to mother; Israel. (**Luke 13: 34; 22: 34; Matt. 23: 27; John 18: 27**)

Cow: Also Heifer, Bull, Calf and Cattle: The young: believers who are sanctified; agile; sacrifice; food; playful; Worship of golden: immorality; great sin; punishment; an apostasy; blood of is not sufficient; evil men; mighty men; God's sacrifice and strength; ashes of sacrifice kept, mixed with water to purify; slaughtered and burned outside the camp; for sacrifice must be without blemish and never been in bondage to sin (never yoked); fall short of the sacrifice of Christ; expediency that is not proper; festive joy with shame. (**Num. 18: 17; 19: 1-22; Lev. 9: 2-3; Amos 6: 4; Ps. 22: 13; 29: 6; 68: 30; Ex. 32: 4-6, 21-35; 1 Cor. 10: 6-8; Matt. 10: 29-30; Luke 15: 23, 27; Heb. 9: 13; 10: 4; Du. 33: 17; Is. 34: 6-7; Gen. 15: 9; Judges 14: 18; Jer. 50: 11**)

Crocodile: See Leviathan, Dinosaur and Alligator: Bending; crooked; meandering; snake; monster; devious; distorted; ancient demon; large, evil creature that cannot be tamed with the natural strength of man; principality; evil spirit; ancient demonic control; only the Lord has power over; dragon. (**Is. 27: 1; 51: 9; Job 7: 12; 26: 12-13; 41: 1-10; Ps. 74: 14; 104: 26; Rev. 6: 7; 9: 1-19; 13: 1-18**)

Deer: Also Hind: Seeking water; ability to leap; quickness in stride; comeliness; our soul longing for the Lord. (**Is. 35: 6; Ps. 18: 32; 42: 1-2; Song 2: 17; 2 Sam. 22: 34**)

Dinosaur: See Leviathan, Dinosaur and Alligator: A high level of demonic attack; spiritual wickedness in high places; antichrist; Satan. (**Rev. 12:3-9; 13: 2-4; 16: 1; 20: 2**)

Dog: Note type of dog and relationship to dog: biting dog is dissension; hypocrite; attack against God's work; accusation; if a personal pet: something or someone dear to your heart; personal pet that is a wolf: pet sin, or warning you of an attack on the sheep; Judizers; watchman as in Elder or prophet as watchdog; returning to sin; false teachers. (**Prov. 26: 11-17; Phil. 3:2; Ez. 3: 17; Gal. 5 15; Ps. 22: 16; Rev. 22: 15; 2 Peter 2: 22; Matt. 7: 6**)

Donkey: Also Mule: Hard headed; endurance; self willed, single-minded, determined, and unyielding; riding: victory over self will and humility. (**Ex. 4: 20; Mark 11: 2; Prov. 26: 3; Num. 22: 25; 2 Peter 2: 16; Hosea 8: 9**)

Dragon: See Leviathan, Dinosaur and Alligator: A high level of demonic attack; spiritual wickedness in high places; antichrist; Satan. (**Rev. 12:3-9; 13: 2-4; 16: 1; 20: 2**)

Dove: The Holy Spirit; peace and new life; a sin offering; burnt offering; cleansing; mercy. (**Gen. 8: 8-12; Matt. 3: 16; 10: 16; Lev. 5: 7-14, 14: 21-22; John 1: 32**)

Eagle: Soaring in the Spirit; good or evil leader; strength, power, and swiftness in both judgment and in delivering God's people from trouble; the United States of America; Prophet of God. (**Isaiah 40: 31, 46: 11; Jer. 48: 40, Ez. 17: 3, 7; Ex. 19: 4; Rev. 12: 14**)

Feathers: Protection; shield; provision of ability to fly and sore. (**Ez. 17: 3-7; Ps. 91: 4; Dan. 4: 33**)

Fowler: To mesmerize; to be trapped. (**Ps. 91: 4**)

Fish: The newly saved; men's souls; clean and unclean men or spirits; miraculous provision of food in mass. (**Ez. 4: 19; Lev. 11: 9-12; Matt 4: 19; 17: 24**)

Flea: Not substantial; annoyance; subtle; inconvenience. (**1 Sam. 24: 14**)

Fly: Beelzebub; Demons; corruption of the house or possession by demonic spirits of the person. (**Ecc. 10: 1; Matt. 12: 24**)

Fox: Also Jackal: Secret sins; crafty man; enemies of the cross; skill for evil; desolation and crying in the night; divining prophets; suck the life flow from lambs (blood). (**Jer. 9: 11; Rev. 13: 11; Is. 35: 6-7; Ez. 13: 4-6; Song 2: 15; Luke 13: 32**)

Frog: Demon spirits; lying nature; sorcery; speaking curses. (**Rev. 16: 13; Ex. 8: 1-15; Ps. 78: 45**)

Grasshopper: Also Locust: Trouble and devastation to crops; instrument of God's judgment upon nations that are rebellious; destroyer; subordinate position; numbers of a mighty army; encumberment; trivial; good for eating. (**Ex. 10: 1-20; Rev. 9: 7-11; Is. 40: 22; Num. 13: 33; Joel 2: 1-11, 25; Lev. 11: 20-23; Mark 1: 6; Ecc. 12: 5**)

Goat: Carnal, fleshly Christians; unbelief; Christian or group of Christians walking in sin; the cursed, scapegoat or goat of removal showing that our sins have been removed as far as the east is from the west; opposite of lambs; carriers of sin; our need to obtain forgiveness of sin; mixed with sheep, but not called the shepherds own. (**Ex. 25: 4; Matt. 25: 31-46; Lev. 16: 8, 15, 20-22; Ps. 103: 12; Heb. 13: 12**)

Hare: See Rabbit.

Horse: Instruments of battle; power and strength of the flesh; time period of work; a powerful work of God on the earth, in the Spirit; tenaciousness, single-mindedness and aggressiveness; in transportation: battle; not to trust in over the name of the Lord. (This would carry over into our modern day weapons and modes of transport.) (**Job 39: 19; Ps. 32: 9; 33: 17; 66: 12; Prov. 26: 3; Jer. 5: 8; 8: 6; Rev. 6: 1-8; 19: 11, 14, 19, 21; Zech. 1: 8; 10: 3; 2 Kings 2: 11; Hos. 14: 3; James 3: 3; Amos 8: 11; John 16: 2**)

Different color horses are important: Black: Famine; evil. Bay (flame-colored): Anointing, power, fire. Pale: Death. Red: Persecution, bloodshed; enemy warring against God's people. White: War of conquest; God's mighty army)

Lamb: Also Sheep: Jesus as our sacrifice; true believers; gentleness; blamelessness and purity led to the slaughter; saints; the church; Israel. (**Is. 53: 7; 2 Sam. 2: 17; Luke 10: 3; Matt. 10: 6; 25: 33; John 1: 29, 36; 1 Peter 1: 19**)

Leopards: See also Tigers, Cheetahs and Cats. Leviathan, Crocodile and Dinosaur: Creature that cannot be tamed with the natural strength of man; demon; evil spirit; ancient demonic control; only the Lord has power over. (**Job 41: 1-10; Ps. 74: 14; 104: 26**)

Leviathan: See also Crocodile, Alligator, Dragon and Dinosaur: Bending; crooked; meandering; snake; monster; devious; distorted; ancient demon; large, evil creature that cannot be tamed with the natural strength of man; principality; evil spirit; ancient demonic control; only the Lord has

power over; dragon. (Is. 27: 1; 51: 9; Job 7: 12; 26: 12-13; 41: 1-10; Ps. 74: 14; 104: 26; Rev. 6: 7; 9: 1-19; 13: 1-18)

Lice: Accusation; shame; plague. (Ex. 8: 16-18)

Lion: Jesus; conqueror; overcoming bold saints; Satan the devourer; warrior; transformation; victory; persecution; dominions of the world; antichrist. (Ez. 1: 10; Prov. 28: 1; 30: 30; Is. 11: 6-8; John 18: 37; Rev. 5: 5; 13: 2; 17: 14; 19: 16; 1 Peter 5: 8; Ps. 22: 13; 91: 13; Dan. 7: 1-4)

Locusts: See Grasshopper. Pig: Also Sow and Swine: An unclean (fleshly) people; legalistic Christians; dull minded to spiritual things; phony and hypocritical; a foolish woman; false teachers; detestable things. (Matt. 7: 6; Prov. 11: 22; Is. 65: 4; 66: 3; 2 Peter 2: 22; Ps. 80: 13)

Owl: Also Liliths, Screech Owls and Night Hags: Wisdom through earthly means or from above; evil spirit; unclean spirit; night creature; routinely secluded. (Is. 13: 21; 34: 13-14; 43: 20; Ps. 102: 6; Job 30: 29)

Rabbit: Also Hare: Satan; evil spirits; pagan celebration of Easter; rapid multiplication. (Du. 14: 7; Lev. 11:6; Josh. 19: 20)

Raven: See buzzard. Sparrow: Provision; food; God's care for his creation. (Matt. 10: 29-30)
Wings: Refuge; God's presence; safety; ability to fly away and escape danger. (Ps. 91: 4, 17: 8, 61: 4)

Scorpion: Evil spirits; sin nature; burdens that are heavy; lust of the flesh; deception; a stringing deadly pain; satanic; spirit of the antichrist; poisonous. (Luke 10: 19; Rev. 9: 3, 5, 10; 1 Cor. 15: 56; Rom. 7: 23; 1 Kings 12: 11; Du. 8: 15; 2 Chron. 10: 11)

Serpent: Also Snake: Satan; earthly, sensual wisdom; crafty and cunning; Christ made sin for us; cursed; criticism and gossip, persecution if viper; divination if python or constrictor; beguiling; drunkenness; malice; evil that is sudden; enemies; vileness of hate of the sinner. (Gen. 3: 1; 49: 17; Rev. 12: 9; 20: 2; Mark 3: 7; Acts 16: 16; Matt. 10: 16; John 3: 14; Prov. 23: 31-32; Ps. 58: 3-4; Ecc. 10: 8; Is. 14: 29)

Sheep: See Lamb. Snake: See Serpent. Spider: False doctrine; unstable; without any deity; enticing demonic presence. (Is. 59: 5; Ecc. 7: 26; Job 8: 14; Prov. 8: 14; 27: 18; 30: 24)

Tigers: Also Cheetah, Leopards and Cats.

Wolf: Plan to destroy God's flock; deviant; wolf in sheep's clothing; brazen; false prophet; opportunistic; prowl round at night. (Matt. 7: 15; 10: 16; John 10: 12; Is. 11: 6; Jer. 5: 6)

Worm: Also Maggot: Detested: disease; humility; no dignity; filthiness of the flesh; destruction; eat off of flesh; destructive to vines and tree; likened to the misery and suffering of the lost soul in hell; crucified Messiah. (Ex. 16: 20; Du 28: 39; Is 14: 11, 66: 24, 51: 8; Job 25: 6; Ps. 22: 6; Mark 9: 48)

Aban (Phl., Pers.): water; name of a [yazad](#) presiding over water; name of the tenth day of the month according to the Zoroastrian religious calendar; name of the eighth month.

ab-zohr (Phl.): lit. "libation to the waters"; a section of the [Yasna](#). (Y62.11-Y70).

Achaemenian: the dynasty which ruled Iran from the time of Cyrus the Great (559 B.C.) to the invasion of Alexander the Great (330 B.C.) (Var. 'Achaemenid')

Adar: fire; [yazad](#) presiding over fire; name of the ninth day of the month according to the Zoroastrian religious calendar. (Var: ader, Pah. 'atash, atesh, adur', Av. 'Atar')

Adar Burzin (Phl.): one of the three greatest sacred fires of Zoroastrianism (the other two being 'Adar Farnbag' and 'Adar Gushasp'). It was placed in a temple by [Kay Vishtasp](#) himself, after it had 'revealed many things visibly, in order to propagate the faith' (GBd 18.14). (Var: 'Adur Burzen-Mihr')

Adar Farnbag Sacred fire.

Adar Gushasp Sacred fire. (var. Ader Goushasp)

Adarbad Mahraspandan (Phl.): a Zoroastrian High priest, prime minister of Shapur II (309-379 A.C.)

Aeshma: See [Eshma](#).

Afrasiyab (Pers.): a [Turanian](#) king who repeatedly attempted to overthrow the Iranians. (Var: 'Franrasyab')

afrin (Phl.): lit. 'blessing, benediction', specific prayers of blessing (in Pazand).

afrinagan (Phl.): a multi-part ceremony of blessing; specific prayers in the [Avesta](#) which are recited during afrinagan ceremonies; a ceremonial vessel in which the sacred fire is tended. (Var: 'afringan, afargan')

agiary (Guj.): lit. 'place of fire', a fire temple. The more traditional term is '[Dar-e Mihr](#)' (Var: 'agiari')

Ahriman (Phl.): the Devil, lit. 'Hostile/Destructive Spirit'. (Var: Phl. 'Ahreman', GAv. 'Angra Mainyu', StdAv. 'Anra Mainyu').

Ahu (Av.): spiritual lord or master, often found in conjunction with '[ratu](#)'.

Ahunawad: name of the first [Gatha](#); name of the first Gatha day.

Ahunwar (Phl.): the holiest prayer of the Zoroastrians. It begins with the Av. phrase 'yatha ahu vairyo'. (Var: 'Ahunvar, Ahunawar', Av. 'Ahuna vairyo').

Ahura Mazda (Av.): God, lit. 'Wise Lord', the Supreme Being of the Zoroastrians. (Var: Phl. 'Ohrmazd')

Airyaman: [yazad](#) of friendship and healing.

Airyanem Vaejah (Av.): See [Eranvej](#).

Alburz: a cosmic mountain, aka 'Haraiti' or 'Hara Berezaiti'; an actual mountain range in northern Iran.