



The Divine Within: Selected Writings on Enlightenment

Aldous Huxley , Huston Smith

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Brave New World author Aldous Huxley on enlightenment and the "ultimate reality".

In this anthology of twenty-six essays and other writings, Huxley discusses the nature of God, enlightenment, being, good and evil, religion, eternity, and the divine. Huxley consistently examined the spiritual basis of both the individual and human society, always seeking to reach an authentic and clearly defined experience of the divine. Featuring an introduction by renowned religious scholar Huston Smith, this celebration of "ultimate reality" proves relevant and prophetic in addressing the spiritual hunger so many feel today.

The Divine Within: Selected Writings on Enlightenment Details

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From Reader Review The Divine Within: Selected Writings on Enlightenment for online ebook

Vitorio says

Impressive clarity

Impressive clarity in navigating waters of religion, religiousness and mysticism from multiple references, including Shakespeare and his works, plays and life.

Jason Comely says

A quasi-religious/philosophical/psychoanalytical look at self-transcendence, enlightenment, grace and agapian love. As deep as these theological concepts can be, Huxley's writing is clear and even practical.

ZLo says

What a privilege it is to be subjected to Huxley's thoughts on the subject of God and Self. I understood what anxiety meant by reading this book, and by understanding it I became aware of it and by becoming aware of it my communication with my conscious self became more sensible and thoughtful than it was before. I recommend this book for anyone who would like to absorb all the goodness that an array religions have to offer, and allow you to take responsibility of who you are in relation to life, all of life, and therefore yours.

Kristen says

This book is a collection of essays by Aldous Huxley, authour of Brave New World, that focus on spirituality. As a fellow psychonaut that has studied the Vedic and Buddhist philosophies I found myself agreeing with much of what he had to offer. The most interesting perspectives I picked up on where his perspectives on Grace, and Idolatry. Thought provoking, and timeless, are both phrases I would use to describe this collection of work.

Tim says

Contains the following essays:

The Minimum Working Hypothesis, Seven Meditations, Religion and Temperament, Who are We?, The Philosophy of the Saints, Religion and Time, Some Reflections on Time, On a Sentence from Shakespeare, Man and Reality, Reflections on Progress, Further Reflections on Progress, Substitutes for Liberation, Reflections on the Lord's Prayer- I,II,III, Distractions- I,II, Idolatry, Action and Contemplation, Knowledge and Understanding, The Sixth Patriarch, Notes on Zen, The "Inanimate" is Alive, Readings in Mysticism, Symbol and Immediate Experience, Shakespeare and Religion, The Yellow Mustard, and Lines.

Lynn says

As the title suggests, the book tackles otherworldly matters; the Divine, Good/Evil etc. What makes it special however, is the depth and clarity it provides and thus its accessibility to any person with thirst for transcendence, let alone the fact that it is skillfully written with utter objectivity by the king of intellectual graces, Aldous Huxley, which altogether expanded my spiritual understanding!
Buy this book.

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Lionzo says

Aldous Huxley is by far one of my favorite authors. His perception of the world in addition to his analysis of various religions and spiritual texts is sharp and insanely accurate. His writing takes my mind to a higher form of thinking that allows me to perceive the world in a objective and wholistic way.

There were times when I was reading this book and I had to force myself to keep reading due to the nature of Huxley's writing style and the information being conveyed in this text. Nevertheless that's what separates a book that's just "meh" from a book that's incredible. Real books challenge you, your beliefs, and thought patterns in addition to helping you learn new things and "cleanse" your perceptions.

I enjoyed reading this book because it helped me challenge so many of the silly beliefs I had about myself and spirituality in addition to the extremely silly beliefs constantly being displayed by religious officials, politicians and the like---so characteristic of the 21st century.

Eric Marcy says

Basically a more readable/approachable version of "The Perennial Philosophy." Great collection of essays. I have more points of contention with Huxley's vision of spirituality than when I first took a deep dive into him and started rethinking my religious assumptions several years ago (I tend to find it helpful in the terms of establishing everything in "man's true end," to realize our unitary nature with the Divine Ground, while simultaneously unnecessarily limited and more than a bit absent of serious consideration of physical/systemic injustices) but his mystic framework remains influential on my own spirituality. As far as personal spirituality, I still find his incorporation of various mystic traditions, and the grounding principle of "Thou Art That" to be immensely helpful. His critiques of absolutist and dogmatic visions of human progress/organization, whether they be theological or ideological, are compelling and necessary cautions.

A couple of nice poems included as well. A real solid introduction to Huxley's spiritual thought, and definitely a more logical next step from "Brave New World" than the immensely dense "Perennial Philosophy" (which is what I initially did).

Ci says

Even though this is merely a collection of Huxley's essays on spiritual and religious topics, it still demonstrates the author's range and depth in history, theology, and literature. One key quote Huxley used to sum up the existential conditions of human, through Shakespeare's dying Hotspur in Henry IV - "But thought's the slave of life, and life time's fool,/ And time, that takes survey of all the world, /Must have a stop." Our humanly life experience is shaped by individual's living time and space, but not limited so. Huxley "We must not live thoughtlessly, taking our illusion for the complete reality, but at the same time we must not live to thoughtfully in the sense of trying to escape from the dream state. " The searching of Divine is thus sourced from "within" but not limited in Self. Hence Huxley is more on pure Spirituality less on doctrinal religious practice.

Several essays hinted the practice of Huxley's searching for Divine. About drug use and other forms of "downward transcendence" are warned but not categorically objected (remember his "Doors of Perception"). There are also discussion about mystic practices, issues of distraction, ego and self.

In general, this book appears to be a modestly accessible collections of Huxley's spiritual ideas.

Jonn says

Excellent collection of Huxley's essays primarily on mysticism...like an addendum to The Perennial Philosophy. Some I liked much better than others, but all have stellar moments.

Matthew Stromberg says

Brilliant collection of Huxley's essays over the years as his atheism transitioned into mysticism. A must read for anyone wanting to dive deeper into the philosophy of Huxley that may be gleaned from his novels.
