

Should I Join the Temple of Set?

in Webb

There is a vague notion that people will both understand Initiation and want it. It's all terribly romantic, like the Shaolin monastery or the Fight Club. Those on the inside are supposed to have Secrets that can help those on the outside.

This isn't far from the truth, but the nature of those Secrets is very different than what might be imagined, based on popular images of occult schools. First off, we don't teach secret words, magical passes, or how to blend incense that will help you win the lottery. Secondly we don't teach handshakes, secret nods or how to manipulate the stock market. In fact, much of what we teach isn't written down at all, although we do have a vast store of internal literature. (I am amused when I see our internal products sold illegally on the Internet for much larger sums than a person would have paid had he simply acquired them through membership fees, but a sucker is born every minute.)

It is not written down because it can not be, as it derives from personal experiences sought for and gained by the individual Setian.

What we teach can be divided into four large areas.

Firstly, we teach that neither you nor the universe are what you've been conditioned to think they are. We do this without drugs, hypnosis, or gadgets. Mainly we do this by asking questions about peoples' experience, and showing them methods by which they can acquire this knowledge by designing certain experiences for themselves. Generally people learn both the universe and the self are much larger, stranger, and interesting than they had thought.

Secondly, we teach two styles of learning in addition to those found in the world. We teach the method of Initiator and Student, and we teach de-centered pedagogy.

The first method is the oldest means of teaching in the world. It is how certain spiritual insights have been passed from one individual to another since mankind became self aware. We do not make the silly claim of certain occult fraternities that our method is direct link to an ancient past. Rather we use the methods discovered by anthropology, depth psychology, and most importantly trial-and-error. We have recreated this technology, and that we have done so in such a brief period is one of our claims to spiritual authenticity.

The second method, that of de-centered pedagogy, means that we are all students and teachers in the Temple, and a good deal of our success requires not only having good teachers already here but continuing to attract people that have something to teach. However, more important still is an openness on the part of new Setians to engage in dialogue and debate with others so that we might consider the effect of, and refinements to, our methods of looking at life.

Thirdly, we teach methods of creating vessels for the Will of the magician. This means a variety of things, from changing yourself and keeping the change, to

we teach that you need all of yourself. Unlike many schools of self-ment that teach only to value certain parts of yourself, the Temple that you must affirm and integrate all of your life history, all of your ted parts of soul. This radical holism calls for deep self love combined with an equally deep commitment to discipline the self. We view the whole of our pasts as important and magical, waiting to be transformed by our present actions into a future more effective and beautiful self less limited by the laws of time and space.

The Temple will help you understand the magical forces you have already unleashed to shape your world, and by your knowledge of your power to shape the world, awaken your consciousness to acting in ways to transform all of yourself into what you can now only dream of.

These difficult things we teach are called collectively Initiation. It is found by guided hands-on doing, and its excellence depends on the excellence of the person, and his or her commitment to the process.

Teaching difficult things is a tough process, and we don't undertake it lightly. We don't spend months or years dealing with people that are looking for a quick occult fix drawn by the lure of the strange. Every Setian's state is improved by each new Setian, so it is worth the difficult effort. The Prince of Darkness' estate is improved by each new Setian—his eternal struggles against the mindless forces of the Cosmos is made easier and richer by each new soul that agrees to take up the process of transforming itself into something no longer limited to four dimensions and five senses.

There are minor benefits to membership. You will get to know some very bright and highly creative people around the world. We have a great annual party/Initiatory gathering open to members holding the II°. The networking abilities of a secret society are there, and the practical knowledge base of a big group of brainy people should not be ignored as a resource. We have a fairly large amount of internal literature on various magical and philosophical specializations—and we have a reputation that is impressive in most parts of the occult world (and simply scary to the sillier parts of that same world). These minor benefits enhance and amplify the benefits of our teaching, and are a natural consequence of it.

I hope this helps you decide what you want in your life, because attempting to answer that question is the force that drives Initiation. Even if the Temple is not for you, I hope that these concerns help you find your Initiatory path, simply because for Selfish reason I want to fill the world with smart, talented people who find working on themselves a joy. The more such people there are, the stronger, more artistic, more magical civilization becomes.

If you can understand why changing the world in this way is resonate with the purpose of the Prince of Darkness, you probably should be here.

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