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The Voice of the Silence has one thing in common with some of the world's scriptures, which is the presence of paradoxical statements. Although the word *paradox* has more than one meaning, it generally includes two elements: a contradiction and an element of truth. Someone with a delightful sense of humor once said that a paradox is a truth standing on its head in order to grab our attention. The contradiction is what attracts our attention; the hidden kernel of truth is what holds it.

Without attempting a comprehensive treatise on the nature of paradox, we might consider a few of its common usages. One instance would be when the term is used to describe a person possessing seemingly contradictory qualities. For example, Robert DeNiro is a consummate actor who has appeared in many films, but also has a reputation for being very shy when not in front of a camera. A second definition would be a statement that is contrary to received opinion, as in Isaiah 45:7: "I form light and create darkness, I make peace and create evil; I the Lord do all these things." Most Christians conveniently overlook this biblical passage, since Christian orthodoxy attributes evil to Satan, not God. A third type of paradox would be a statement that seems opposed to reason and common sense, but yet might be true. For instance, in the *Bhagavad Gita* Krishna tells Arjuna, "He who perceives inaction in action, and action in inaction, is wise among men." On the surface this statement seems nonsensical, but when one understands that action includes movements of the mind, Krishna's words have profound meaning. The *Tao Te Ching* has this enigmatic statement: "The farther one goes, the less one knows." This is paradoxical because conventional wisdom equates experience (*the farther one goes*) with an increase in knowledge. One is reminded of Seneca's epigram: "To be everywhere is to be nowhere."

So as not to deprive the reader the joy of discovering the marvelous paradoxes in *The Voice of the Silence*, I will mention just one: "Thou canst not travel on the Path until thou hast become that Path itself." On one level, it seems like an illogical statement. The conflict is resolved, however, when we realize that a psychological point is being made. The neophyte cannot "travel on the Path" as though taking a walk in the park, or stroll along the beach, and then return home unchanged. There has to be a total commitment, a transformation of one's inner nature, and *then* one gradually becomes a living embodiment of that Path.

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