

Rays from the Rose Cross



“A Sane Mind, A Soft Heart, A Sound Body”

March/April 2003—\$5.00

THE MYSTIC FEAST AND THE WEDDING GARMENT
RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY AND THE CHRISTIAN DISPENSATION
ATHANASIA, THE CORNERSTONE OF RELIGION
GOD’S MESSAGE THROUGH PISCES

A CHRISTIAN ESOTERIC MAGAZINE



Heav'n from all creatures hides
the book of fate,
All but the page prescrib'd,
their present state:
From brutes what men,
from men what spirits know:
Or who could suffer
being here below?
The lamb thy riot dooms
to bleed today,
Had he thy reason,
would he skip and play?
Pleas'd to the last,
he crops the flow'ry food,
And licks the hand just rais'd
to shed his blood.
Oh blindness to the future!
kindly giv'n,
That each may fill the circle
mark'd by heav'n:
Who sees with equal eye,
as God of all,
A hero perish,
or a sparrow fall,
Atoms or systems
into ruin hurl'd,
And now a bubble burst,
and now a world.



Ptolemaic planisphere. Plate 1 from 1708 edition of star atlas 'Harmonica Macrocosmica' by the Dutch-German mathematician and cosmographer Andreas Cellarius (1596-1665). Science Photo Library, Royal Astronomical Society.

Ptolemaic Geocentric Model of the Solar System

Conceived hierarchically, the cosmos is "a vast chain of being," extending from God to clod. Intuited unitively, the cosmos is a vital complex of interpenetrating planetary spheres, the outer permeating the inner, the whole existing as one physio-spiritual organism. The Copernican system exchanges the Earth's position with the Sun, whose sphere of influence extends to and encompasses the outer orbs, all being enveloped by a zodiac of stars.

Hope humbly then; with trembling pinions soar;
Wait the great teacher death, and God adore.
What future bliss, he gives not thee to know,
But gives that hope to be thy blessing now.
Hope springs eternal in the human breast:
Man never is, but always to be blest:
The soul, uneasy and confin'd from home,
Rests and expatiates in a life to come....

See, thro' this air, this ocean, and this earth,
All matter quick, and bursting into birth.
Above, how high progressive life may go!
Around, how wide! how deep extend below!
Vast chain of being! which from God began,
Natures aethereal, human, angel, man,
Beast, bird, fish, insect, what no eye can see,
No glass can reach; from infinite to thee,
From thee to nothing. On superior pow'rs
Were we to press, inferior might on ours;

Or in the full creation leave a void,
Where, one step broken, the great scale's destroy'd:
From Nature's chain whatever link you strike,
Tenth, or ten thousandth, breaks the chain alike....

Cease then, nor order imperfection name:
Our proper bliss depends on what we blame.
Know thy own point: this kind, this due degree
Of blindness, weakness, Heav'n bestows on thee.
Submit. In this, or any other sphere,
Secure to be as blest as thou canst bear:
Safe in the hand of one disposing pow'r,
Or in the natal, or the mortal hour
All nature is but art, unknown to thee;
All chance, direction, which thou canst not see;
All discord, harmony not understood;
All partial evil, universal good.
And, spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,
One truth is clear, 'Whatever is, is right.'

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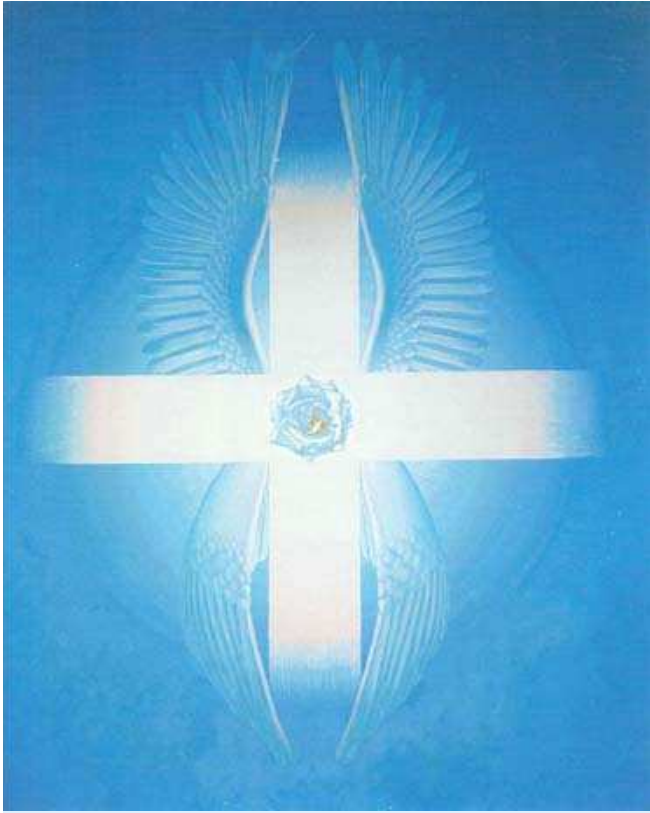
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**“A Sane Mind,
A Soft Heart,
A Sound Body”**

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FEATURE



The Winged Self

*Lord God of heaven and earth,
Thou hast vouchsafed of Thy grace,
to those of our order,
to know Thy works of creation, and true secrets of them...*

*I do here acknowledge and testify before this people
that the thing which we now see before our eyes
is Thy finger, and a true miracle,*

The Winged Self

*And forasmuch as we learn in our books that Thou never
workest miracles but to a divine and excellent end...
we most humbly beseech Thee to prosper this great sign,
and to give us the interpretation and use of it in mercy;
which Thou dost in some part secretly promise,
by sending it unto us.*

—from The New Atlantis, by Francis Bacon

The Winged Self

The purpose of The Winged Self symbol is to focus thought in the inner divine perfection of each individual. The Cross of Light holds us in perfect equilibrium with its inflow and outflow of cosmic energies, through the open ends of the arms. The Cross balances us in thought and feeling and word.

The Winged Self is a Rosicrucian symbol used to identify one with another when traveling in "Foreign Countries." In the inner planes the symbol is an identification, and those marked with it can always be served with protection and guidance.

The four arms of the Cross denote our four vehicles: physical body, vital body, desire body and the mind. These radiate from the center from which they manifest. They are located in the World of Life Spirit, the home of the Christ. The white Rose at the center symbolizes the impersonal, selfless love of the Christ. Each petal is a quality, or virtue, unfolding in us. The wings uplifted, beat ever higher when we give and serve others. When the wings are folded, they gain strength by listening and receiving. Such is the experience of every soul upon the path.

May the Winged Self serve to make straight the way of Christ in our hearts and thus herald a new and golden age in consciousness on Earth.

Prayer of the Winged Self

*Our God, who art our Winged Self,
It is Thy will in us that willeth.
It is Thy desire in us that desireth.*

*It is Thy urge in us
that would turn our nights,
which are Thine,
Into days,
which are Thine also.*

*We cannot ask Thee for aught,
for thou knowest our needs
before they are born in us.*

*Thou art our need;
and in giving us more of Thyself
Thou givest us all.*

—from The Prophet, by Kahlil Gibran

This copy of the painting, *The Winged Self*, is reproduced with permission of the New Age Bible and Philosophy Center, Santa Monica, California. The Winged Self symbol was discovered in the late 1930s by one Dr. Cunningham, who, being privy to a secret code, applied it to an original, unedited version of Bacon's *The New Atlantis* and interpreted the vision recorded therein: The vision was of a cross of light, with a white rose at the center; two wings at the cross's upper arm spread outward and upward; and, at the lower arm, two wings that were folded.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

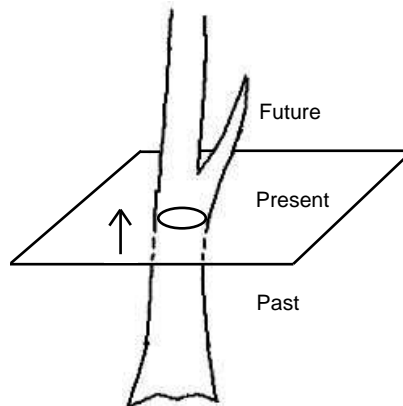
Measuring Time, Deducing Dimensions

IN RESPONSE to the “Eternity Now” article in the Nov/Dec 2002 *Rays*: The question was asked whether our measure of time changes if the earth changes its rate of rotation on its axis or its rate of revolution around the sun. Because the rotation and revolution of the earth are not precisely constant, scientists now use another standard of time. When Cesium atoms make the transition from their next to the lowest to their lowest energy state, they emit radiation of a specific frequency. One second is defined as 9,192,631,770 cycles of this radiation.

The statement was made that time is “dependent on...the location of the observer.” This is not true. Suppose two observers at different distances from a star observe the star explode. Even though one observer is closer than the other, they will both take into account the time which it took the light to travel to them, and thus they will both agree on the time when the star exploded. The situations in which there begin to be disagreements about time are when there is relative motion between the observers.

In response to “The Fourth Dimension is Not Time,” in the Nov/Dec 2002 *Rays*: The fact that fourth-dimensional perception involves “throughness” is not inconsistent with the fourth dimension being related to time. The best way to understand this is by analogy. Suppose we picture some beings who live on a large plane (like a large sheet of paper, laid flat). The creatures cannot leave their plane and cannot see outside their plane. Now picture this plane as intersecting a tree (see picture). The 2-D beings on the plane (which we will call Flatlanders) will perceive only the part of the tree which intersects their plane, which is a circle. If the plane has an upward motion, the Flatlanders will see the various cross-sections of the tree in

sequence. The cross-sections which are below the plane are, for the Flatlanders, past and cannot be seen again. The cross-sections which are above the plane are, for the Flatlanders, future and will only be seen later. We with our 3-D vision, however, can simultaneously see the Flatlanders past, present, and future. For the situation shown in the picture, we could predict that the Flatlander’s circle will split into two circles, one larger than the other,



and that the smaller one will disappear before the larger one. Note that for the Flatlander, a 2-D being, his time is in the third dimension. By analogy, the time for us 3-D beings will be in the fourth dimension, and those with fourth dimensional vision will be prophets to us.

How does “throughness” tie into the picture? For a Flatlander, a rectangle is a box. If all four sides are in place, the Flatlander cannot see what is inside. However, we 3D beings can see the inside of the box. In fact, we can see everything in all of Flatland, inside and out, at a glance. By analogy, one with 4-D perception will be able to see all in our 3-D world, inside and out, at a glance.

An excellent book on this subject is *Flatland* by Edwin Abbott. □

—Elsa Glover, Ph.D. (in Theoretical Physics)

The Mystery of Golgotha

WHAT DOES “The Mystery of Golgotha” have to do with a person living in the 21st century? Some allege it to be an historical fiction. What are the facts? Surviving accounts, known as Christian Gospels, describe a putative capital offense ending in a crucifixion: Rough justice, barbarity, tragedy, pathos—depending on your viewpoint. And the viewpoints abound. Then what? Earthquake? Night at noon? Global transformation?

Today’s positivist asks, How can we know for sure what happened? the identity of him to whom it happened—if it happened? No extant secular records even make reference to Jesus—him who was crucified. Over a billion humans call this same Jesus the Son of God, God incarnate, the world’s Savior—Him who couldn’t save himself—at least, he didn’t. Not your standard hero-god who carries a big stick. This God carried a cross and was nailed to it. What’s to imitate here? What’s so compelling about this story that human destiny has been altered by it? What’s in this to feed the soul and give joy? Well, there’s more to the story. For one thing, a few of “God’s” contemporaries saw Him after His death—alive, radiant, powerful. Come to think of it, he said, destroy this temple and he would raise it in three days. Apparently that’s what he did.

And what was raised? The Spirit that animated Jesus and spoke through him with authority and worked miracles and walked on water and wept salt tears and shed blood. Today’s emancipated humanist can weep too, and speak and walk and bleed. But to him this talk of Spirit is, to be polite, scientifically suspect. Yet that’s what the Jesus people—Christians—believe. Some would even die rather than renounce their core belief. And Rosicrucians believe more. Some of them *know* more. They say Golgotha is a mystery only to those who are blind to the higher dimensions of reality, that Spirit is real. It exists. It is in each of us. It enables us, like Christ Jesus, to survive death. It is this Spirit that

makes us human. More, it can make us divine, like God who gave it. These Rosicrucians say that Christ is higher than a human Spirit, that because He came to Earth on a mission of mercy and lived in Jesus, humans can also do the works He did, and even greater.

But this Rosicrucian “teaching” is all hearsay, right? Where’s the proof? How about some incontrovertible truth? By “truth” do you mean according to scales and rulers, or based on lived experience? Paul was assaulted, stunned, and blinded by the Truth: vengeance was transmuted into candescent love. But that’s an antique narrative. How about now? Now is a keyhole into all time—and the timeless. Insert the key of truth, call it provisional truth, if you like, and turn it in the lock of ignorance. First, suspend your disbelief, because not believing gets zero results. You are welcome to doubt, to call all into question, to believe only what your senses tell you. But are your senses your only basis for knowing? Doesn’t something behind your eyes see deeper—and other? Doesn’t a hearing more inner than sound through the ears give you understanding, a finer and higher sense of things? Call it eyes and ears of the soul.

Material Earth is the place of the skull. It is Golgotha. There is also a living Earth, an Earth of soul and an Earth of Spirit. It is here, even where crucifixion in countless forms continues daily, where eyes are blinded by hate and envy, and ears are deaf to words of grace and love and mercy.

It is not gravity that makes Spring possible. It is not electricity that generates vital light. It is not chemicals that produce life. By all means weigh and measure and number the mineral world. Be exacting. But if that is your sole guaranty of certainty, Spirit will remain mysterious, even as it makes all things new. And joy will be out of reach, though ever ready, if you will, to exalt you. And life will remain elusive, even as it daily renews you and gives you reason to hope. And the empty tomb will be a hoax, even as Christ irradiates the Earth and ever knocks at the door of your heart. □

MYSTIC LIGHT

Studies in the Apocalypse *Weight, Measure, and Number* *In the Spiritual History of Mankind* *Part 2*

IT WAS JUST THIS transforming of 'weight' into heaviness which took place in the destiny of the Old Indian culture-community. She forsook her "first love," and in consequence of this, the descent became a fall. "Remember from whence thou art fallen [*ekpeptokas*], and repent, and do the first works" (Rev. 2:5). In these words the Lord of Karma expresses the karmic dispensation which had become necessary because of the loss of the first love for the current of the Old Indian culture. This is the effect of karma on all who are unwilling to incarnate fully, all who resist complete incorporation: They *fall* into incarnation against their will, instead of *descending* by free moral force into the sphere of karma-determining action. For the scene of those actions which determine karma lies, for men, in the physical world; the working-world is the region where the deeds of men acquire their greatest significance. For this reason the warning to the Angel of the Church of Ephesus runs: "Remember from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works [*ta prota erga poieson*]." This warning is addressed to all who are inclined to refuse to work energetically in the sphere of deeds—all who are inclined to shirk the full measure of their share in the responsibility for earthly happenings. For they will not allow true weight to function in their souls—the 'weight' of the spirit of sacrifice, which also gives weight to human effort and action in controlling the karma of the future.

But to be able truly to tread the path into the

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future, not only is the spirit of sacrifice required to produce 'weight' in the soul, strength is also needed to carry that sacrifice to an end, persevering with it through trials. For to be ready to descend into nether *space* is not enough; it is also necessary in that 'space' to tread a path which will lead to the goal. It is necessary, too, to remain faithful to the task through a prescribed period of *time*. Following on the ideal of the "first love"—the ability to love the Earth mission of humanity—is the ideal of fidelity to this mission throughout the trials of the earthly road in 'time.' The realization of this ideal is the task of the "Angel of the Church of Smyrna," the mission of the Old Persian spiritual impulse. That is why the admonition of the second letter, the letter to the angel of the church in Smyrna, runs: "Be thou *faithful* unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev. 2:10). For this reason the letter to the church in Smyrna no longer comes from Him "that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, and walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks," but from Him "that is the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive." For what flowed from Christ into the souls of men through the Old Persian spiritual culture is the impulse of fidelity, the longing and the hope that all obstacles, even death itself, may be overcome. "The first and the last, which was dead, and is alive", is, therefore, a formula expressing, very concisely, the nature of that highest longing and highest hope which constituted the spiritual and moral life-nerve of the Old Persian culture, and which persists today in the Old Persian stratum of the human soul.

This ideal of fidelity is, in its innermost essence, the spiritual content of Measure, just as the "first

love” is the innermost essence of Weight . For the path which leads from “the first” to “the last,” from “death” to “life,” is the true ‘measure’ of human fidelity and of the magnitude of the human Earth mission. This ‘measure’ can be perceived, recognized, and realized by the free moral force of the soul; then it shines in the soul as the great, liberating goal of man’s earthly existence. If, however, it is not freely and consciously accepted, then karma, instead of appearing as the ‘measure’ of spiritual heroism, makes its appearance as a cramping and compelling influence. As the loss of the “first love” leads to the fall, when true ‘Weight’ becomes heaviness, so lack of fidelity leads to contraction, when true ‘Measure’ becomes a *constriction* of the soul: “the devil shall cast some of you into prison” (Rev. 2:10), in order, through the enforced confinement, to awaken a striving after the free heroism of true ‘Measure.’

This imprisonment, which is to be brought about by Lucifer (Diabolos), is in reality the loneliness of the soul which is confined within itself because it will not unite itself with the great purpose of human evolution. Since the soul will not accept the *spiritual* ‘Measure,’ it must become, just as it stands, the ‘measure’ of its own consciousness; its own nature will draw the line which will confine its consciousness, its activity, and its world. The walls of the “prison,” into which the soul has been cast by Luciferic impulse, are boundaries drawn by itself; it is the soul’s egoism which confines it and keeps it in prison.

Thus, the soul is confronted with the choice of two possible ‘measures’: either to acknowledge freely the ‘Measure’ of the spirit, or to accept its own standard as a ‘measure.’ Lucifer would guide the soul to the second choice, and that is why we are told in the Apocalypse that Lucifer (Diabolos) “shall cast some of you into prison.”

Those, however, who have chosen the true path of fidelity to man’s mission on Earth (that is, those who have chosen the spiritual ‘Measure’) are called in this letter, the “Jews” (*hoi Iudaiou*). This name really means nothing else than “human souls who are determined to minister throughout the ages to



Die Bibel in Bildern, Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld (1789-1853)

Christ Jesus Manifests Himself to John

Clearly, von Carolsfeld’s conception is strongly influenced by (indeed, almost identical with) Albrecht Durer’s depiction, executed over 300 years earlier, of the same passage in Revelation. See Jan/Feb 2003 Rays.

the preparation and the realization of the Christ impulse.” For this is the meaning of the “eternal Israel” consisting of twelve tribes—the karmic community of human souls united through many incarnations with the Christ impulse, first in preparing for it, then in realizing it. Hence, “Jews”, in the sense of the Apocalypse, are not members of any one nation; they are those souls who have decided for the service of the Christ impulse. But now there is a very severe trial connected with this; namely, the “blasphemy of them that say they are Jews, and are not, but are of the synagogue of Satan.” This “synagogue of Satan” is the karmic antipode of the “eternal Israel,” and the blasphemy of that community consists in their imitating all the power and activity of the Christ impulse in human life, while, at the same time, turning it into its opposite. The Ahrimanic activity (that is, in the sense of the Apocalypse, the activity of Satan) in the destiny of humanity consists primarily in the creation of a kind of caricature of the human community and order for which the Christ impulse strives. While Lucifer (Diabolos) isolates men, “casts them into prison,” Ahriman (Satanas) gathers them into a community (synagogue), just as the Christ impulse also unites them in a community (ecclesia). Instead of the

egoistic isolation brought about by Lucifer, two communities founded on a 'we-consciousness' will appear in world history. One is the community of Christ, where free ego-men will unite in a free alliance; the other, its opposite, is Ahriman's mass-organization, swallowing up the individual ego. The *blasphemy* is contained in the fact that the *true* we-consciousness of spiritual brotherhood is turned into its opposite by the mimicry of the *false* we-consciousness in the mass organization. Thus, there are "true Jews," that is, free ego-men striving for a community among themselves on a foundation of freedom, and, on the other hand, there are we-men destined to be swallowed up by a mass organization. These, however, believe "they are Jews [that is, ego-men] and are not."

This contrast first appeared in world history in the relationship between Iran and Turan during the Old Persian culture-epoch, but it has persisted down the ages, and today, as then, the two types of we-consciousness confront each other as a trial of the fidelity of man to his spiritual mission on Earth.

On the other hand, the "imprisonment by the devil" also persists. It has to last for "ten days"—and that period is not yet ended, for the Luciferic current is to continue its karmic flow until the Christ-Sun has shone ten times since the Old Persian culture-epoch. Now that Sun shines at the beginning and the end of each culture-epoch. It shines at the beginning as the fundamental impulse of the epoch, and at the end as the response to its positive result, as the benediction on its fruit, however scanty that may be. Then it is "day," as in the beginning there was the "day" of a culture-epoch. And ten such "days" occur until the Sixth culture-epoch—until those who are imprisoned either join the Philadelphian community of brothers, or are swallowed up in the 'we' of Ahrimanized humanity. The "prison," the isolation of self-sufficiency, will then cease. They will then either become really free, or they must join the Ahrimanic throng.

Thus the "Church in Smyrna" has a path to tread, whereon it is tested by the "prison" of Diabolos, and by the "synagogue" of Satan; but he who is "faithful unto death" receives the crown of life. The crown of life is not a mere poetic expression; it is an exact description of a significant occult fact—the fact, namely, that certain changes will take place in

the future in the system of spiritual currents in the human head. As a result of these changes, the so-called "crown of death" will become the "crown of life." At present, the life-forces of man concentrate more and more in the head with advancing age, and thence radiate upwards as a kind of "crown." Then, if this concentration becomes complete, the heart ceases to function (even when there is no malady), and death supervenes. But now another process may take place in the etheric organization of the human head; namely, the concentration in the head of the downward radiating spiritual life-forces which spread out with vivifying power into the rest of the human organism. The development of such a "crown of life" is, at the same time, a sign that the Christ impulse is at work in the life body of a man. By this influence the life body of the man is preserved from the "second death," that is, from dissolution some time after the physical death; the "crown of life" is that element of the life body which is not subject to "the second death."

It is in this sense that the promise of the second letter is to be understood: "He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death." (Rev. 2:11).

But the promise addressed to that karmic current which is called "the Church in Pergamos" refers neither to the "tree of life" nor to the "crown of life," but to the eating of "hidden manna" and to a "white stone" in which is written a "new name," "which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it" (Rev. 2:17). For the spiritual impulse which underlies the third (the Egypto-Chaldean) culture-epoch, and which has persisted in the souls of men since that time, is a striving for the experience of immortal individuality and for the harmony of immortal individual beings one with another.

The "stone with a new name which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it" is the immortal ego-being of man. The "I" is the name which can be spoken only by the man himself. And the "hidden manna" is the community-forming force at work beyond the threshold of ordinary consciousness; it is the force which binds separate individuals into a human community. Thus Moses, for example, whose mission lay within the Egypto-Chaldean epoch, received the revelation of the "I am the I am" in the Burning Bush as the revelation of the source of the ego experience, while, on the other hand, the

Israelite community under his guidance ate of the “heavenly manna” which descended during the night and was “gathered” in the early morning. Thus Moses led the community entrusted to him to the ideal of the ego evolution; but he led it as a community, for it was united and held together as such by the eating of the “manna.” The reality of the Manas influence (that is, the “manna”) is manifested when men whose lives are based on their inner ego produce at the same time a harmony. The true ‘we’ can be realized only under the influence of the Manas (the Spirit-self [synonymous with the Human Spirit—Ed.]), when the ego-consciousness has acquired the firmness and solidity of a stone.

But there is also an anti-Manas current for the purpose of forming communities. The community-forming force of this current is not to be drawn from the super-consciousness, but from the subconscious regions. For together with the karmic union of individual beings brought into harmony by the “manna,” there is yet another force drawing men one to another and binding them together. It is the urge which comes, not through the blood from the “I am” impulse of Jahve in the past, nor from the ego as it is experienced today, but from the blood which is neither under the influence of Jahve nor yet determined by the ego. This force is the urge of sex. It was misused by Balaam, for instance (cf. Num. 25), when he counseled the Midianitish prince, Balak, to substitute other principles for those of the Israelite community so that, through the medium of the Midianite women dedicated to Baal, the Israelites might be drawn into the sphere of influence of the Baal cult. The influence was achieved by arousing this urge through the eating of “meats offered to idols”—that is, the flesh of victims prepared by ceremonial magic and invested with definite powers, thereby inducing alliances which lay outside the network of positive karma. The “doctrine of Balaam” referred to in the letter is the point of view from which the “hidden manna” is sought, not in the seclusion of the super-consciousness but in the subconscious life of impulse.

As the true harmony of the Manas activity can be falsified and superseded by the “doctrine of Balaam,” so also can a man’s striving for the experience of his own ego be falsified and superseded by the “doctrine of the Nicolaitanes.” For, as in the first

case, there is a false kind of karmic union among men, so, in the second case, there is a false kind of ego experience. Since the “Nicolaitane” current, of which we have just spoken, placed man’s consciousness right inside the body, it felt itself to be ostensibly independent and free within the body. Thus, a substitute for the real ego came into existence, created by the confining influence of the body.

A false ego-consciousness arose whose content was due not to the ego but to the body. Against these two errors is directed the “two-edged sword” of the mouth of him who addresses the Letter to the Angel of the Church of Pergamos, for the sword of the word of truth strikes what is immoral in the life of impulse as well as what is illusionary in materialistic ideas and concepts.

The opposite of the “two-edged sword” of the future word of truth is the principle of the power of black magic working in silence, a principle which subserves, and is based upon, the union of subconscious impulses with illusionary concepts. For this reason the occult language of the Apocalypse speaks of this union as the “throne of Satan” (*thronos to Satana*). This name signifies the principle of the evolution of Ahriman’s power over humanity, so that this principle (or “throne”) must be sought in the metabolic life of the human system. On the other hand, there have also been historical situations in which this “throne” was present externally and objectively, functioning as a center of power. The throne of Herod and Herodias, for example, was a point of departure for such activity. And the activity was manifested in the fact that those who came within the sphere of influence of that ‘throne’ (that is, of that activity functioning through illusion and the life of immoral impulse) were ‘beheaded’. They were ‘beheaded’ in the sense that they lost the ego-conscious center of the head, and were thus exposed to the influence of the subconscious depths of the metabolic organization.

Now the only way to oppose such a “throne” is to unmask the immorality of the ‘slavish’ impulse springing from it, and to overcome materialistic concepts by fidelity to the spirit, even unto death. Every historical “throne of Satan” has always to be opposed by a “faithful witness” (*martys ho pistos*) of the spirit. It was so with the throne of Jezebel and Ahab, whom Naboth withstood as the “faithful

witness”; it was so also with the throne of Herodias and Herod, against whom John the Baptist was the “faithful witness”; each time the “faithful witness” had to overcome immorality by the word, and illusion by death. For the immortality of human individuality is attested, not only by teaching, but by the fact that individual beings face death as “faithful witnesses”—that human individuality can be raised above death and is thus immortal. In this sense, not only John the Baptist, but also Socrates in Athens was a “faithful witness.”

This special mission—of being a “faithful witness” against the “throne of Satan”—has a definite name. In this sense every man who has such a mission to fulfill is an “Antipas,” that is, the man whose task it is to suffer together with the victims of the “throne” (i.e., of black magic). Thus John the Baptist also suffered the fate of the victims of Herod’s throne; he was even physically “beheaded” as the other victims of that throne were inwardly “beheaded” in their soul life. In this sense, John the Baptist is “Antipas,” the fellow-sufferer, who withstood the “throne of Satan” as a “faithful witness”—and, indeed, not only at that time, but also in the past during earlier lives.

This “beheading” of men actually happens today still, in the moral sense. It happens, for instance, wherever men are regarded and treated not as individuals but as a quantity, a number. For when men are regarded merely as a number they are “beheaded”; the dignity of their ego nature is taken from them. And if the units thus obtained are added up and the sum of them stated, then something is being done which is morally the opposite of community-forming through the power of the “hidden manna.”

What was originally a black-magical misuse of the impulse-life and the life of materialized concepts became later a numeration and addition of human units. For as the sin of the Church of Ephesus brought about the conversion of true ‘Weight’ into a fall consequent on heaviness; as the sin of the Church of Smyrna brought about the conversion of true ‘Measure’ into “imprisonment” within the confines of egoism; so the sin of the Church of Pergamos caused the change of true Number into



Oil on canvas, Jacques Louis David, 1787, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City

The Death of Socrates

Socrates, as John the Baptist, was a “faithful witness,” a martyr (Greek for witness) for life and truth, opposing the illusions foisted by materialism that issue from the “throne of Satan,” and affirming the undying spirit.

the beheading and the ‘mechanical unification’ of men. But true spiritual ‘Number’ is a community of individual beings ranged according to “the glory of the stars,” of which each one is not a mere unit, but a “new name” written in the “white stone, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.” In the sense of true ‘Number,’ men should not and cannot be counted and added up; they ought to be called by their names and united into a community by the “hidden manna.” The consequence of the sin of the Balaamites and the Nicolaitanes is the substitution of the sum for the “manna,” and of a numerical unit for the “name.”

Thus the statistics, which today appear so innocent, have their antecedents; the example was set by tragic facts in spiritual history, and the frame of mind which produces them owes its existence to a preparation through the medium of black magic in the past. Regarding it in this light, we can also understand why the numbering of the people ordered by King David [1Chr. 21:1] was considered so sinful by the spiritual world and brought so severe a punishment in its train; for what has now become commonplace was, at that time, a terrible breach of faith towards the conception of the human community desired by the spiritual world. Human faces and names should not be converted into numbers; it was a yielding to the sin of the Third Culture-epoch “treason against Spiritual Number.”

Moreover, in this light we can understand how tragic is the beginning of the second chapter of St. Luke's Gospel, where we are told: "It came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed [counted]."

For we can understand the tragedy of the fact that Jesus should be born during a national census and regarded by the Roman state as a mere "plus one" if we can really bring to consciousness the actual meaning of 'number' as "the harmony of the ineffa-

ble name" of individual beings, and, on the other hand, the consequence of the 'fall of number' into mechanism; that is to say, the misuse of impulses and illusions. But it was necessary that Jesus should be born in an age when 'Weight,' 'Measure' and 'Number' were already divorced from their true significance: the birthplace of Jesus was a stable, with the animals.

The spiritual impulse and its history during that culture-epoch in which Christ Jesus appeared will be the subject of the next section. (Continued) □

The Prison—a Myth

THERE WAS A TIME when humans had light swords, which could instantaneously fry anything they were directed at. These humans had the elixir of life, so they themselves could not be killed. They rode on winged horses which could travel faster than light. But what they didn't have was a sense of responsibility. They flew around the universe causing destruction wherever they went. And the poor angels could hardly keep up with the job of putting things back together, healing wounds, and restoring order in the wake of the humans passing through.

When God saw what was happening, he decided something needed to be done. First He created an earth, and put a gravitational field around the earth so that all things near the earth would get pulled toward the surface. Then He put a number of "cages" on the earth (which we now call physical bodies), and told the angels to collect all the humans, take their light swords and elixir of life and winged horses away from them, and fasten one human inside each cage.

The cages were provided with all the amenities that cages of that type can have—eyes to see, ears to hear, mouths with which to eat, and feet and hands for walking and doing work. The humans still had enough motion to gather food, clothing, and shelter and to interact with one another, but the power and range of their destructiveness was now limited to the regions in the vicinity of their cages on the surface of the earth. Even so, humans still frequently got out of control, and God found it necessary to place further restrictions on some humans

by visiting them with various plagues, floods, fires, earthquakes, winds and other "natural" disasters. To make life in the cages bearable, God occasionally let the humans out (what we call death), but when they were out they were still held on leashes and their light swords and elixir and winged horses were not returned to them. Also, they were required to return to the cages after some time out.

How can humans get free from their cages and get their light swords and elixir and winged horses returned to them? The first requirement is that they learn how to behave. They must cease acting irresponsibly, cease destroying without rebuilding, and cease harming others. They must be committed to living in harmony with the rest of the universe. Only then will God be able to release them without fear of their again causing great havoc.

God, however, has an additional aim. He wants the prison to be not only a prison but also a school. At the same time that people are learning not to do harm, he wants them also to learn to be constructive forces in the universe. He wants them to develop such qualities as courage, initiative, helpfulness to others, and creativity. Thus, God has added the requirement that to attain release, people also need to be able to pass graduation requirements in these fields.

When people have earned their release, their light swords and elixir and winged horses will be returned to them, and they will be rewarded also with the mystic marriage. Then instead of being the villains of the universe, they will be the heroes. □

—Elsa Glover

The Wages of Revenge

THERE ARE ALL SORTS of revenge—revenge as an experiment, revenge for anger, revenge to get even, revenge to hurt; revenge on an individual basis, revenge at a group level, revenge by country and by race. People usually get pretty excited when they hear the word *revenge*. They get that itchy crawling under their skin. There is a contraction of consciousness. The blood pressure rises, the emotions run hot and heavy, and they start plotting. Who has not experienced revengefulness at some time in his life? But let me tell you a story—as old as man and as new as this morning. When one person hurts another, only a few people are *directly* affected. But when nations engage in revenge, call it what they will, it become far more serious, and history sets on writing itself.

There was time when revenge was expected of man—not wanted, but expected. Then he was taught the doctrine of “an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.” His unchecked passions and primitive mentality could not respond to high ideals. He had to develop a sense of rightness through suffering day-to-day hurt and hardship. Now humans have accumulated the experience of many prior lives to guide them. And as they grow their religion evolves with them. Christ abolished the doctrine of revenge. He taught the turning of the other cheek, not acting on the retaliatory instinct. Revenge has become an impermissible resort for the practicing Christian. He is expected to live the doctrine of forgiveness. But the high teaching is not easily accepted, and is even harder to practice. There are still many believers in the Old Testament way of dealing with hurt and violation. The struggle between vengeance and peace, between revenge and forgiveness, seems as strong

today as it was 2000 years ago.

Revenge can bind people in interlocking karma that lasts thousands of years. Once begun, it is hard to stop the internecine violence. Today Muslims are killing Christians, but centuries ago it was the reverse. And it goes on and on. Revenge is sweet goes the saying. The truth is that revenge is unendurably bitter. How much more blood has to be shed before humanity finally learns that revenge is a tragedy and a travesty of divine justice?

There is an inviolable Cosmic Law that governs man’s actions—the law of Cause and Effect. No one escapes it. From the most virtuous to the most vicious—all are subject to its sovereign power. Consider Moses, when he led the Jews during the last part of their Egyptian captivity. You recall that he killed an Egyptian guard who was abusing a fellow Jew. When Moses was old he was blessed with a son. That son bore the Spirit of the man he killed. Moses had a debt to pay for taking a human life and raising this son could help balance the offense. But more, Moses was later born Elijah, and then, as Christ himself says, the Spirit of Elijah was embodied as John the Baptist. And what was the fate of the Forerunner? He was beheaded! Was one of his murderers the former Egyptian overseer killed by an angry Moses? No one but Christ escapes the Cosmic Law of Cause and Effect. He, the only sinless, Who had no debts to pay, took upon Himself humanity’s transgressions, including the sins of Solomon (later born Jesus), who as a king must have been responsible for, or at least been implicated in, the death of some people, including Hiram Abiff.

When the left wing of the chemical plant in M. blew up, Margaret was sitting at her desk. It felt

like an earthquake. She saw the huge flames erupting like a volcano, engulfing the cisterns and everything around. There was immediate panic. People were screaming and running about in mayhem. Then a new loud detonation concussed the entire area. Margaret was thrown into the air. Sharp pain sliced through her body...

She saw a tunnel and she made her way through it. As she advanced the light at the end grew stronger and brighter. At last she was in the open. It was bright. Millions of little twinkling lights glittered in the air. There were lovely colors, flowing colors, many of which she had never seen before. She felt light as a feather. As she looked around she saw thousands of people floating in the air like herself. She knew them. They all worked in the plant.

Below saw the plant, consumed by raging gigantic flames. Thick smoke billowed into the sky.

“What happened?” asked a secretary in horror, passing by in the air.

“I am not sure,” Margaret replied. “It looks like an accident.” As she viewed the scene, panic grabbed at her heart.

She saw fire engines approaching from all sides. People were running about in every direction. Chaos reigned.

Margaret remembered her children with a constricting chill. She flew as fast as she could to the school where she had left them that morning. They were sitting calmly, doing their lessons, unaware of the disaster that had just occurred. Soon the bell rang and they ran out into the school yard. She followed and called them, but they paid her no attention. They were busy with their friends. She hovers over them for a while.

“My husband!” she thought suddenly, and rushed toward his workplace. She saw him driving his car in the nearby street, heading towards the plant. She passed through the windshield, sat on the front seat, and began talking to him:

“Its okay dear. You won’t find me there. I am here—sitting next to you.”

But his face remained worried, pale, and nervous. He was listening to the radio that was giving non-stop reports on the inferno. “It looks like there are no survivors...estimated number of deaths

about 5000...” The voice of the announcer bordered on hysteria. The announcer’s voice was broken. Overcome by emotion he unable to continue. Then her husband broke into tears.

“So that is what happened,” Margaret thinks. “I am dead...”

By evening the President had appeared on TV and declared the event an act of sabotage perpetrated by a separatist group known as the “Movement for Liberation,” comprised of the Fenkushy people, which had been responsible for many other terrorist attacks, though none approached this magnitude.

Calls for war were heard from many respectable citizens. “We have to revenge the death of those innocent people,” urged the Secretary of State with strong conviction....

Despite her state of near panic, Margaret was fascinated by her ability to fly, to defy gravity. It was a new sensation. And she found she could be anywhere almost instantly simply by thinking herself there. Her colleagues also flew around. Some exchanged words, but most of them were distraught and disoriented.

“Why don’t they hear us?...Can’t they see us?”

After a while a procession of fair Beings on what appeared ethereal chariots appeared from on high. Everything around them shone in strong light. In front of the first chariot stood a youth with a trumpet and began to play a solemn fanfare. The chariots encircled the distracted people from the plant. The Being from the first chariot, embellished with golden ornaments, rose to address them:

“Brothers and Sisters, welcome to the Beyond. We have come to take you to our Ceremonial Field. Please, follow us.”

His chariot took the lead, the people from the plant following. Some gathered in groups, holding hands, afraid of what they couldn’t understand. The most adventurous were in the front rank. Some of them attempted to converse with the leaders. The procession passed through the clouds and rose further and further. Everywhere there was a lovely play of glittering lights and colors flowing in myriad directions.

After a while they came to a great vistas of gardens planted with thousands of beautiful, vividly-

colored flowers. Their many scents were delightful and invigorating. Strangely, they had faces, kind and smiling. Stranger yet, all the flowers could talk.

“Welcome, dear brothers”...“Welcome”...“Welcome,” was heard from all directions.

When all the people had arrived, they were seated on comfortable and ornate chairs with arm, head and foot supports. The chairs were in a clearing facing a huge stage. An upright gigantic Book with a golden glittering cover occupied most of the stage. Its upper margin was lost in the sky. Margaret heard whispering: The Records of Nature...

Again the boy who sounded the fanfare appeared and played a ceremonial passage.

Then the leader of the procession came to the front. He was an old man with a wise face. His robe seemed to be woven with living light, adding to the brightness of his person. He solemnly declared:

“Let the reading begin.”

The Book opens slowly to the accompaniment of deeply affecting music. An enormous panoramic screen appears before the gathered people. The wispy glistening clouds of Time descend from everywhere. The people are transported on a fast journey through Time, back through the centuries. Among the roiling clouds the contours of a fortress gradually begin to appear—nebulous at first, then more and more clearly. Its stone walls are strong and high. There are guards on every post. The interior contains a city with prospering features. There are beautiful houses, estates, and government buildings. There are four grand gates on each side of the city. It is a warm summer night and most of the people are asleep. Only a few are wandering in the streets. They are wearing light clothes and robes. The sky is clear and the stars are twinkling, though their light is beginning to fade. The year is 978.

The city is under siege. Around the fortress there is a huge camp of enemy soldiers—about 5000. Most of them are sleeping around fires that have been reduced to glowing embers.

Somehow Margaret identifies herself with one of the soldiers. He is awake, thinking about the coming battle. A huge blanket covers his friend

and him. He is not afraid. He has been through so many battles.

“That’s me!”—her colleague from the plant, sitting on her right, exclaims.

“There I am!”—Margaret hears from the left.

“That’s me!”...“That’s me!” in chorus people shout from everywhere. Soon everybody from the plant recognizes his former self among the soldiers.

Suddenly a signal is given. The soldiers awake and soon they are ready for the forthcoming attack. In the receding dark the first faint signs of the breaking light are visible on the eastern horizon.

Traitors are opening the gate on the North side of the fortress. What happens next is hard to bear. Brutal killing, horror, screams of terrified people fill the entire area. Pools of blood, bodies of soldiers, maimed and mutilated women and children everywhere.

Margaret sees herself killing people... So do her viewing companions. A few hours later when the fortress is taken, there is silence—only terrified cats and dogs are running around, until they too are killed.

The soldiers gathering in the center begin a frenzied celebration....

The clouds slowly gather over the scene and engulf the ruins of the fortress, the victims, and the conquerors. When they disappear, the Giant Book also is nowhere to be seen.

Grave silence falls on the people of the plant. Now they know that they are not innocent. They understand why they died in the inferno. All of them were involved in the killing centuries ago, all of them are now together in death. For a brief moment they saw the faces of the people of the “Movement for Liberation.” They were the same people who were in the fortress, who were killed by the soldiers, by Margaret and her associates in their earlier life. The situation is now reversed—but in another era, in another land. The victims had become the executioners.

No one is able to say a word. No one can look in the face of the others. They stand accused. They are dumbfounded. They all sit in silence, for hours, brooding over the event, all to themselves. □

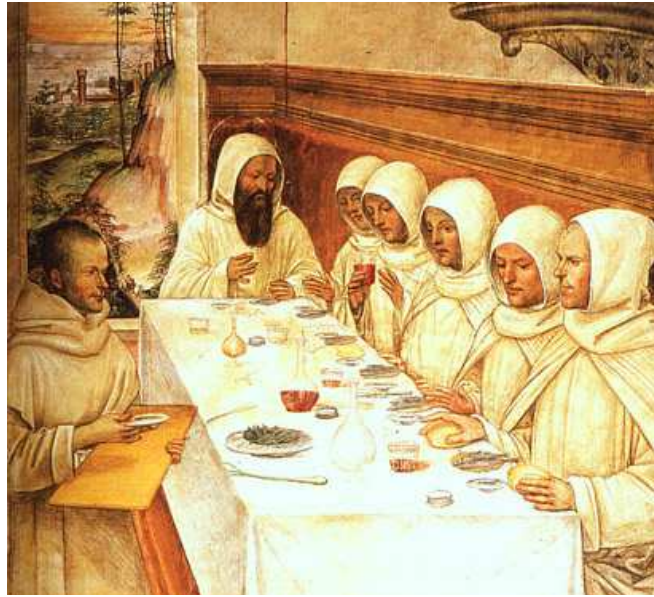
—Marcia Malinova-Anthony

The Mystic Feast and the Wedding Garment

IN MANY apocryphal documents of the Bible, which supplement and often clarify the meaning of abstruse texts of the canonical writings, we find references to “garments” which are laid up in one or another of the heavens awaiting the illumined soul. Orthodoxy has abandoned these apocryphal books, partly because the Church has lost the key to their meaning, and partly because Church hierarchs have consciously and deliberately repudiated Initiation for the masses of the people, despite the saying of the Christ that He had opened the Way for “whomsoever will” to come.

It is hard to envision such suppression of knowledge as being done from innocent motives; yet history shows us that well-intentioned ignorance is often the most powerful instrument available to the black forces. It is comparatively easy to deal with an openly wicked person, but to bring pressure to bear upon a tender-hearted and well-meaning individual who is hopelessly in the wrong but cannot be made to understand that he is—this is truly a formidable task, and one to give pause even to the wisest of men.

Aristotle wrote of a “Wisdom Feast,” and this expression is found generally in all mystical and philosophical literature of the entire Greek Period, which of, course, includes the time of Christ and early Christianity. Latin Christianity repudiated the Greek sages; but the Greek Orthodox Church continued to revere the great Greek philosophers, according them a place comparable with the great Hebrew sages who gave the Bible. Even today it is not uncommon to hear a sermon in a Greek Church



Fresco, Giovanni Antonio Bazzi (Sodoma), 1477-1549, Abbey of Monteoliveto Maggiore, Siena

St. Benedict and His Monks

in which the teachings of Socrates are used as an introduction to a text and lesson from the New Testament.

The Greeks also spoke of an “Eidolon,” or Image, which was the “double” or likeness of the man, and which could go forth from the body; and an “Augoeides,” a glorious shining body, or garment, which was the clothing of the Real Man, the Spirit-as-Ego, the Human Spirit of the Rosicrucian Philosophy.

Greek was the universal tongue of culture in the early Christian World. In Egypt at that time the Egyptians began to write their ancient language in Greek characters, giving rise to Coptic; and in the far West of that day, which was the coast of Europe, the Druids also began to write their mysteries and secrets in the Greek characters.

The language used by a people is of the utmost significance. Today we find that the tie between England and the United States is far closer than that between the continent of Europe and the United States, despite the fact that the population is certainly more European than English in

descent. But the tie of language, the magic of the word, binds us to England and to English culture and institutions.

So in antiquity, the widespread influence of Greek culture is related to the fact that the Greek language was the universal tongue of communication; and this meant that Greek philosophy was the dominant intellectual power throughout the ancient world, and that Greek science held the eminence then that nuclear physics and astronomy hold today. We see everywhere that priests, ministers, teachers, of every cult and religion, are searching their ancient scriptures to find corroboration of the latest scientific discoveries and are happy when they find them, and plunged in gloom when they do not.

In view of all this, it will be readily understood that Christianity and the problems of its origins cannot be elucidated without knowledge of Greek culture and civilization, and this is especially true of the apocryphal books of the Bible, and of the Gnostic library recently found in Egypt at about the same time that the Essene library was discovered in Palestine near the Dead Sea.

But Greek Philosophy was not merely intellectual, although the school of Aristotle focused the mind in materiality. The Platonic School still had great force, and its influence was metaphysical and mystical, and held to a discipline that was entirely spiritual, as shown in Plato's words: "About the subjects which I seriously study....there does not exist, nor will there ever exist, any treatise of mine dealing therewith. For it does not at all admit of verbal expression like other studies, but, as a result of continued application to the subject itself and communion therewith, it is brought to birth in the soul on a sudden, as light that is kindled by a leaping spark, and thereafter it nourishes itself."

The Greeks themselves acknowledged indebtedness to Egypt for much of their supernal wisdom and the Mysteries in which that wisdom was conveyed.

Even the canonical Scriptures received their final form during the Greek Period, and we are therefore not surprised to find Greek influences in the Old and New Testament texts as well as in the Apocrypha.

Now in all Greek literature—not in Aristotle alone—one discovers mention of the Mystic Marriage of the spirit, or soul, with God, and the Wisdom Feast which is part of the marriage celebration, and the beautiful and radiant garments in which the Bride and Groom, and also their guests, are clad for the occasion. Without the necessary garments no one can attend the Feasts, and so it is that in the apocryphal *Ascension of Isaiah* we read that when Isaiah had been brought by his Angel Teacher to the Gate of a certain high heaven, the Guardian of the Gate at first refused him entry; but the Angel said: "His garments are there," and at once the Gate was opened to the prophet.

What is this Garment which was laid up in the high heavens for Isaiah? Do we not recognize in it the Golden Wedding Garment, or soul body, of the Rosicrucian Teachings, and see here the symbology of the Wedding at Cana, where Christ turned water into wine?

We learn in the Western Wisdom Teachings that each aspect of the Threefold Spirit has a "reflection," or expression, in an aspect of the threefold personality: the Divine Spirit in the physical body (especially the skeleton); the Life Spirit or Christ Principle in the vital body (especially in the two higher ethers, the Light and Reflecting, which are the inmost essence or core of the vital body, as the skeleton is the inmost member of the physical body); and the Human Spirit, which is reflected, or expressed, in the concrete mind and in the desire body, especially the higher levels thereof.

From the work which the Virgin Spirit does in the threefold personality the "essence of experience" is extracted, which, we are told, nourishes to omnipotence the corresponding aspect of Spirit.

The Hebrew Initiate Isaiah possessed a garment in each one of the heavens to which he ascended, and since he had the garment, the Guardian of the Gate was compelled by divine law to allow him to enter.

The Golden Wedding Garment is the first of these garments of the spirit-self, or soul. It consists of the outer golden light, and an inner core of blue or azure Reflecting Ether, which is seldom seen outside the periphery of the dense body. Indeed, only in the greatest of saints does the blue color of

the Reflecting Ether reveal itself beyond the body outline. Note here that this is not to be confused with the Chemical envelope, which is a very dark blue, virtually indigo, and which has sometimes been described as lying “like a glove” upon the hand, for example, or burning like a low, fuzzy gas flame in material substances—along a wall or other surface. In all probability, the blue Chemical Ether is that which science has described and photographed as “free electrons,” which seem to show the appearance of blue flames such as are seen by etheric vision. From the free electrons and other sub-atomic particles all material substance is formed.

The Reflecting Ether is not the same as this Chemical Ether, and is described as “vacuous” in appearance, but in its seeming vacuity lie the records of the lowest aspect or phase of the Memory of Nature, and here also certain Nature Forces became visible to etheric vision.

We think of the Golden Wedding Garment, then, as a golden ovoid of radiant light, which may resemble a star, within which is the blue core of the Reflecting Ether. This twofold Garment holds within itself the “soul body,” or likeness of the dense body, a luminous transparent body which is born under the blazing Star, and whose birth is attended by Wise Men, now as in ancient times.

The Golden Garment is built by loving service, and by all that feeds and sustains the Christ Principle in the Human Spirit. Positive action is called for, in the line of service to others, but it may sometimes be that simply holding a mental attitude of positive good will, refraining from criticism, and quite definitely “minding one’s own business” is also such service as weaves the garment of the Initiate, the golden garment in which he soars aloft into the heavenly places.

Service may include work in the arts and crafts, if the motive is loving and spiritual and the work itself directed toward the upliftment of the human being and the conservation of all that is good in civilization. Service includes the self-sacrifice of the scientist in his laboratory; the caring deeds of the wife and mother in the home; the conscientious and inspired teaching of children in the public schools. All good work serves to build the Golden

CARITAS

Is thy cruse of comfort failing?
Rise and share it with another,
And through all the years of famine
It shall serve thee and thy brother.

Love divine will fill thy storehouse
Or thy handful still renew;
Scanty fare for one will often
Make a royal feast for two.

For the heart grows rich in giving;
All its wealth is living gain;
Seeds which mildew in the garner,
Scattered, fill with gold the plain.

Is thy burden hard and heavy?
Do thy steps drag wearily?
Help to bear thy brother’s burden,
God will bear both it and thee.

Numb and weary on the mountains,
Wouldst thou sleep amid the snow?
Chafe that frozen form beside thee,
And together both shall glow.

Art thou stricken in life’s battle?
Many wounded round thee moan,
Lavish on their wounds thy balsams,
And that balm shall heal thine own.

Is the heart a well left empty?
None but God its void can fill;
Nothing but a ceaseless Fountain
Can its ceaseless longings still.

Is the heart a living power?
Self-entwined, its strength sinks low;
It can only live in loving,
And by serving love will grow.

—Elizabeth Charles

Wedding Garment, and this Garment is truly a Star which shines forth on the mystic East, as beautiful as the Morning Star, Venus, which heralds the Sun, and, like that Star, is a significator of cosmic love and beauty. □

—Mary Ford

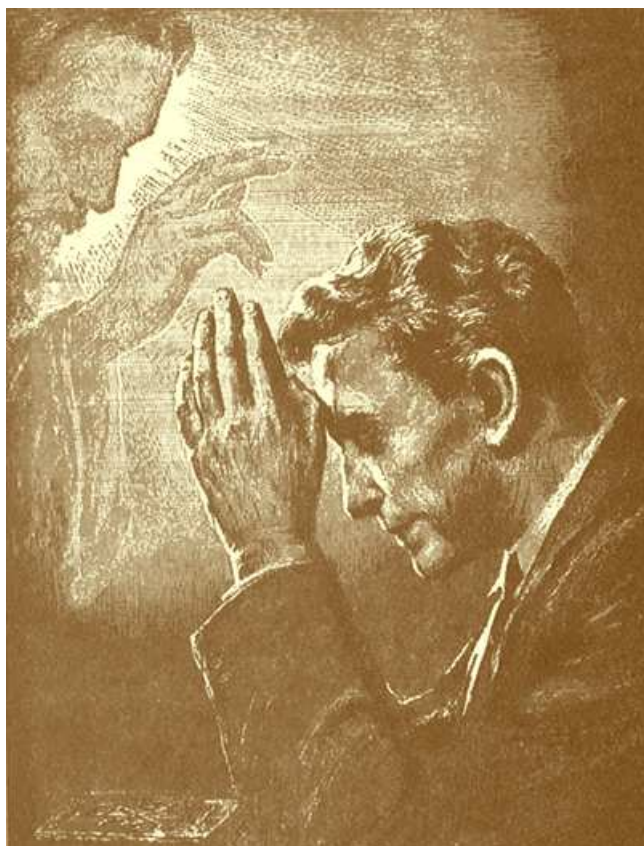
The Lord's Prayer

THE SCRIPTURES present the various sections of the various sections of the Lord's Prayer in the order suitable to man operating at his highest level, that is in contact with God. In the discussion that follows, which is from the point of view of man focussed at his lowest level, the physical, the order of the sections has been changed to emphasize their graded levels of application.

The Lord's Prayer can be interpreted from several different points of view, all of which are valid. At the lowest level, it is purely and simply petition prayer containing a set of requests to God. A clear indication that this prayer applies to other levels as well is the fact that, as petitions, certain parts of the prayer sound incongruous or are misleading.

Probably the most jarring and incongruous sentence is the petition to God to "lead us not into temptation," as surely God should know what He is doing. Petitioning God for our daily bread is misleading as it does not make manna fall from heaven. There is a complicated social process of food production and distribution. Those who are directly engaged in producing food make a surplus for the community to distribute to those who help in other ways. In other words, daily bread has to be earned by service to the community.

All these difficulties are cleared up when the prayer is interpreted from progressively higher levels. From a slightly higher viewpoint, which is an inward-directed one, the prayer becomes an instruction manual for the care and maintenance of the various vehicles with which man as spirit is endowed. When thus regarded, the prayer reveals the complexity of man's vehicles. First of all, he has been given a physical body by God and the instruction manual reads "Give it food, daily."



Created by Ariel Agemian exclusively for the Confraternity of the Precious Blood

"Forgiveness" is the balm for the next vehicle, the vitality or vital force which permeates the body and produces health or sickness. Physical matter, for example calcium, is never sick; it is the organizing vital force that malfunctions producing, for example, bone diseases. This is due to "sin" or transgressions of the laws of harmony. On an obvious level, anger and irritability are well-known sources of illness. On a more subtle level, all diseases are psychosomatic, that is, caused by emotions in disharmony. When mental and spiritual harmony is restored, the vital force also functions in harmony and the person is "at ease" and not in "dis-ease."

"Temptation" is the problem of our desires and emotions and shows the need to control them. It is we who must control our desires and not lead them into temptation. "Deliver us from evil" is a guideline for the mind, for reason can be used objectively and unemotionally to plan either good or bad acts. It is only at the petition level that the

prayer is passive. At any higher level it is dynamic in that it requires definite action by man. As an instruction manual, the prayer not only shows the complexity of man's vehicles (the body, vitality, emotion, and mind), but also the God-given responsibility he has to look after them and use them wisely.

At the next higher level, an outward-directed one, the Lord's Prayer is an environmental manual defining man's relationships with a complex environment which includes his fellow beings. On the physical level, the earth must be maintained as a continuous source of food (daily bread) and man has to look after and care for his physical environment to keep it as a renewable source of life and energy, which is the basis of the science of ecology. Just as we can pollute the physical earth and make it a desert, so we can pollute the vital, emotional, and mental atmospheres around us. Certain areas can become salubrious or enervating; certain atmospheres can breed anger and violence or promote tranquillity; and certain groups can foster evil, selfish thinking, or altruistic planning. Thus the prayer indicates that our environment is also left in our care and custody and we have to actively work to maintain it properly because we are as responsible for conditions around us as we are for conditions within us.

Another step upwards raises the prayer to spiritual levels where it clearly defines man's spiritual qualities and his relationship to God. The prayer is addressed to "our Father" in "heaven." Our Father is known only through His Will, an abstract principle—which was why Christ could not "show" the Father to his disciples as requested by them. What could be seen was Christ doing the Will of the Father (John 14: 8-11). Similarly, the abstract principle of justice cannot be shown except through persons practicing the laws. The opening sentence reminds us that it is in furtherance of the Will of God that we are here on earth, and the task to be accomplished is given in the command to us to see that "Thy Will be done on earth as it is in heaven." "Heaven" is where God rules and where His Will is done, and Christ indicated that "heaven" is within us (Luke 17:21). This phase of the prayer teaches that God's Will, or the spiritual principle of Love within us, must be made manifest on earth.

The energizing power which makes the manifestation of God's Will possible is the "name" of God used in a similar sense to the "name of the law" which motivates the conduct of law officers, or the "name of charity, mercy, pity, etc.," appealed to as motivating forces. When Adam "named" the animals (Gen. 2:19), he gave force to form; that is, he energized models of clay (earth). The Buddhist concept of worlds of "name and form" (*nama rupa*) indicate levels of energizing matter. Energizing forces can be used for good or evil, in altruistic or selfish ways; therefore the prayer insists that the "name" of God which is a creative force be "hallowed," that is, used reverently and responsibly to create good alone at all levels (physical, vital, emotional, and mental).

"Thy kingdom come" relates directly to the mission of Christ to arouse the God or Good in man when man will rule the earth, not as divided kingdom (the works of God and the devil corresponding to conflicting directions from his separated higher and lower selves) but as an unflawed, unified, Christ-inspired kingdom under the direction of the "Christ Within" (Col.1:27), the combined higher and lower selves in man.

Finally, the closing sentence ("thine...forever") dedicates the entire project after it is accomplished as a love offering to our Father God.

As man develops spiritually, he becomes more and more aware of the complex and wonderful forces assisting him and the prayer becomes one of praise and thanksgiving. We realize we are triune spirits made in the image of a Triune God and we are in the process of developing the three spiritual aspects in us by using their vehicular counterparts. The various parts of the prayer show the linkages and dependencies of our vehicles to our triune spirit, and ultimately to our Triune Father. Each vehicle is an expression of and under the continuous care and guidance of an aspect of Spirit. The body, vitality, and emotions each represent one of the aspects and the mind is the bridge or link to all three aspects. The prayer at this level raises man into that poised and tranquil state where he becomes a silent radiator of praise and thanksgiving which, in turn, exerts an uplifting effect on himself and his environment. □

—C.E.S. Gunasekera

Religious Authority and the Christian Dispensation

THE LAW was given by Moses, but Grace and Truth came by Christ Jesus.” These words from John 1 refer to two forms or phases of authority and truth which correspond to two stages in an individual’s spiritual development. Let us consider this development with respect to the cited passage.

THE MOSAIC DISPENSATION

Fallen man, man oriented exclusively to the world of sense perception, cannot recognize truth without knowing error. Error stems from ignorance of Cosmic Law, from spiritual amnesia, and manifests through the impulses of an ungoverned and unenlightened desire nature by which man sows seeds of confusion and suffering and thereby reaps a bitter harvest. Mosaic Law and Old Testament morality were formulated by lofty Guardians of human evolution and imposed on pre-Christian man to aid him in curbing his instinctive lower nature by inculcating fear of the repercussions of his immoral or illegal actions. Initially, physical punishment and deprivation of material benefits acted as deterrents to the expression of selfish tendencies. Jehovistic religions taught and continue to teach a preponderant awareness of sin and error. To the degree they teach Truth at all, they teach it negatively, from the vantage point of what it is not. They teach the separation of man from the unapproachable, awe-ful sublimity of Deity. They establish obedience to external authority as the ideal, and they locate this authority in a priesthood which categorically determines Truth, functions as a spiritual police, and serves as a dispensary of salvation.

When, through the wisdom gleaned by suffering from ignorant acts springing from selfish motives, man attains to considerable control over his lower

desire nature, he ceases to profit from prohibitive Old Testament authority. Then his budding spiritual awareness demands a higher Teaching, and he gratefully awakens to and embraces the New Testament teachings whose keyword is “love.” We should understand, however, that love will ever be the euphemistic substitute for personal desire, however subtle or refined, until man’s lower self becomes wholly subject to the control of the spiritualized mind and until its basic desire energies are fully transmuted by the spiritual will. Then love will be understood as the mighty power maintaining cosmic manifestation—as the embodiment of the Second Person or Principle of Triune Deity, whose active working manifests as Living Truth.

JOHN THE BAPTIST

As each of us journeys out of the Egypt of an Old Testament world and stands at the threshold of the Christ-permeated New Testament consciousness, we come to discern the pivotal role that the *persona* of John the Baptist plays in this transition from the worldly to the esoteric dimension of conscious being. The Bible unfolds the spiritual drama whose manifold characters we each in turn re-create and project as we make our way from the first Adam in Eden to the second Adam, the Christ, in the New Jerusalem. Although John was the greatest of beings born of woman—born of flesh—yet he is the least in the Kingdom of Heaven; that is, one who is born of spirit is greater than he.

As prototype of an intermediate phase in our spiritual career, John takes the law of Moses and the outward authority of the old dispensation and applies it to his own conduct and life with a terrific zeal, purging and clarifying his consciousness. John builds the Law into the Ego ark of his own living

tabernacle. In turn, his moral strength and spiritual authority stem from his mighty self-discipline. He brings the desire nature totally under the control of the will. And no outward law can ever check or chasten one who has taken it upon himself to prepare the way for the indwelling Christ with the requisite energy and vision. Generally speaking, the Old Testament primarily works on the desire body. The New Testament exerts its major influence on man's vital and mental bodies by encouraging and strengthening the faculties of loving and knowing. John marks the period of conversion of emphasis from the old to the new.

The John in each of us reaches the point where outward authority and man-originated law are superfluous to continued spiritual development because they condition the mind to dwell on and think exclusively in terms of the merciless perspective of violation, sin, and condemnation. Under the Law, all are sinners. Who, then, is fit to judge?

Not one. Who dares, in all conscience, cast any stone? Christ, the immeasurably greater, suffered Himself to be baptized by John, the merely mortal. Christ comes to our physical person—to the prepared "John vehicle"—in each of us. Christ, the only blameless, suffered and suffers himself to carry the planetary cross of selfishness and error, in order that its appalling weight might be somewhat lifted from the shoulders of humanity and that, through love, humanity might begin to redeem its



Oil on canvas, Hans Holbein (1497-1543), National Gallery of Scotland

Allegory of the Old and New Testaments

Holbein's pictorial allegory is a gloss of John 1:17: "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." The word "lex" appears above the kneeling Moses who is receiving the tables of law from Jehovah. As Paul writes in Romans, "By the law is knowledge of sin" ("peccatum" is written above Eve beguiled by the serpent) and the wages of sin is death ("mors" is imprinted on the casket containing the skeleton). The plight of man ("homo"), sitting on the rock of spirit-imprisoning earth, is given in the lament of Paul: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" The prophet Isaiah has the answer and points to the Virgin Mary: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" (Is. 7:14). Mary, the purified soul, is full of grace ("gratia" appears above the cross-bearing cherub), the Christ Spirit, the Truth which incarnates in the man Jesus. The serpent raised up by Moses in the wilderness prefigures the lifting up of the crucified Son of Man ("our justification") The attention of distraught man is directed by John the Baptist to the Lamb of God ("Agnus Dei") "which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). So is death, "the last enemy," destroyed: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" Note the tree, emblematic of the vital body, blighted on the law side and flourishing on the side of grace and truth.

fallen state. Continuing love, the active and ongoing forgivingness of sins, is the panacea brought by the Christ to mankind. This is the unmerited healing power given as grace by the Father through the Son, by which we may and will raise ourselves above the judgmental and condemnatory perspective of Old Testament morality.

ECCLESIASTICAL AUTHORITY IN HISTORY

Grace and Truth came by Christ Jesus. The spiri-

tual aspirant of the Aquarian dispensation, especially the one whose development requires heavy infusions of higher philosophy and metaphysics, is called upon by his curious or skeptical brethren to justify his knowledge. His task is not easy because those who inquire of him may not appreciate the profound transformation signified by the interiorizing of authority. To the casual observer, this change may outwardly be equated with mere subjectivism and personal convenience. Thus, the historical Christ Jesus frequently was confronted by proponents of the old order who demanded of Him by what authority He taught, healed, and generally conducted Himself. Frequently, His actions and words had no doctrinal precedent or appeared to be outright blasphemy.

We might benefit from a brief look at religious authority as it has been exercised in the more recent Western tradition. Religious authority is the formalization of what was, originally, divine inspiration and revelation received by spiritually evolved persons. The authority, following in the wake of these revelations, describes the institutionalization of Spirit, whereby that which is heavenly is taken over by earthly organizations and used to expand and justify their worldly power. Orthodox religions, and religions generally, conveniently tend to forget their own transcendent origins. They tend to forget that the power they exercise is borrowed or vicarious. They claim primacy and irrefutability for their doctrines when, in fact, only the divine Source of the Truth they purvey is primary and undeniable. When early Christianity was being amalgamated into the Roman political regime, the executors of this empire took every measure systematically to root out all trace of the pre-existing mystery cults which made spiritual truths accessible to the duly prepared candidate. The Roman state aimed to be the sole dispenser of spiritual truth and foisted the delusion that Spirit beings and spiritual experience would work only through the access of emperors and their appointed ministers. Thus the Catholic religion was from early times established as a theocracy—that is, a spiritual monopoly. The tremendous power of the Mother Church dictating all facets of life to a captive laity became, with the approach of the Renaissance and the rampant abuse of office and

the sacraments, intolerable. The Protestant Reformation was the consequence.

Martin Luther asserted the primacy of the individual conscience in determining spiritual truth. He re-established the priority of the inner voice as the high priest of one's religious life. Yet Protestantism, too, went the way of formalism and intolerance, splintering into a myriad of sects, each with its code of observances and anathemas.

AUTHORITY AND THE MODERN ASPIRANT

The modern aspirant to higher wisdom recognizes no *true* spiritual authority in political fiat or ecclesiastical mandate. He has made a momentous transition from an exoteric to an esoteric perspective and he discerns in the Christing of Jesus a universal paradigm applicable (eventually) to all evolving humanity. This signifies the marriage or fusion of the terrestrial man and the celestial man, the outer personality and the inner individuality, the Son of Man (lifted up) and the Son of God (descended to Earth). To him who assigns outer authority with complete rulership over his life and retains the exoteric perspective, Jesus Christ was either a man among men, however exemplary, or an historical superman, but lost in time. To him who awakens to his own Divine nature and begins to participate in the being of his sacred I, Jesus was the mortal vehicle and vessel for the living, universally individual, Christ Spirit, even as the Simon Peter in each of us, eventually, can perceive and testify spiritually.

The Way, the Truth, and the Life are open to all, directly from within—a condition obtaining from the time of the crucifixion of Christ Jesus and the rending of the Temple veil. In fact, only through individual effort can one now attain to the Kingdom of Heaven. It is not simply the gratuity conferred for refraining from violating the Ten Commandments. Even less is it the Sunday dispensation of one's neighborhood church.

AUTHORITY AND WESTERN WISDOM TEACHINGS

Christ now is to be received through the intercession of one's own ministering heart and mind. And what of the Western Wisdom Teachings that describe the magnified context in which the Being of the archangelic Christ appears in Cosmic glory

and power? By what authority are they to be accepted? Initially, by the inherent authority of their very reasonableness, their fundamental rightness, and the deep and vital appeal they make to our fullest understanding. What better criteria do we have at the outset than that our questions can be answered rationally, contradictions can be resolved, and diverse theories and facts can be systemized and harmonized? There is no coercion here, and no metaphysical passing the buck by invoking dubious outer authorities or invoking ecclesiastical infallibility.

The procedure of validating spiritual truth, prior to confirmation by first-hand revelation, is identical to the method employed in the physical sciences wherein, at the outset, we accept as true those theories which explain and order the phenomena of sense-experience. Likewise, we accept on a provisional basis the plausible formulations of the science of Spirit relating to cosmic structure, origin, and event and put them to the test. Do they bring light and order to experience? Do they answer questions arising out of everyday occurrence?

It is abundantly clear, however, that occult truths are not the end of our seeking. On the contrary, they are the beginning of our living with purpose and dedication in the fraught and fret of day-to-day circumstance. This day-to-day experience is the fire that will try the quality of what we deem to be true, whether it is of man or God.

The first and foremost precept of the aspirant living along the lines of the Rosicrucian philosophy is that Christ Jesus will be his ideal, and a second precept is that the student shall refer to his inner self as the ultimate and most reliable source of Truth. The synthesis of these two precepts clearly indicates that true authority proceeds from within and from on high: from the Christ within. The author of true authority is the Higher Self, which partakes of the selfsame divinity as does the Godhead. Truth is not from mortal man but from the God in man. Outward man merely receives, manifests, and demonstrates. As Paul puts it, “we have this treasure [of the knowl-

edge of the Glory of God] in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the Power may be of God and not of us” (2 Cor. 4:7). Humans are expressive channels for and exemplars of the one Truth—the Logos or Word begotten of His Father before all worlds.

The Spirit of Truth, or Holy Spirit, is the Comforter because He has come to man as witness and confirmation of the ongoing Cosmic Deed of the Christ. The Truths imparted by the Holy Spirit



Opaque watercolor over graphite on gray wove paper. J. James Tissot, 1836-1902, Brooklyn Museum

The Chief Priests Ask by What Authority

Christ Jesus makes clear the source of his authority by pointing heavenward.

testify to the Love of Christ and His continuing cosmic sacrifice. The Lord of Love has descended from the heart of the Sun and taken up his lowly abode in the abused body of planet Earth and, especially, in the fallen form of humanity, that we might attain unto the conscious realization of our divine natures and repossess them in wisdom and in strength.

Christ in man is the one revealed Truth by which all men are made one, even as all the members of our physical bodies are indissolubly linked together by the indwelling Ego. Because Christ is in all and all are in Christ, one man is, essentially, neither more nor less than another. Similarly, we cannot say that the arm is more than the leg or the heart is better than the head. Since each man is a living part of the living Christ, none is dispensable. Likewise, if one part ails, the entire body is affected.

Esoteric Christianity comprehends all teachings

within. It recognizes differences and it accounts for disparities. Subsidiary doctrines and specific techniques may vary, but the core Truth is ever one and the same. By analogy, we may say that a circle has an infinite number of radii, but only one center. It is not a question of which religion is right or true. God is Right and True, and the vital religion describes the life consecrated to the realization of the Son of God in man. It is not which path to choose, for there is but one Path, at once individual and universal. On Earth, there is one common air. It is the one life of us all, physically, even as we breathe separately. Likewise, there is one spiritual air or Life that we, individually, each in our inimitable way, enfold, which is Christ: "I Am the Way." "I Am the Door." The name may change but the spiritual Being remains the same. Christ is the way. Christ is within: in the center of and permeating our solar system; in the center of the spiritual Earth; in our souls; at the heart of our daily lives. In fact, Christ, speaking through Jehovah, identifies Himself to an anxious Moses, troubled by the burden of authority he is to assume, as "I am the I AM." Christ is not a doctrine. Christ is not a teaching. Christ is. Christ is Love, unfathomable Power, Light brighter than mere mortal sight can behold.

The brain-bound mind can assent to or dissent from any thesis brought to its attention; it may accept or reject any theory. This movement of the mind is itself of no consequence if the will does not seize upon the formulated truth and ground it, bring it into the marketplace of daily life, and use it. Herein is Truth tested. Truth is pragmatic: it works; it is useful; it endures the daily onslaught. Words come easy. Rather, try the words, whether they come from mortal man or from the God in man.

As a personal criterion for the Truth to which we may aspire, we may apply the words of Christ: my doctrine is not mine but His that sent me. If any man do the Will of the Father, he will know of the doctrine, whether it be of God or whether man speaks of himself. And what is the Father's Will? That we love one another even as He has loved us. Love, then, is the criterion by which we determine the authority, that is, the truthfulness or authenticity, of a teaching.

What does love enjoin? It urges a living in, to,

and for the Whole, the One; it urges selfless service. The servant is not greater than the Master, and the Master gave his life. We, too, may give our life daily in service to God, working for the upliftment of our total immediate environment, praying, praising, making every effort to keep alert peace in our minds and purity of motive in our hearts. Love urges and demonstrates simplicity, humility, harmony, compassion, nonjudgment. Love manifests in continuous readiness to be of use to others. As acts of service build the soul body, the reflecting ether shall make known to man truths not dreamt of by his brain-bound philosophy.

THE EXPERIENCE OF TRUTH

In *Teachings of an Initiate* (p. 136) we read: "As the luminous soul body grows in and around a person, this light will teach him or her about the mysteries without need of books, and one who is thus God-taught knows more than all the books in the world contain."

Or, as this truth is formulated in I John 2:27: "The anointing which ye have received of Christ abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you; But the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth." John's visions as set forth in Revelation refer, in part, to the book of living wisdom that we each are; that is, each of us is a book or Bible bound by seven seals. These seals are loosed to him who awakens the vital centers or convokes the churches to which each corresponds, and he thus becomes God-taught. These etheric centers serve as messengers of the Word of God.

God imparts truth to them who are ready to receive it. "When ye have lifted up the son of man, then shall ye know that I AM He." As Thomas à Kempis expressed the idea: "If thy heart were right, then every creature would be to thee a mirror of life and a book of Holy Doctrine. If thou were good and pure within, then wouldst thou discern all things without impediment and understand them rightly."

"I AM the Truth." As we set about seeking the Source of living Truth and inspiration within our beings, let us realize that the Word intones its high forms in our hearts and minds to the degree that we have put off the old man, the personal self, and put on the New Man, the planetary Self, which partici-

pates in the fellowship of humanity as the very body of Christ and knows all separative distinctions, all outward differences, as fundamental illusions tempting us to deny the living presence of the unifying Life Spirit, which is the high body of Christ. Therefore, that which does not contribute to the well-being of the planetary whole, that which favors a part to the exclusion of its larger context is, ultimately, false.

APPLICATION OF TRUTH

Again, one cannot really know the Truth until one brings it into one's life and makes it part of the flesh and blood of daily experience. Truly, Christ is the bread and the blood of life. All too commonly what passes for religion is a temporary solution to life's problems by means of which an individual can obtain short term security without changing his life and his apparent being. This is a great deception. The inner experience of spiritual certainty, the I-identification with Christ (rather than imitation or even emulation) demands an utter transformation of life. As Max Heindel describes it, the structure we are is broken down to its basic components, which then may be restructured, with Christ as the foundation and cornerstone. We deceive ourselves if we think this dismemberment and restructuring do not alter us to our very core. We remember the lines of Angelus Silesius: "The cross on Golgotha thou lookest to in vain,/ Unless within thyself it be set up again." In a real sense, each of us is Jesus. Each of us, as the Son of Man, ultimately re-enacts the Christ experience: "Though Christ a thousand times in Bethlehem be born/ And not within thyself, thy soul will be forlorn."

The Christ Truth designates the Way that life transcends itself. It is the Way the soul of man soars above its mortal coil and its mutable forms. We must look to our lives here and now if we are to find the Truth that liberates from the suffering and error incident to this same momentary perspective. We must love Truth into vital being. We must inject our hearts, our minds, and our souls into this continuous *now*. Then we will know the Truth and the Truth will set us free. Then we will know even as we are now and ever known.

Let us resolve to prove our readiness to receive

ALONG THE ROAD

I walked a mile with Pleasure;
She chattered all the way,
But left me none the wiser
For all she had to say.

I walked a mile with Sorrow,
And ne'er a word said she;
But oh, the things I learned from her
When Sorrow walked with me.

—R.B. Hamilton

what we seek—which is what seeks us. Far more earnestly than we, does It seek to disclose Itself to us. For Truth comes down to us from the realms of light, ordering and sustaining creation. Christ waits at the door on the side of Light. We are striving upward and inward, from out of ignorance and darkness, dimly comprehending what we seek, knowing that it awaits our readiness, our sanctification, through full victory over our lower natures, our ennoblement through years of selfless service.

We gain little by looking to others for confirmation of our spiritual understanding. From others we sometimes receive consolation. With others we may and do live in spiritual fellowship. The truths and convictions of others, however, cannot be imported as our own spiritual I-identity. Truth proceeds from within and awaits the giving of our lives to it. Truth is quickened by our inner strivings and our tireless aspirings. Let us each strive to be worthy to enter those inner precincts where the living Truth is found and can be experienced.

From our present vantage on the path of spiritual unfoldment, we may state with certainty that our higher understanding, our wisdom, increases and deepens directly with our capacity to experience and live spiritual love.

Finally, when we speak of spiritual enlightenment, we speak of establishing the Christ in each. We earnestly strive to be invested by His Spirit as our guiding light. If we live by the highest truth we know, and in love, we shall grow in all ways into the perfect man, even unto the fullness of the stature of Christ. □

—C.W.

Promoting Spiritual Development

THE RECORDING ANGELS are the agents of destiny. Their aim is to give to all people what they need for their spiritual development. The questions this article will explore are what the Recording Angels do to accomplish their task and ways in which humans can help in the process.

In order for people to develop spiritually they need two things. They need to exercise their various spiritual muscles so that they develop spiritual strengths and they need to experience the effects of their actions so that they learn which actions were wise and which were foolish. In order for the universe to stay in balance as these processes occur, people who incur debts of destiny also need to eventually pay them back. The Recording Angels, then, have the responsibility of arranging people's spiritual exercise programs and their retrospections and their debt payments. Their specific duties involve the following:

1. Prior to birth they set up the major outlines of a life plan for each person and choose the time and place of birth of that person in such a way that that person will encounter those astrological energy patterns which will challenge him to exercise those of his spiritual muscles which are most in need of exercising.

2. They guide people in their 'chance' encounters with other people so that each person will encounter those who will promote the working out of their life plan.

3. After death, the Recording Angels see that each person retrospects his life and feels the effects of each of his actions on earth. This totally clears the debts of joy and sorrow, so that when a person is born again he does not have any outstanding debts of joy or sorrow. People may still have debts

of service to work out. If, in one life, a person has received more services than he has given, then he will owe some debts of service when he returns to life on earth. People can also incur debts of service by doing acts which harm or delay the evolutionary progress of others. In each life, the Recording Angels arrange for people to have the opportunity to pay as many of these debts of service as they are able.

People have free will, and they may use their free will either to work with the Recording Angels in promoting spiritual development of themselves and others, or they may work against the Recording Angels and against the promotion of their own and other's spiritual development. The Recording Angels are not deterred by the willfulness of humans, and they keep giving humans opportunities to develop and the associated retrospections until ultimately the spiritual development generally occurs. But humans by their actions can speed up or slow down the process.

What can humans do to speed up their spiritual development? They can accept the challenges of life and do their best to solve whatever problems they encounter. They can retrospect their actions at the end of each day, trying to see and feel the effects of their actions and thus learn which actions had desirable effects and which had undesirable effects. They can also serve whenever they have the opportunity.

This leads to the next question. How can humans serve one another, which translates into how can humans promote the spiritual development of one another? To promote the spiritual development of others we need to encourage them to face the challenges and solve the problems in their lives. This does not involve doing for others what they should be doing for themselves, although it may involve doing for others things which they are not currently

ready to learn to do for themselves. It does not involve giving to others everything they want (which may take away their motivation to develop the skills to earn things for themselves), although it may involve giving others the information and resources they need to get started on some productive activity. It does not involve telling people that they are doing a great job when they are not (which may give them a false sense of accomplishment and diminish their motivation to improve), but it may involve reminding people that they have potential and can accomplish great things if they persist in their efforts. This does not involve sheltering people from all the effects of their actions, although it may involve standing by them in their problems and helping them find a way through them.

A particular need for service occurs when people are ill. Any illness is given the sufferer by the Recording Angels in order to enable that person to learn some lessons or in order to help him develop some spiritual powers. For example, if people are ill because they did not know how to keep themselves healthy, their lesson may be to learn about such things as proper diet, exercise, rest, and a harmonious state of mind. If people knew what they needed to do to stay healthy but did not control their desire body sufficiently to live by these rules, then their lesson may be to learn to live according to rules.

Some illnesses may not be the effects of wrong living, but rather be caused by some unforeseeable 'accident' or congenital problem. These illnesses may have been given by the Recording Angels to help the person develop some spiritual quality such as patience, sympathy for those who suffer, humility, will power, seeking for spiritual understanding, etc. The spiritual needs of someone who is ill are to learn the lesson which the illness is trying to teach him and/or to develop the powers which the illness is meant to help him develop. When these have been accomplished, then the Recording Angels will lift the illness from the person. Possible service to ones who are ill may involve helping them with everyday living chores (if they need it), helping them understand the possible causes of disease (and thence also the route to cures), helping them view their situation from a spiritual point of view (so that they can see the goodness of the universe and can

SILENCE

"If we are to foster the awe, reverence, and adoration through which we may know the Word of Christ, then we must love, and not fear silence and stillness in...our life. From silence comes the Word. From silence God spoke and created the world. From silence He spoke to Mary and came to dwell in her womb. From silence He sent His Holy Spirit at Pentecost to lead the Church. Meditative quiet...is neither favored nor fostered in our culture. Yet there is no getting around the simple fact that only in stillness do we learn to listen with the interior ear. Only in stillness do we calm down enough to sense the Lord's presence. Only in stillness do we find out that the Lord loves us and that we are made to love him. Silence, then, is not a den of terror; it is rather the place where we fall in love."

—Anne Husted Burleigh

overcome such negative emotions as anger, fear, and worry).

Are spiritual healers, who are able to bring healing to those who are afflicted, working with the Recording Angels to promote the patient's spiritual development? If they are not initiates, they probably are unable to work against the Recording Angels because they will not be able to heal anyone whom the Recording Angels have not decided is ready to be healed. Initiates have the power to heal at will, but they have the wisdom to only use this power when it will be of benefit to the spiritual development of the patient. Thus, initiates will consciously work with the Recording Angels in promoting the spiritual development of people.

Another method of service is through prayer or meditation or projected thoughts. Any pure, loving, uplifting prayers or thoughts have a positive effect on the spiritual development of the world. It is possible to make prayers of commitment, to tell the Recording Angels that if they send anyone to us in need of service, we will do our best to help. (It is useful to the Recording Angels to know this.) If, in our prayers, we would ask for something, we might follow the example of King Solomon. He requested wisdom so that he could serve the people better. □

—Elsa Glover

MYSTIC LIGHT

What is Time?

ACCORDING to *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*, time is a duration, the measured period during which an action, process, or condition exists or continues. Time can also be a continuum which lacks spatial dimensions and in which events succeed one another from past through present to future. What then precisely is time?

Scientists say that time is something related to various events in nature. For example the daily rotation of the earth's spin-axis resulting in alternating daylight and darkness, the annual earth seasons, the backward precession of the equinoxes along the ecliptic plane of the earth, or, a more recent disclosure, the decay rate of some specific nuclear isotope. Still others say that time is a grand illusion, it is something that deceives the eye by producing a false impression or delusion.

Max Heindel said that there is only an eternal now! Apparent time in the dense Physical World is simply God exercising His ability of creation/evolution of various life forms in His domain. Some life forms in God's kingdom are minerals, plants, animals, humans, Angels, and Archangels. The Bible's opening book of Genesis tells us that "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Max Heindel said that the first aspect of the triune God manifests as Will to create. It then arouses the second aspect, which is Wisdom to design a plan for a future universe. The third aspect is Activity, which produces motion in cosmic substance. Motion alone, however, is not sufficient. To form a system of worlds, it must be orderly motion. Wisdom is therefore necessary to guide motion in an intelligent manner to produce definite results.

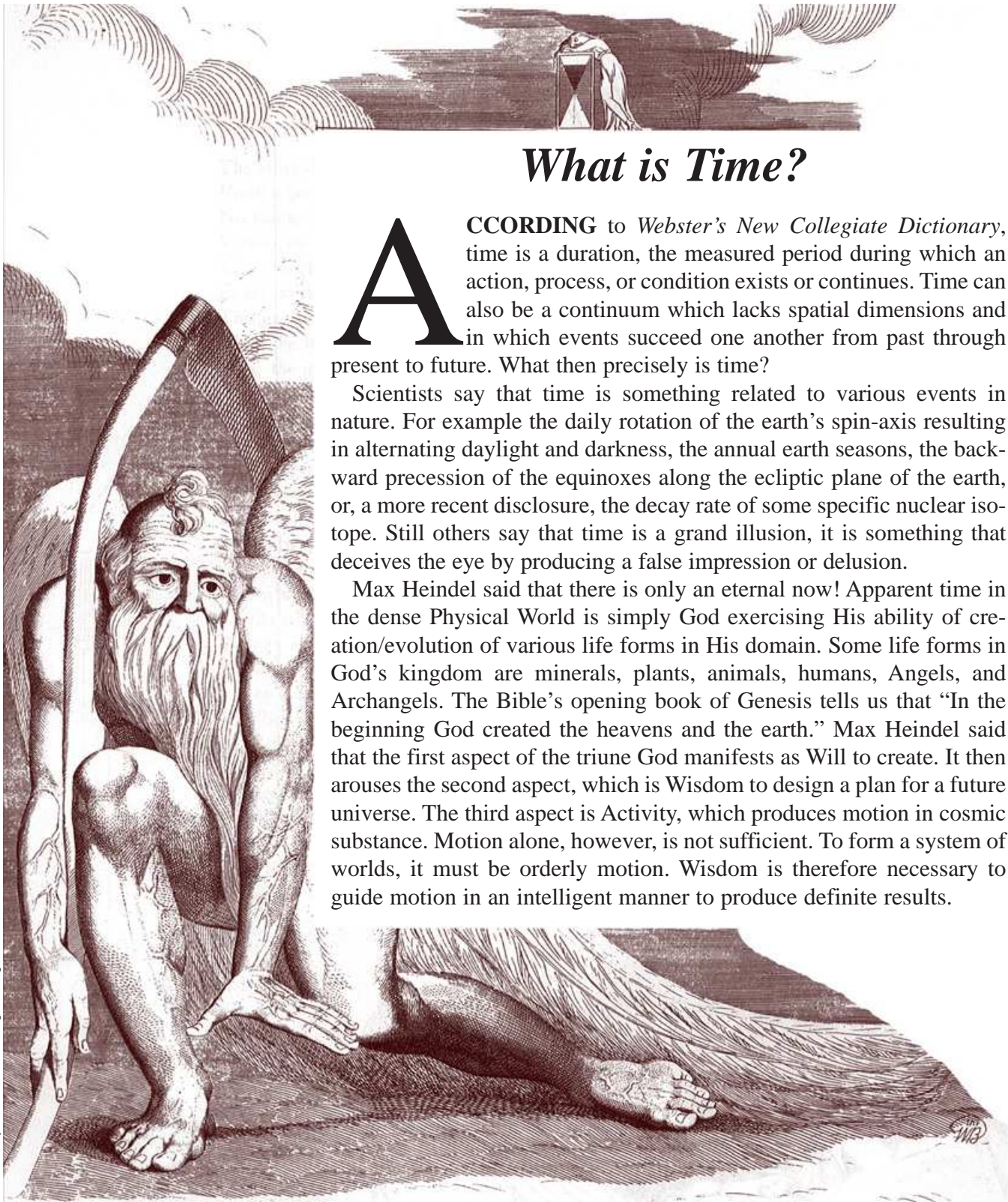


Illustration by William Blake for *Night Thoughts*. Dover Publications, Inc.

Time from a human viewpoint is thus based upon some practical point of reference, a form or pattern of orderly motion in Nature (i.e. God), such as the daily rotation of the earth's spin-axis, resulting in alternating daylight and darkness. It is necessary for human and animal life forms on this planet earth to have periods of rest because of our heavy physical bodies. This is the reason why God created periods of daylight and darkness. Some creatures are of course nocturnal, which means they are active in their physical bodies at night and sleep during the day.

Max Heindel also said that in the Desire World there is neither heat nor cold, forms levitate as well as gravitate; distance and time are nonexistent. There is only one continuous span of everlasting daylight and color, no darkness. Human beings never get tired in the Desire World. The Spirit is not restrained by a heavy physical body, therefore it does not need sleep and conscious experience is not broken.

Spiritual substances are not subject to the expansion and contraction resulting from the application of heat and cold, therefore summer and winter are nonexistent. Also, most humans in the Desire World are unable to determine the chronological relation of events. Only students of the stellar sciences (astronomy/astrology) and esoteric teachings are able to calculate the time of passage after their demise.

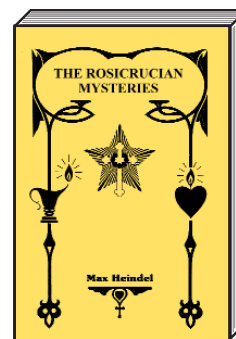
When an occult investigator in the Desire World wishes to study an event in the past history of man, he may most readily call up the picture from the memory of nature, but if he desires to fix the time of the incident, he will be obliged to count backwards by the motion of the heavenly bodies. For that purpose, he generally uses the measure provided by the Sun's precession. Each year the Sun crosses the earth's equator about the twenty-first of March. Because of a certain wobbling motion of the earth's axis, the Sun does not cross over at the same place in the zodiac. It reaches the equator a little earlier. It gradually moves backwards around the whole circle of the zodiac in about 26,000 years or approximately one arc-degree of space in 72 years.

We have been told by the Rosicrucian Elder

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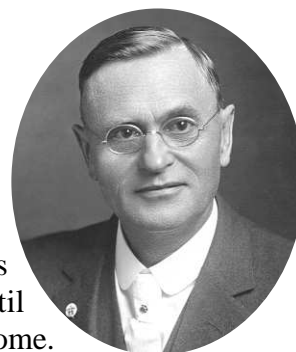
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Brothers that seven cosmic days of manifestation are experienced for humanity to attain to Godhood. Humanity is presently a little more than halfway thru the fourth day of manifestation. Each day of manifestation lasts for many millions of dense Physical World earth years of time! Also, between each day of manifestation God reabsorbs His creations back into primordial substance called "Chaos" and time stops! At a later day of manifestation God's creations re-emerge from Chaos into Cosmos at a higher level of evolution than the previous day of manifestation. So I ask you again, what is time? □

—Harry O'Connell

Athanasia, the Cornerstone of Religion



A GAIN we are about to witness one of the alternating acts in the great Cosmic drama involving an annual metamorphosis of the earth.* The southern Sun is hastening toward his eastern node, removing the snowy blanket under which Mother Earth has been sleeping, and waking her to activities of a new year that she may again bring forth food for the sustenance of her children. Cheered by the invigorating rays of the returning Sun, the little birds are singing their love-songs while building the nests for their coming brood. The beasts are mating and the millions of seeds in the ground instinct with the cosmic Christ-life which came down from heaven are bursting that that life may be liberated and returned again to the Father who gave it. Hence they produce not *the living bread* but the bread whereof men live and men die, for though this earthly food is capable of sustaining the body in which the real man sojourns for a time, the divine Life which alone could vitalize it forever has soared to higher spheres since its resurrection at Easter.

An unwarranted stress has been and is being laid upon the mystic death of Jesus in the Gospel story, which is an error from the esoteric point of view. The resurrectional event seems to fade into insignificance in comparison with the death on the cross, and even at Easter the sermons do not usually emphasize the paramount importance of the resurrection. But in the fifteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians we find the doctrine laid down unerringly concerning the relative importance of the death and the resurrection of Christ as the first-

fruits and ourselves as Christs-in-the-making until His kingdom shall have come.

There Paul shows with his usual logic that unless *the seed* dies it cannot bring forth. But though it is necessary in plant-life that the seed should die in order to bring forth a new plant, we regard its death as only an insignificant incident to be forgotten in comparison with the all-important fact that the plant flowers and brings forth seed for a new year. Following the analogy, it was necessary when the Christ-Spirit entered Jesus at the time of the baptism, that Jesus, the personality, should die in order that the Christ-Life might be liberated and resurrected in due time and from the seed-body of the dead Jesus there might grow millions of other bodies, potential vehicles for the Christ-Spirit, ready to follow in His steps to make the world a better place and pave the way for the perfect men.

But we know that there are no sudden processes in nature. When the butterfly breaks its cocoon and soars into the empyrean, the seemingly sudden and miraculous development proves upon investigation to be the outcome of a comparatively slow growth and development which has transformed the grub into a winged creature. The law of analogy, which is the master-key to all mysteries, shows us an orderly process of unfoldment also in the human being, and even in the earth upon which we live. There are too many lessons to be learned in life's school, and it has therefore been wisely ordered by the divine Hierarchs who have charge of our development that by a series of existences in gradually improving earthy bodies we may learn life's lessons and evolve toward the stature of a perfect being. Thus, as the Christ-Life enters the

**This article is unpublished, save for its appearance in the April 1917 issue of the Rays.*

earth in annual cycles to give it the vitality necessary to the sustenance of the flora and fauna and is raised up again to the right hand of the Father at Easter, so also the Ego takes its cyclic dips into the body, and that which we call death is only as the seed that lies in the ground. The life has ascended up to the Father, taking with it the aroma of soul-growth, and from the dead seed of the body arises the seed-atom, which will furnish a new vehicle for the next pilgrimage of the spirit into matter. The spirit which was never born can never die and even the body in the very act of dying perpetuates itself through the seed-atom by which it lives anew.

Man was destined to conquer the physical world. This was necessary in order to teach him to think aright, for concrete conditions reveal to us, and show us more plainly than could be done in any other way, when we have made a mistake in our calculations. But in order that man might apply himself to learn these lessons with his whole heart, the spiritual verities were hidden from him by unrestricted indulgence of the lower nature. Wine, women, and song have taken the place of spiritual pleasures, until many believe that that is all there is. The truth, however, was not to be entirely obscured, and though the Light has been deeply veiled in the Christian religion for the purpose stated, it has, nevertheless, been there all the time. We are beginning to conquer the demon drink and the virtue of chastity is beginning to be more and more recognized every day. Therefore, the light shines more clearly and we perceive it in such places as that fifteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians, which all ought to read, particularly at this Easter time, substituting, however, the word "soul" for "natural" twice in the 44th verse and leaving out the words "is the Lord" in the 47th. In that chapter Paul champions the doctrine of rebirth: "How say some of you there is no resurrection of the dead? If Christ be not raised from the dead then is your faith vain." And later:

"But some men will say, How are the dead raised up and with what body do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die, and that which thou sowest thou sowest not that body which shall be but a bare seed [atom], but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him, and for every seed a body. All flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one kind of flesh of beasts,

another of birds, and another of fishes. There are also celestial bodies and bodies terrestrial [earthly bodies as well as spiritual bodies], the glory of the celestial is one and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the Sun and another glory of the Moon and another glory of the stars, for each star differeth from the others in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead: it is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised to power; it is sown a soul-body, it is raised a spiritual body. So it is written, the first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual but that which is soul; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy, the second man is from heaven. Now this I say brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

When the Sun is in the southern signs during the winter months and the northern part of the earth is asleep, wrapped in its death-like shroud of snow, the powers of death and darkness seem to be supreme; but when the Sun of the new year reaches the equator and crosses into the northern signs, giving its light and strength for the present preservation of humanity in this hemisphere, death is vanquished. Similarly also the aspirant to the higher life can only win victory over death by giving his life in self-sacrifice for others. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, it must be offered up on the altar of self-sacrifice. Only then comes the liberation from the cross with the glorious cry uttered first by Christ, *Consummatum est*—it has been accomplished. As he soars out into subtler spheres, he continues there the work of soul growth that was commenced in his earthly body. Thus, in every realm of nature, from the crystal to the Christ, the principle of re-birth is used by the divine Hierarchies for the upliftment of all that lives, the least to the greatest, and it is therefore the cornerstone of all religion. □

READERS' QUESTIONS

Visiting a Cemetery; What is Happening to Me? The Universe is Like a Rose

QUESTION: If one visits a cemetery on a night close to the full moon day will he be able to see all the souls buried during the previous 24 hours?

Is it possible that any other beings from the spiritual world, including demons, could be seen in the area at this time?

Answer: To see any spirits one must possess a degree of clairvoyance. What one sees of the departing spirit ("soul") in the cemetery near the full moon is, however, the physical body's etheric counterpart, the two lower ethers of the vital body that are decaying synchronously with the dense physical body of the deceased. This vital body is part of the physical world. It is usually only faintly visible to nonclairvoyants within a day of the person's demise, under the above-mentioned conditions.

One is less, rather than more, likely to see a demon in a cemetery, for demons seek to influence living beings, and typically, the spirit has left the locus of its physical body after concluding its retrospection, during which time it is protected from demonic intrusion.

WHAT IS HAPPENING TO ME?

Question: I am a non-practicing Catholic but with an open mind. For the last 5 years interesting events have happened to me. They got more predominant since the death of my grandfather, who according to my parents, was a high order Rosicrucian. He died outside the U.S.

Allow me to briefly explain what happened. (This was about 3 days after his corporeal death.) It was approximately three o'clock in the afternoon when I started to be sleepy and feeling weak to the

bone. I did not lose consciousness but could not open my eyes. After a series of bodily reactions and emotional changes, I found myself standing at the door of my house (I had left my body behind) with my grandfather outside. (I had not seen him for about 12 years.) He spoke to me words that I seem unable to remember. I also witnessed who "took him" (for lack of better word). I remember seeing a flower rod standing at the front of my house which "turned" into two (I think) snakes that as soon as they touched the ground, slithered toward me. Since then I have experienced vivid dreams, seen apparitions of entities and people that I do not know. I am aware of catastrophic events, sense death of family members and also unknown people. Furthermore, unknown hands have attacked me when I approach certain individuals. This and many more interesting things are going on. The priest thinks I am in need of more praying, but even that has turned interesting in recent years. Please, any advice would be greatly appreciated. I was told your order could shine some light onto what is happening to me.

Answer: The account of your narrated experiences, apparently connected, at least coincident, with the death of your grandfather, suggests several points:

(1) The effect of his death may have triggered the extrasensory faculty which you have gained, and conceivably he may have played some initiating role in its onset.

(2) In the account you relate, the fact that you were at the door of the house indicates a loosening of the your vital body from the dense physical body, making possible the visionary capability. A

house in dream symbology is the physical body. Your grandfather on the outside shows him at the threshold of your consciousness of the invisible world. He also, being just three days deceased, was still within the earth's etheric aura and able to more easily show himself, his affection for you drawing you to his attention, and him to you.

(3) The two snakes on a flower rod, objectively seen, is a rich symbol, connoting both healing gifts and initiatic powers. That the snakes came off their mount and slithered toward you would suggest that thereby a clairvoyant ability was awakened in you. However, this device, called the caduceus, is also a representation of the involuntary sympathetic nervous system (at least the double serpentine portion of this figure). The falling of the snakes to a supine position and their crawling toward you also indicates a demotion of positive to negative form of learning about the invisible worlds, one that is not subject to the personal will. It is therefore, from the Rosicrucian standpoint, atavistic and not to be encouraged since undesirable entities may unduly affect and gain a controlling influence upon one so disposed.

At an earlier time all humans had this visionary faculty. Presently, humanity is evolving positive clairvoyance. It is possible that you may bring this ability under your conscious control, as in the case of Edgar Cayce. However, to be on the safe side, inviting apparitions and calling on spirits to provide information is generally to be discouraged until one is fully grounded in the waking, reasoning Ego-consciousness. Then one can direct his thoughts and centered will into the spirit worlds without the hazard of being misled and even eventually controlled by the negative beings who dwell there.

(A follow-up from the same questioner:)

“Thank you for responding so quickly to my e-mail. You have explained more clearly how my grandfather was able to show himself in my house....The apparitions are not my doing. On the contrary, I would sometimes like them to be gone, since, as you said, it is a world that I am not versed in at all. These "entities," so far, have being wonderful beings who seem to be teaching me. They leave me with wonderful feelings that I am unable

to compare with any other feeling. Furthermore, they come not with my invitation, they come on their own. Usually they request of me to assist people who seem to be in need of some help. I find myself questioning how I know so much about these individuals whom I have never met. They are as astonished as I am. My question to you now would be perhaps, how do I stop them? For most of my family and friends think of me as a crazy person. I do see beautiful and indescribable beings, both in feelings and beauty.

Answer: Under the circumstances you describe, consider yourself blessed if only beautiful and uplifting visions and knowledge come to you. You may be favored with these insights into people you have never met by the faculty of intuition, which transmits wisdom directly from the world of Life Spirit. As long as you stay Christ-centered, grounded in objectivity and healthy skepticism, you cannot be harmed or led astray by these visitations. If you want to stop them, you can ask the Christ to guide and protect you, that His will always be done, and that if it is His will that these spiritual experiences continue, so be it. You do not need to divulge your personal experiences to people who may not be sympathetic to them.

IS THE UNIVERSE LIKE A ROSE?

Question: The universe “unfoldeth like a rose” is a beautiful image, but is it just an image?

Answer: This beautiful image is the image of a reality, as near to truth as physical world phenomenon can represent invisible occurrences. In this case, visualize the potential rose as the bud or generative idea and then the blooming or opening up (into visibility) of one ring or corolla of petals raying outward, followed by successive rings. Something of this sequence can be applied to the progressive manifestation of the Word becoming flesh, or the Virgin Spirit gaining layers of "substance" from the worlds it descends through on its path of involution into increasingly denser forms. The rose's unfoldment is somewhat analogous, each circlet of petals correlating with a different dimension and density of cosmic matter. The center of the rose is the World of God, from which issue all life and its countless formal manifestations. □

Discipleship *The Fellowship Degree* *Part 2*

MATTHEW

THE MASTER saw a man named Matthew sitting at the receipt of customs and said unto him, “Follow me.” Matthew was a tax collector for the Roman government and collected revenues from his own people for foreign tribute, which earned for him the despised name of “publican.” He left a position of much prominence and great wealth to follow Christ Jesus. Afterward, though he attained to high spiritual power, he retained always a deep humility of spirit. It is only in his own Gospel that he is referred to as Matthew, the publican. The name Matthew means “God’s gift.”

In Palestine a tax-collector, or publican, in the employ of the Roman government was a social leper. Publican and sinner were synonymous terms in the minds of the people. The “tainted money” of such men as Matthew was rejected by the Temple; their oath was null and void in the courts. From such degradation was Matthew called to become one of the Twelve.

Another legend from the East is to this effect:

A group of boys crowded around the body of a dog lying dead in a Jerusalem gutter. One of them remarked, “It has one eye gouged out.” Another said, “He’s lost an ear in a fight.” “What an ugly brute!” exclaimed a third. “His hair is matted with dirt and blood.”

“But look at his teeth,” suggested a stranger passing by. “They are as white and fine as pearls.”

“Who is that?” asked one of the boys, and one who knew Him replied, “It is Jesus, the Galilean.”

One of the principal aims of the divine Way



School of Ghirlandaio, fifteenth century, Santa Maria Novella, Florence

St. Matthew and the Angel

Matthew’s radical change of vocation—from receiving taxes to receiving God’s Word—is a pattern that all humans trace.

Shower was to teach men to manifest their latent divinity. Yea, and the divinity within every thing. That this man Matthew, once a despised publican and then one of the immortal Twelve, learned this lesson is evidenced by the prominence accorded the Golden Rule in his Gospel. It has been said that Matthew wrote this Rule in letters of fire upon everlasting parchment.

His transformation from the old life into the new was complete and thorough. All the parables of Matthew’s Gospel bespeak fair play, equitable distribution and selfless reciprocity. Under the Master’s divine spell he ceased to be “Matthew the publican,” and became “Matthew the saint.” His Gospel emphasizes the fact that man cannot serve two masters, and he proved it in his own life.

His ministry centered largely in casting out of demoniac entities (obsessions). In Hierapolis he healed the wife of King Fulvanus; also the king’s son and the son’s wife who were similarly afflicted. Out of gratitude they all embraced Christianity and after Matthew left they continued to serve the Christ.

The following is an old record of Matthew’s

martyrdom: "He, having healed the king's wife of obsession, the demon appeared to the king disguised as a soldier to enlist his aid in procuring the death of Matthew. Whenever the (demon) soldier appeared, Matthew became invisible. The king went into the church saying that he wished to become a disciple of Matthew, but when he approached the saint, he was smitten with blindness. Matthew healed him by touching his eyes. When he attempted to remonstrate with the king for his evil ways, the king had him arrested and nailed to the cross. His body was covered with oil and a heap of brushwood lighted about him. But the fire changed into dew and Matthew lay unharmed as if asleep. Many came and touched his body and were healed of illnesses and obsessions. The king then had the body placed in an iron casket and dropped in the sea. Matthew's disciples took bread and wine to the seashore and as the Sun arose they saw Matthew walking on the sea with two men in shining garments."

This mystic legend refers to the initiatory rites of Fire and Water, wherein the disciple learns that he possesses the ability to pass through both these elements and remain unharmed. The legend gives the added information that the king, together with his wife and son, became Christians. Matthew blessed them and the king's name was changed from Fulvanus to Matthew; his wife's name from Ziphazia to Sophia (wisdom); the name of his son's wife from Erva to Synesius (understanding).

On becoming an Initiate the aspirant receives a new name, symbolical of certain spiritual characteristics which he has already developed or is about to acquire. One Initiate, on learning the new name of another, is immediately apprised of the status of his development.

Matthew lived a life of extreme austerity, subsisting on nuts, roots, and berries. He remained in Jerusalem for a number of years after the Crucifixion and then went into Egypt and Ethiopia to teach and to heal. His Gospel contains the accounts of two miracles, ten parables, nine discourses, and fourteen incidents that are related to certain phases of initiatory attainment not found in the other Gospels.

The early Church Fathers write concerning

Matthew:

"He was for forty days praying and fasting in the mountains, when Christ Jesus appeared to him saying: 'Take this rod of mine and go down and plant it at the gate of the church founded by you and Andrew; as soon as planted it will become a tree, with branches thirty cubits long and every branch bearing a different fruit. From the top shall flow honey and from the root will spring a great fountain in which all the creatures of the earth shall bathe and be cleansed, become ashamed of their nakedness put on clothing of the rams of sheep.' Matthew did as he was requested and all who bathed there saw themselves changed into the likeness of Matthew. The tree was beautiful and flourishing like the plants of Paradise and a river proceeded from it which watered all the land."

Such legends as these are interesting to the esoteric Christian, for they are replete with occult truths. They bear signs familiar to all who have passed the same mystic way and who, having glimpsed the vision, are endeavoring to tread the Path of Attainment.

PHILIP

Philip of Bethsaida is mentioned seven times in the New Testament and each reference is indicative of his temperament, which was spiritual and yet matter-of-fact, steadfast, sincere and dependable. Tall and slender, he was of commanding appearance, with dark hair and flashing blue eyes. Legend reports that his sister Marianne also became a disciple of the new way and accompanied Philip and his friend Nathanael upon their missionary pilgrimages into foreign lands. Philip was the first apostle to the Samaritans.

It was Philip and Matthew who were summoned by Jesus to feed the multitude, but they were unable to make the demonstration. So the Master himself multiplied the loaves and fishes to feed five thousand:

*And they did all eat, and were filled.
And they took up twelve baskets full of the
fragments, and of the fishes.
And they that did eat of the loaves were about
five thousand men.—Mark 6:42-44*

Despite their failure on this occasion, the mere



Tempera on canvas, Albrecht Dürer, 1516. Uffizi Gallery, Florence, Italy

Apostle Philip

fact that the Master called upon them to perform this miracle is indicative of their very high stage in discipleship.

After the great transformations effected by the Pentecostal downpouring, Philip's particular work was healing. As he traveled through Asia his ministry of healing was so outstanding that vast numbers deserted their worship in the temples to follow him. In Hierapolis, Nicanora, wife of the proconsul, was cured and became his disciple. The proconsul and temple priests vowed vengeance on Philip and his companions, Marianne and Nathanael.

Nicanora's husband, declaring that she was surrounded by a light so bright and strange he dared not approach her, attributed this to sorcery and ordered the three bound and dragged into his presence. They were taken at the house of Starchys, a disciple. At the command of the priests they were to be stripped in order to find their tools of enchantment, and then hung before the temple. Crowds taunted and insulted the holy maiden Marianne, but when they tried to tear away her clothing she was enveloped in a cloud of light that

obscured her from the mob.

When Philip and Nathanael were bound to crosses, the Saviour appeared. With His hand he marked a Cross of Light descending from heaven that had the appearance of a ladder. Seeing this the people were filled with awe and attempted to release the prisoners.

Philip, knowing that his earthly span was ended, gave his blessing to Nathanael and Marianne and told them to found a church in that place, to be in the charge of Nicanora and ministered to by Starchys. "Where my blood shall drop upon the earth, a vine shall spring up and produce grapes," he continued. He was conscious of the sustaining presence of his beloved Teacher during these last hours. All physical pain was transmuted into spiritual bliss as he, in turn, comforted the disciples gathered around him. He finally passed into the higher realms while praying for his persecutors.

Marianne and Nathaniel escaped death. They cared for and buried his body with the blessing of Angels. As they were preparing these last rites a Voice from heaven was heard saying, "Philip, the Apostle, has been crowned with an incorruptible crown by Christ-Jesus."

After three days a plant sprouted from the holy blood of this Disciple. A church was established with Starchys appointed bishop. Nicanora and all the faithful assembled and never ceased glorifying God, and all the city believed on the name of Jesus. Philip often appeared to bless them, saying, "Paradise has opened to me and I have entered into the glory of Jesus."

The Book of Acts opens with a description of the Ascension. The Gospels contain the life story of Christ Jesus. Acts contains the account of the demonstration of Christed powers as they manifested in the lives of His individual followers or disciples.

The Christ delivered His teachings to the multitude; He had shown himself in glory to the five hundred. Now His last intimate touch was with the inner or esoteric group which had qualified for deeper spiritual knowledge. This group included the eleven remaining Disciples; Mary the mother; Mary Magdalene; the other holy women; Lazarus and his sisters, Martha and Mary:

And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.—Acts 1:4, 5

This final appearance of the Christ took place in order to give those assembled instruction preparatory to their reception of the Holy Spirit.

NATHANIEL

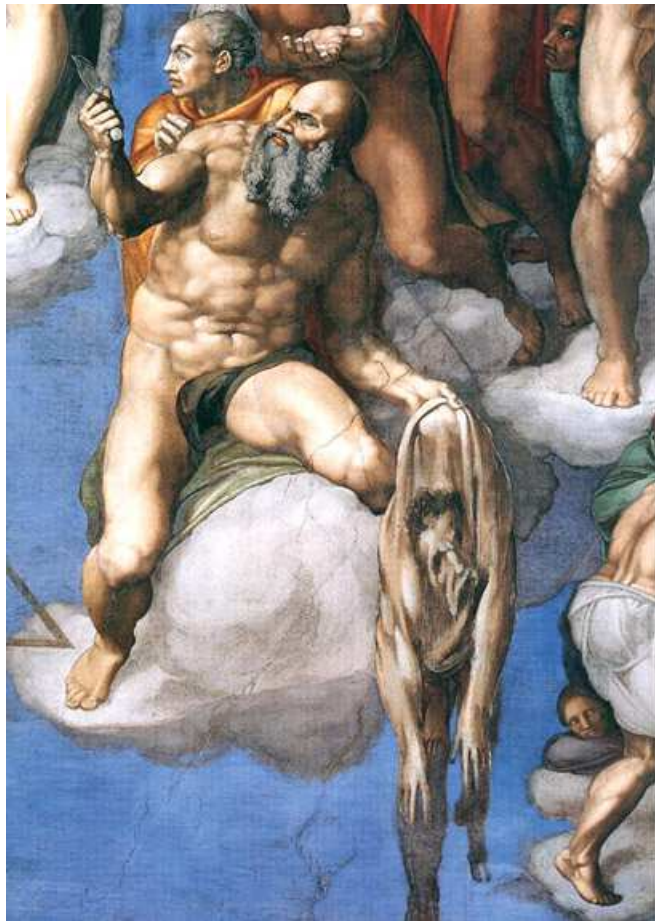
Legend says that Nathaniel, whose last name was Bartholomew, was a son of the Prince of Talmai, a family referred to by Josephus. The Christ described Nathaniel for us when He declared him to be without guile. Nathaniel was a mystic whose keynote was purity. When Philip brought him to the Great Teacher whom he had found, the first words of the Master to His new Disciple were: “When thou wast under the fig tree I saw thee.”

The fig tree symbolizes regeneration. This greeting implied that He knew of Nathaniel’s work of preparation for discipleship through the process of regeneration.

The friendship between Nathaniel and Philip may be compared to that which existed between David and Jonathan. Nathaniel Bartholomew was described as “having black hair, fair skin, and large beautiful eyes. He was of middle height, neither tall nor stunted, but middling. He wore a white undercloak bordered with purple and upon his shoulders a white cloak. His voice was like the sound of a strong trumpet.

He was accompanied by the Angels of God who never allowed him to be weary, nor to hunger or thirst. His face, his soul, and his heart were always glad and rejoicing. He foresaw all things. He knew and spoke in every tongue of every nation.”

When the Disciples dispersed after the Ascension, he and Philip travelled over many lands together. Upon the death of Philip, Nathaniel went into Ethiopia where he founded the first Christian Church. There he released the daughter of the king from the power of obsessing demons. The girl, who became one of his pupils, told her father, “He



Fresco (detail), 1534-1541, Michelangelo, Sistine Chapel, Vatican

The Last Judgment (detail)

Together with the planets and the sun, the saints surround the Judge, Christ, with identifying items. This grisly scene in Michelangelo's vast tableau depicts the figure of St. Bartholomew, on Christ's lower left, with the skin that was stripped from him when he was martyred (flayed alive). Remarkably, the skin is a self-portrait of the artist.

knows all things, speaks all languages, and is ever attended by the Angels of God.”

The king forthwith sent to Nathaniel camels loaded with gifts of gold, silver and precious stones. That very night he appeared in the king’s room and inquired of him, “Why did you send me these earthly things? My desires are no longer carnal, but are centered upon the things of heaven.”

Following the departure of Nathaniel, the king and his daughter became leaders of the Christian community in Ethiopia, where they accomplished much good for their people.

Nathaniel is said to have suffered martyrdom in Armenia by being flayed alive. □

—Corinne Heline

God's Message Through Pisces

WE NOW ENTER the sign Pisces, whose planetary rulers are Neptune and Jupiter. Neptune's work is to awaken us to the truth that the spark of God in us is one in essence with the spark in every other creature, and one with God, since all are a part of the one Light and one Life which is God.

Neptune, therefore, offers us the first key by calling us continually to be still and listen to the voice of our Divine Self. Knowing this isn't enough, for God is also Love. So the love-power of the heart must be developed until it reaches out in kindness and understanding to every living thing. That is why Jupiter calls upon us to "be kind."

The Creative Hierarchy operating through the sign Pisces is the Hierarchy to which the human life wave belongs.

It is called the "Sign of Sorrow" because in its mystical depths is pictured that pathway of pain upon which Man entered when he broke from his spiritual guardians and took upon himself (prematurely) the responsibility for his actions.

Pisces indicates the reaping, under the Law of Cause and Effect, of that which has been sown. It is the Sign of Sorrow only because so much of Man's sowing has been done in defiance of the laws of life. When the awakening comes and he recognizes these laws as the laws of his own being, Pisces ceases to be the Sign of Sorrow and becomes the Sign of Liberation.

Each individual travels this path of pain until he becomes so entangled in self-wrought confusion that he sees no escape. Then, in despair, he cries out to God for help, the help which was there for him all along the way: "Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord. Lord, hear my voice." (Psalm 130)

This cry marks the turning point in the evolution of each individual, the beginning of his upward journey toward the Light. From this point on there stands before him on the path Christ Jesus, the Way-shower, with His magic call "Come unto me....I am the Way, the Truth and the Life."

Every word that He utters points the way to liberation from the bondage of pain and discord. But one promise rings out above them all to strengthen the courage of the climber: "If ye continue in my word then ye are my disciples indeed. And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free."

During the solar month of Pisces we are given an opportunity to touch the very depths of our own being and to gain a truer understanding of life's mysteries than we have ever had before.

During this month let us meditate often on the symbolism of the Crucifixion—Spirit nailed to the cross of Matter—and apply it to ourselves, the Christ crucified in us. Let us hold in mind the Law of Cause and Effect as it operates throughout all Nature, hold it until we KNOW that the conditions which surround us and the experiences which come



I am the Way

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to us are the direct results of forces which we ourselves have set in motion.

This complete acceptance of responsibility for all that "happens" to us, is necessary before we can realize to any extent the power that lies within us to shape our destiny as we will. Once this realization has come, every defeat may be turned into a victory and every obstacle into an opportunity for progress.

The mystic Ray of Neptune calls us during this month to recognize the divinity within us as being one with the divinity of our brother man and one with the divinity of Him Who is All in All.

The Jupiter Ray, meanwhile, calls for an analysis and readjustment of our scale of values, based on this broader vision of life.

Understanding, one of the most precious qualities to which the human mind may aspire, is born of such deep searchings into the inner meanings of outer phenomena.

One of the first fruits of understanding is glad obedience to the Law within, as represented by conscience. Happiness in obeying the Law indicates a developed conscience.

With understanding comes *compassion* for the failures and sufferings of others, together with an increasingly intense desire to hasten the day when pain and discord will be eliminated from human life. This can be brought about only by the effort of each awakened Ego to attune his individual life to the cosmic rhythms so that these may vibrate through him in ever greater volume and power.

Under *Rhythm*, the third keyword of Pisces, we study the relation of the physical body to these mighty rhythms.

The archetype of our physical body is established in the rhythmic outflow of that Power which sustains the universe. Hence the wonderful resistance of this, our most perfect vehicle, to the countless abuses to which it is subjected. Nevertheless, every inharmony in our being has a disturbing effect upon its delicate balance, so that persistent abuse together with discordant thinking over a period of lives will wreck it in time. It can then be restored to health only by the re-establishment of the rhythms which have been broken.

Conscious effort toward the establishment of the life rhythms in our whole being builds the

regenerated physical body. This, as we "continue in His word," grows more and more responsive to the will of the Spirit and becomes, in time, the perfect spiritual instrument it was designed to be.

Pisces has rulership over the feet, and it is well to remember that what the feet are to the body as a supporting foundation, so are Love and Truth to the inner man.

One of the keywords of Pisces is Understanding. Understanding is sought after by many people, but few really possess much. Wisdom is closely related to understanding. Wisdom is knowledge wedded to love. The trait of understanding blends knowledge with feeling. It encompasses sympathy and empathy.

Knowledge includes more than human relations; it includes the principles of life and the Laws of Nature. Memorized knowledge is helpful in certain specific instances, but with understanding a person can apply that knowledge to other situations. In a sense, the person who possesses understanding becomes as a skilled craftsman using his tool, knowledge, with grace and facility. A person need not be a genius to possess understanding, but he does need to apply himself seriously to grasping a situation or a principle in Nature. The person who has been observant during his experiences is the most likely to gain understanding.

Understanding begins as a small light in the darkness and grows to a brilliant radiance when a person sticks with a problem, uses his memory, and applies his reason. Reason, when exercised, and with the help of love, produces understanding. When reason is not sufficiently exercised it withers, and limited thinking takes its place. Love alone cannot produce understanding any more than can knowledge alone.

Man has been given a mind so that he can become godlike. Mind, fully matured, is capable of reason—connecting causes to effects and relating future effects to present causes. Without mind, knowledge is impossible, but mind alone cannot provide understanding. A person achieves understanding only if he pursues his study of a subject with constancy, sympathy, and courage, and ultimately comes to feel himself almost a part of that subject.

When we open the doors of our minds to eliminate

old, crystallized ideas, we open the avenue to understanding. Understanding cannot exist in the presence of crystallized, negative, prejudiced thought.

Understanding leads to contentment. It eliminates useless cares and worries and gives a new lift to the business of life.

Understanding is based on observation and experience. We should do our utmost to observe everything going on and apply our powers of reason to it.

Then, too, we must learn to react sympathetically and with love. In this way, we will gain understanding. "With all thy getting, get understanding."

Other keywords of Pisces are *Love* and *Humility*. In all Christ Jesus' work we find love and humility to be very outstanding. Although He brought great hope to people and was to make the great sacrifice of His life, still He was the most humble person who ever walked this Earth. He could very easily have taken a prominent role and put to shame all the rulers of His day, but that wasn't what our Heavenly Father sent Him to do.

The disciples had been with Christ Jesus for about three years, listening to and learning from His parables to the people, and His private talks with them when he explained the hidden meanings of all He taught. They were being prepared to spread those Teachings to people everywhere. Christ Jesus heard their conversations and listened to their questions about who would be the greatest among them. He must now give them a clearer understanding of His mission and their own, for the time was rapidly approaching for His departure from them.

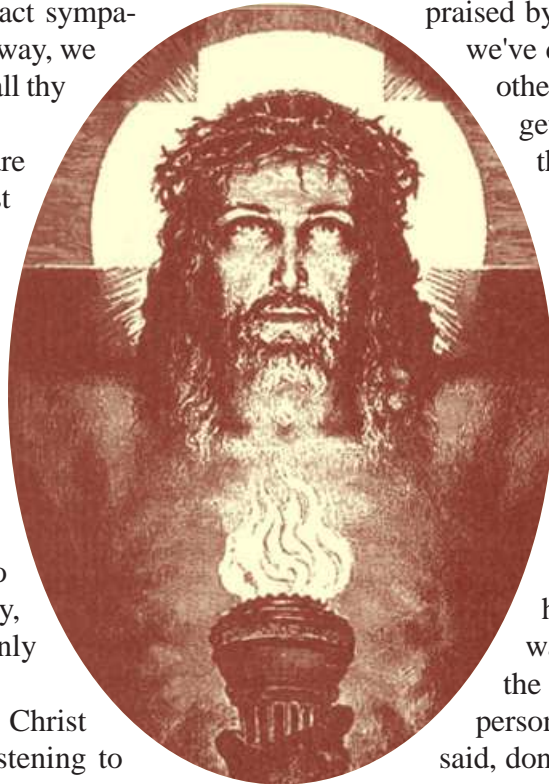
After they had eaten supper one evening, Christ Jesus arose and, wrapping a towel about Himself, filled a basin with water, and began washing the disciples' feet. Although this was customarily done by servants as an indication of courtesy and respect, not one of the disciples thought of doing it, even

though they had no servants. In doing so, Christ Jesus "took upon himself the form of a servant." By doing this humble task and saying to His disciples, "What I do, you don't know now, but you shall know later," He was giving them an example of what they should do for others. It wasn't easy for the disciples to understand the need for humility, although Christ Jesus said: "He who would be the greatest among you, let him be the servant of all."

It is all very well to do something and be praised by those who see or hear of what we've done. The word gets around and others come with their praise, so it gets to be a "big thing." The little things we do for others, silently and unnoticed, however, are the true test of our humility. Perhaps we can help an elderly lady to cross the street, or speak to a new classmate at school. Perhaps we can give a hand or take some food to a new neighbor who is busy getting settled. Sometimes just a smile or a cheery "hello" to a passerby on the street may be helpful. There are many other ways that we will think of when the occasions arises. The observant person will notice what needs to be said, done, or even thought.

Most important of all are thoughts of goodwill, kindness, and cheerfulness. By our very presence we may bring to others those worthwhile things which make life more pleasant for everyone around us. Not only that, but we ourselves shall find that we not only feel better, but also get far more accomplished in our daily lives by thinking and acting in harmony with Christ Jesus' way of love and humility. Let us see what we can do to live in this way.

Another keyword of Pisces is *Compassion*. The great Beings above mankind in evolution are living in harmony with the laws of Nature, while many people on this Earth are not. These laws are mighty forces flowing throughout the Universe with a rhythm somewhat like the rhythms of great music.



I am the Truth

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The Higher Beings are always in tune with these glorious rhythms. Their thoughts and activities create harmony, order, and beauty, while mankind is mostly out of tune with the cosmic rhythm. This causes our thoughts and activities to fill our world with discord, disorder, and ugliness.

We can't nullify the Laws of Nature, but we can break ourselves against them. From the very beginning our great spiritual Teachers have tried to get this truth across to us. The Ten Commandments, given through Moses in the early stages of our mental development, were warnings against doing things that would hurt us. At that time, only warnings could be given us because we were unable to understand anything about the marvelous results possible by living in tune with those great laws.

When Christ Jesus came with His message of Love and Compassion, He showed us how to free ourselves from the terrible confusion we brought into the world by our ignorance and stubbornness. We are all equally guilty and owe it to the world to do our part in changing bad conditions—beginning with ourselves and our own lives.

All people are developing their hidden powers and climbing the road of evolution by reaping the results of actions in past lives—good or bad. When we see someone, either sowing evil or reaping the results of evil sown in the past, our first impulse or thought must be to give all the help we can, either by word or deed, if that is possible. If not, then we can always send a strong, good thought to strengthen the Higher Self of that person and help him to gain victory over the wrong conditions, whatever they may be.

Jupiter, as the messenger from Pisces, enriches and improves our feelings so that the problems and sorrows of other people become just as important to us as our own problems. It isn't possible for us to have compassion unless we do care about others and how they feel. It is in so doing that we "Love our neighbor as ourselves."

And if we want to be able to care about others, we must also know what Temptation is and how powerful it can be. In Matthew 4:10, it is written: "Then said Jesus to him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." These verses are

PRAYER

Lord of my unabashed desiring,
Give me piety to conceive Thee
Free from the image of my aspiring,
Empty my zealous mind
of these all-too-human divine definings
And visit Thy true form
on my transformed beholding;
For Thou canst not be present and be seen
When I lack presence
and am blinded by worldly seeing.
Nor the word Thou ever speakest do I hear
While earthly concerns busy my tongue
and I listen to the din of deaf doings.
Light Thou my eyes from within
the heart of Thy Sun.
Open my inner ear to the wisdom
that conceives in fertile silence.
Find in me a Temple hallowed,
An altar worthy of descent,
A readiness acceptable of summoning.
Thy patience is my promise of overcoming.
In Thy absence there is no solace,
But thus does the flame for Thee burn brighter
and this vessel Thou will fill becomes lighter.
Lord, teach me the being I must be
to know Thee,
The loving I must live
to be one with Thee,
And from hour to hour may my life prove
The prayer Thou wouldst most hear.

—CW

extremely important.

Christ Jesus, our Way-Shower, great as He was, met with temptations. As He gave us an example in so many things, He also gave us an example in overcoming temptations. "He was tempted and yet remained without sin."

Christ Jesus spent 40 days and nights fasting in the wilderness before He was tempted. We can well believe that He was hungry. Then it was that Satan (or the devil) came to Him and suggested: "If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread." Christ Jesus had the power to turn the stones into bread because He knew how to work

with the Laws of Nature in order to accomplish this. Any very highly evolved person, such as the Elder Brothers of the Rose Cross, also have such power. Christ Jesus also knew, however, that one must not use spiritual power for selfish purposes. It would have been all right for Him to turn the stones into bread to feed other people who might have been starving, but it would not have been right for Him to have done so for Himself. Thus, He answered:

"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." In this way, Christ Jesus showed that we must overcome the temptation of desire.

Next, Satan took Christ Jesus to the "holy city," in the first of the heaven worlds, and set Him upon a pinnacle of the temple there. Then Satan said: "If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down; for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee; and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone." This was the temptation of vanity, a temptation of the mind. Christ Jesus knew that He could get the whole world to admire and wonder over Him if He gave a demonstration of His ability to use supernatural power in this way.

We, too, are often subjected to the temptation of vanity, and it is sometimes very difficult for us to keep from bringing ourselves to the attention of other people by saying, "Look at me. Look what I did. You can't do that!" Christ Jesus, of course, knew better, and said to Satan: "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."

Finally, Satan took Christ Jesus to what is called in the Bible an "exceeding high mountain." This refers to the Second Heaven. Here is seen the Memory of Nature, the record of all that was, and is, and is to come. It must truly be a magnificent sight for anyone who is able to read it, which Christ Jesus, of course, could do. Satan then said: "All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down

and worship me." Christ Jesus saw the wonders that could be His, but He also could not forget that He had come into the world to help suffering and sorrowing mankind, who would be lost without Him. His compassion and selflessness triumphed. He did not succumb to this temptation of the soul, but said: "Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."



I am the Life

After this, "angels came and ministered unto him." So, too, do they come to bless and strengthen every person whenever the higher is victorious over the lower self.

We must remember that it is not the temptation itself, but the way in which we respond to it, that shows our spiritual strength. If we are tempted to do something we know is wrong, but do not do it, we have triumphed over the temptation. If we do it in spite of knowing that it is wrong, then we have yielded to temptation.

Resisting one temptation makes us stronger in overcoming the next one, and at the same time gives courage to stand up to it, while we pray for strength to overcome every single one.

For us, "praying without ceasing" is the only sure way we have of meeting the temptations that appear before us every day of our lives. Satan, the devil, knows so well how to twist and turn temptations according to each person's nature so as to make them attractive traps, avoided only by those who are praying and watching. We can't say exactly what our temptations will be, but we may be sure we can learn to tell they are not what Christ Jesus would have us do.

A good question to ask is: What would Christ Jesus have me do? If we use this question each day as an incentive, we shall find we receive help in overcoming. Also, we must remember to thank Him for helping us! □

—Rosicrucian Fellowship Staff Members

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Planetary Vibrations & Fate and Free Will

ADEPTS TELL US that all forms have their own rate of vibration; that each man or woman born into this physical universe has his or her own dominant and characteristic keynote, sound, and colour, this making up, together with the other vibratory notes, the chord, or mass vibration of the aura.

This aura, or individual atmosphere, is made up of life atoms in which many varieties and types of vibration are latent. In every person one particular rate of vibration is dominant, one class of these life atoms more immediately operative than others. In order to know these various rates of vibration in one's aura, and therefore the chord to which the individual is keyed, one must have raised the consciousness from the personal self to that of the Divine Self within.

Dr. Anna Kingsford speaks of vibration as being centripetal and centrifugal; that is, moving towards the centre and moving from the centre; vibrations tending inward, and vibrations tending outward, one being negative the other positive. Now the balance between these two vibrations, the mean between the positive and negative, may be called the keynote of an individual, or what astrologers term the "Polarity."

Each individual is emitting a certain sound, and it is said that the great Alchemist or Master of Wisdom never makes a mistake when he hears the sound—life-sound—of any person or thing, for its dominant note gives him the key, so that he knows just where that soul stands in its evolutionary progress, by the rate of its vibrations.

These vibrations manifest themselves on the physical plane, in the case of men and women, in

the pitch of the voice, which is an index to the life tone of persons generally, character being expressed in a remarkable way through the voice. For instance, a person born under the influence of Jupiter will have the Jupiterian voice, which is deep and powerful, yet harmonious; a Martial voice is sharp, and if combined with Mercury shrill and metallic, while the Venusian note is pleasing, gentle, and soft; and so on, with the other planetary influences.

Few, except students of human nature, realize how powerfully character declares itself by sound. Much has been written about the Music of the Spheres, but very few, except Initiates in the great Temple of Wisdom, know today the numerical ratio of each planet's vibration. Indeed, exact predictions respecting the coming destiny of any nativity can be absolutely and accurately given only when the dominant chord of the individual is known, together with the rate of vibration at which he is living, some people being able to exhaust bad influences and cross vibrations much more rapidly than others.

This, of course, would depend to a large extent on the age and experience of the soul working within its self-made limitations, and would be especially the case with those whose minds are turned towards the higher life and the occult laws of nature, who seek to co-operate with her, to dominate their lower nature, and thus realize their ideals. As they use their will in co-operation with the stellar forces by aspiration and individual effort, the higher notes of the scale of each planetary rate of vibration would come into play, and progress advances by leaps and bounds.

For instance, the vibrations from Venus are finer and more rapid than those from Mars. These rapid

vibrations neutralize and extinguish the slower and coarser ones. As we think and live purely, we throw out the coarser matter of impurity; in loving we throw out the coarser matter that can respond to the vibration known as hate; and so on, constantly replacing the grosser by the finer, ever travelling towards the centre of our being, the true Self within. Let us suppose in the case of a person born under the dominant influence of the planet Venus, that this planet's vibrations were nullified in their action by the slower vibrations of Saturn—call it “afflicted” by Saturn, if you will—then, until selfishness has been dominated, the rate of progress would not be rapid, and much suffering would be experienced until the soul has learned truth by experience. The truth would then set it free, for it would have realized through sorrow that separateness and self-seeking do not bring happiness and joy. It would then liberate the vibrations of Venus from Saturn, and evolution could go on unhindered. Persons born with a Venus free from affliction by either Mars or Saturn are lovers of mankind, unselfish souls, compassionate and tender, and the love of the Solar Logos conveyed through the vibrations of Venus would thus be able to flow through the instrument (or personal self) without obstruction.

Again, if Mercury, the ruler of the mind, vibrates in unison with Jupiter, Venus, or the Sun, then the manifestations of the Self as Knower will be able to use the lower vehicle to express truth, the mind being lofty, generous and noble, able to study the heart and essence of life, to be profoundly meditative, contemplative, and wise. But if the Mercurial vibrations are afflicted by either Mars or Saturn, then Mercury, the mental ruler and the messenger of the Gods, will be unable to give his message, his wings being smirched and weighted by the dross of earth, he will become a captive fettered by the bonds of self and sense, and the mental images generated will be of the earth, earthy; for the windows of the mind being darkened, and the messenger of the Gods held captive, the solar “light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world” will be unable to make itself seen.

The practical occultist, with his trained clairvoyant power, tells us that the finer and lighter the

colors in the aura, the more pure and perfect is the condition of the soul. Each life atom in the aura is produced by a definite rate of vibration; the darker the color, the slower the rate of vibration; the lighter the color, the quicker the vibration. In the case of Love, or Venus, for instance, the higher octave may be said to have been reached, and the whole gamut of the lower (or Mars) has been transcended, when the blood-red color which comes from passion, lust, or anger (Mars) is all transmuted and replaced by the fair, rose hue, beautiful as the first faint flush in the Eastern sky which heralds the approach of dawn. The mind may be said to be detached from earthly objects and selfishness, ambition, etc., when the orange hue associated with Mercury is changed into a beautiful luminous yellow as the mind takes on more unselfish characteristics.

People do not understand how character is destiny, for they do not realize that all the colors in the aura are produced by certain rates of vibration, and that as the color changes the vibration changes, and as the character changes the destiny changes, so that old shackles fall off, old environments drop away, just as the coarser parts of the aura drop away when the higher and finer vibrations shake them out.

As the lessons of life are learned, and the soul grows wise by experience transmuted into wisdom, he chooses to some extent definitely how he will vibrate, for he has developed to some extent self-consciousness, and thus is enabled to hold to any given thought and its consequent vibration for a great length of time; he is realizing the sphere of his own self-hood, and is slowly becoming the creator of his own destiny, by exerting within his past limitations his present freedom of choice, drawing closer and closer to his true centre, his Higher Self, the Logos of the Soul.

Astrology, esoterically considered, shows the existence of minor cycles in each life span, answering as it were to the larger life cycle of the individual, a new cycle occurring with a change in the rate of vibrations at certain epochs in the life; changes also occurring as the Moon progresses through the zodiacal signs, bringing opportunity into the life; while, as the Sun alters its scope of

influence, individual and out-of-sight changes take place in the consciousness of the individual, and the positions of the planets as they move show to some extent the scope of activity that lies before the native. Thus we shall begin to see that latent capacities lying dormant in the aura of the individual are ripened and brought to fruition on responding to the touch of the changed vibratory action due to planetary progression.

Thus karma becomes expended, and the fetters of the soul become unfastened, setting the captive free; the knower is able to manifest, for knowledge is power, and a knowledge of the truth sets us free. Madame Blavatsky has said that the key of Astrology needs to be seven times turned. Few astrologers today can give the key its first turn, yet the history of the world is written in the zodiac, and so also is the progress of the soul towards perfection. □

—Bessie Leo

Fate and Free Will

Where does fate end and free will begin? To solve this problem, we must, I think, first consider what we mean by Will. Will has its positive and its negative poles; its negative pole we call Desire. Desire is the outgoing energy of The Thinker, determined in its course by the attraction of external objects. Will is the restraining, creative, or determining power that is directed in action by The Thinker himself, without reference to the attractiveness or otherwise of the object pursued or the action performed. Thus we see that Desire is guided from without; Will from within—and Will alone can restrain both thought and desire.

At the beginning of man's evolution Desire has complete sway, and hurries him hither and thither. In the middle of his evolution, Desire and Will are fighting for the mastery, one sometimes gaining the ascendancy over the other. At the end of his evolution Desire has died, experience of all forms of matter having been gained. Will (which is, after all, the reflection in us of the Divine Will, and thus must necessarily be free) rules supreme, with unopposed, unchallenged sway; the free will, which is in other words a spiritual force, has

entirely overcome and dominated all material conditions. So fate ends at the close of man's evolution. Because then he is bound by nothing from without, nothing from without has any power to attract him, Will has freed itself from Desire.

This result is gradually accomplished as follows. Until the Thinker or human soul is developed sufficiently to see directly by his spiritual sight, Will in him is led by reason. Now, in the youth of the Soul reason can only draw its conclusions from its stock of accumulated knowledge or experience, and as that experience is limited, the Will constantly commands mistaken actions. The pain which then comes from these mistaken actions gives the reason a larger store of material from which to draw its conclusions, enlarging at once the experience and the breadth of view. Thus progress is steadily made, and in time Wisdom is born.

In considering the question of Fate, we must bear in mind that each man makes his own Fate, being left free to choose his own actions.

But every action brings about an inevitable result. Let each man desire and grasp whatever he will; he is free to desire and to achieve. But he must pay the cost of his purchase, be it found satisfactory or otherwise. At last, through experience, Wisdom, the fruit of knowledge and the reward of striving, is gradually acquired and so puts an end to the conflict while yet preserving the freedom of the Will. He chooses to work and think in harmony with the law of God's universe. He tries, in his small measure, to carry out the Divine Will, not using the germinal will within him, which is God's, just to gain something for the mere separated self.

But this conception of life, which necessarily puts an end to sin and pain, can only come in its entirety when the soul is merging into the Divine. And then all Fate, caused by the spirit aiming at the satisfaction of itself in matter, is at an end, the highest and best being chosen by a self-initiated volition, the true free will, which, knowing good and evil, deliberately chooses "the better part," for the love of all mankind: For Wisdom has been evolved, as a result of the long conflict of Will and Desire; and Wisdom understands the *whole*, is no more limited to the *part*, as is mere Knowledge. □

—Bessie Leo

The Message of the Stars *Interprets Max Heindel's Horoscope*

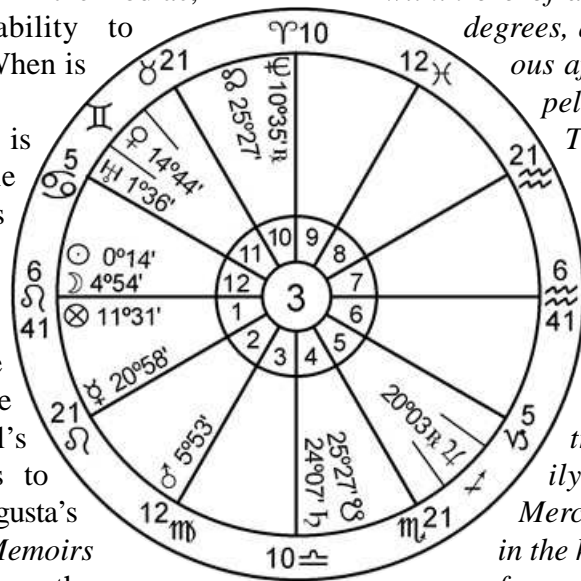
THE MESSAGE OF THE STARS was coauthored by Augusta Foss and Max Heindel. While it is not certain in every instance which writer is responsible for a given text, clearly the first three chapters, which are more theoretical and consider the spiritual, occult, and cosmic aspects of astrology, were written by Mr. Heindel. The topics discussed include "Evolution as Shown in the Zodiac," "The Measure of Amenability to Planetary Vibrations," and "When is the Best Time to Be Born?"

Max Heindel's horoscope is No. 3 of the thirty-six example horoscopes presented in this book. Augusta's horoscope is the first one given in *Astrodiagnosis, a Guide to Health and Healing*, on page 70. Those persons who are familiar with Max Heindel's biography, and have access to documents that supplement Augusta's account as given in her *Memoirs* (available in book form from the Fellowship), are struck by the pertinence of the delineations in *The Message of the Stars* that apply to Heindel's own chart, and are therefore inclined to conclude that the author was writing from personal experience (as well as from intuition and creative synthesis) in these instances. These passages also provide insight into Heindel's inner person that are at most only implied in the biographical details and his personal comments. The relevant delineations are therefore

given exactly as this text appears in *The Message of the Stars*. On pages 592 and 593 the author writes:

Horoscope No. 3 shows the inimical influence of the nebulous spot in Leo 6, the Ascelli, on the sight. This dangerous degree was rising at birth with the Moon in close conjunction, and the Sun also in orb. Saturn in 24 degrees of Libra is just within orb of a square to the Sun in Leo 0 degrees, and as a result of these various afflictions, the person is compelled to use bifocal glasses.

There is a compensating advantage, however; Neptune in elevation and trine to the Ascelli (with Sun, Moon and Ascendant in orb), has endowed him with spiritual sight over which he has perfect control, as the student may readily see by examination of Mercury, the best fortified planet in the horoscope. Saturn, by sextile, from the sign of his exaltation, gives steadiness, persistence and concentration; Jupiter by trine from the house he rules, expands the mind, makes it religiously inclined and benevolent; Venus, by sextile, adds kindness and love of beauty. Thus it is evident that in this horoscope the relation of Mercury and its octave, Neptune, to physical and spiritual expression of mind, is well illustrated. Neptune is most highly elevated and Mercury is most strongly aspected. Neither



The horoscope of Max Heindel born July 23, 1865, 4.32.04 true local time, in Aarhus, Denmark

is afflicted, therefore he is not liable to hallucinations, but weighs his experiences in the scale of logic.

Some further biographical remarks can probably be found in the following descriptions, also in *The Message of the Stars*.

The Sun in the Twelfth House

This is the signature of the lonely soul who as a recluse shuts himself off from his fellows. It brings with it a danger of conflict with the authorities or an inability to fit in with the family conditions and on account of the ensuing trouble the person goes into voluntary or enforced exile, living his life henceforth a stranger among strangers. Even when such extreme conditions do not prevail, the first third of the life is usually wasted in vain efforts to find a balance and settle down to some lifework....it gives a love of the occult and leads to curious lines of research. (p. 150)

Saturn in Libra

"...when Saturn is afflicted in Libra the marriage partner is either treacherous or removed by an early death." (p. 258. Heindel was twice married before he married Augusta Foss.)

Sun Square Saturn

His marriage is unhappy and is likely to end in divorce or early death of the partner. He has difficulty in finding and keeping employment [Heindel had many jobs, on land and sea], trouble with employers and authorities, a feeling as if he were held in leash all his life and denied expression in any direction. If Saturn is in his exaltation sign, Libra, the latter part of the life may be better because the person may have taken the lessons of life to heart and mended his ways. (p. 161)

Sun Conjunct Moon

"In the twelfth house or sign, the conjunction will give a strong tendency to drink, bringing trouble." (p. 158) Heindel confirms this statement in an autobiographical letter written to Charles Leadbeater

January 15, 1904, which appeared in the April 1949 issue of *The Theosophist*.

Mercury Sextile Saturn

The forethought and profound reasoning ability indicated by these aspects insure success in whatever vocation the person may pursue. The patient persistence which permits no temporary failure to stand in the way of ultimate success; their caution and diplomacy make such people invincible in the long run. Therefore they generally become prominent in connection with some serious enterprise such as secret societies....(p. 209)

Mercury in Leo

gives high ideals and aspirations, a positive, strong and persevering intellect which scorns to stoop to low and mean acts, and despises equivocation; is blunt and out-spoken, quick-tempered, but kind-hearted and sympathetic. People with Mercury in Leo well-fortified have good organizing ability and make capable leaders. They love children and are also fond of pleasure. (p. 203)

Jupiter in the Fifth House

well-aspected increases the number of children [Heindel had four children by his first wife]...it gives popularity and good friends who will be a help to the person, also a sociable and pleasure loving disposition....high intelligence and success in educational work or the publishing or newspaper business. These people make fine teachers and have a very convincing way of putting things. (p. 281)

Jupiter Trine Mercury

is one of the finest assets in life, for it gives a cheerful, optimistic disposition with the ability to look upon the bright side of things and keep up the spirits in hours of adversity. The mind is broad, versatile, and able to reason correctly and to form a reliable judgment by careful deliberation. These people never give a hasty decision; they require time to think over whatever is presented to them, but once they have reached a

conclusion it will be found incontrovertible. They are successful in law or literature and much respected for their honesty and sincerity. These aspects are particularly fortunate for people who travel for business or pleasure [Heindel was in the merchant marines and was in the import business with his brother Louis, through which he became "well off," according to his daughter Wilhelmina], for they will reap both benefit and enjoyment from a migratory mode of life [as shown by Heindel's trek across the United States and his multiple journeys up and down the West Coast. They are]...loved by everybody for the vital vibrations they radiate upon whomever they meet.

In his *Study of Max Heindel and the Rosicrucian Fellowship* (not presently available in book form), first published in Dutch in 1969, Ger Westenberg writes that

In astrology books mention is made of major and minor aspects, suggesting that the minor aspects should have less potency than the major aspects....but when we calculate Max Heindel's horoscope according to the Campanus House system and calculate the minor aspects too, we can easily find happenings which are not to be found in any other way.

*For example, Jupiter in Sagittarius in the sixth [rather than the fifth] house, sesquiquadrate the ascendant, clearly indicates the accident in youth which caused a bruised leg [mentioned in *Teachings of an Initiate*, p. 153, and elaborated on in the March 1916 *Rays*, p. 38]; while Jupiter opposite Venus and semisquare the Sun indicate the bad condition of his blood (it did not coagulate after injuries) and blood circulation in the damaged leg. The bad configuration of Venus is also the cause of his disappointments in marriage.*

Venus in Gemini

blends the beauty of Venus with the mercurial ability to express so that people who have this configuration are able to choose their words with singular facility and infuse in them a rhythm which is like music to the ears of a lis-

tener. Therefore this is one of the positions which make poets, provided of course that other indications in the horoscope support....This position has a very refining influence on the mind, inclining to a literary or artistic career....This position also inclines to marriage and frequently to more than one union. It favors traveling both for gain and pleasure, especially short journeys.

One recalls Heindel's experiences with "Bedelia," his two seater Franklin which he loved to drive, and his 1915 excursion in "Carita," a sturdy "Overland," to Sacramento, Hollywood and Santa Barbara in the company of his wife and two other ladies.

Jupiter Opposition Venus

gives the same luxurious likings as the good aspects, but limits the ability to satisfy them.... they are very liable suffer losses through the treachery of others. Love and marriage also are sources of sorrow for those whom Venus and Jupiter are afflicting. They are apt to be jilted before marriage or the marriage partner may prove faithless and may abscond. These aspects also produce an amorous nature....

Moon in Leo

has an illuminating influence on the mind. It gives a strong, self-reliant and aggressive disposition with ability for organization; therefore people with the Moon in this position usually attain to leadership in their immediate circle. They are honorable in financial and social matters, fair and magnanimous in their dealings with others, and very popular with other people.

Mars in the Second House

when well-aspected [Mars sextiles Uranus] makes the nature free and generous in financial dealings with others. The person has a splendid earning capacity and will make a financial success in any business of a martial nature involving the use of fire, iron tools, or machinery. It is also an indication of money by marriage or legacy.

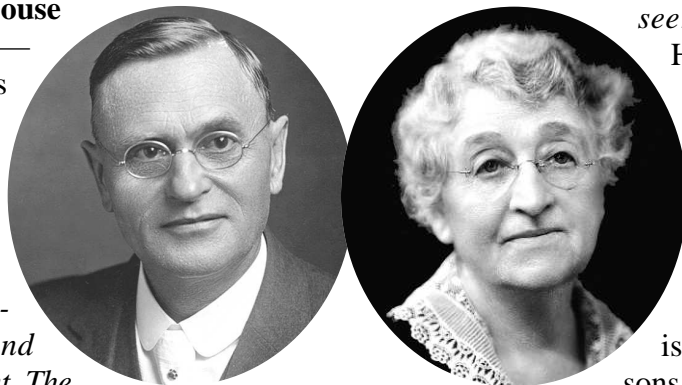
Heindel had a keen mechanical sense enabling him to install, operate, and repair motors, printing press-

es, pumps, electrical circuitry (ruled by Uranus). Many of his literary analogies draw on his knowledge of mechanics and his familiarity with phenomena of physical sciences.

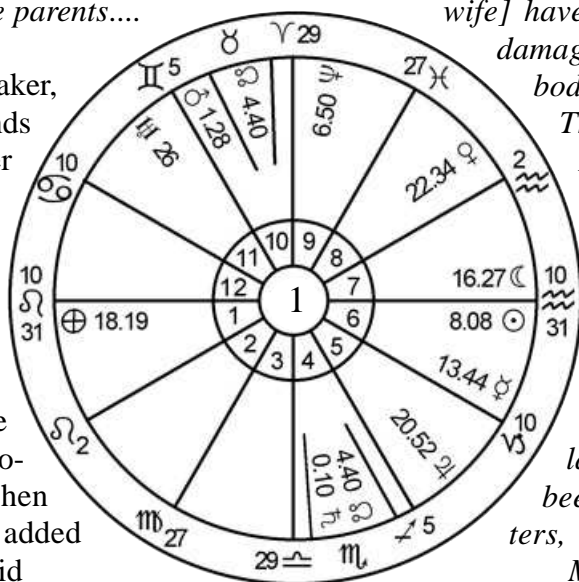
Saturn in the Fourth House

[When well-aspected—Heindel’s Mercury trines Saturn—this placement indicates] *success from investments and administration of houses and lands, agriculture or mining property under careful and economical management. The success grows better as life advances. When Saturn is afflicted in the Fourth House [square Sun and conjunct the Dragon’s Tail] it signifies the early death of one of the parents....*

Max Heindel’s father, a baker, died from burns and wounds sustained when a steam boiler exploded. Max was but two and 2/3 years old at the time and therefore qualifies as the Son of a Widow, as was his spiritual progenitor, Cain. One may even see an association between this unfortunate incident and the abortive explosion of the molten sea when Hiram Abiff’s adversaries added water as he was pouring liquid fire into the receiving vessel.



comparison in the April 1918 Rays:



The horoscope of August Foss, born January 27, 1865, 17.13.07 TLT, in Mansfield, Ohio

Neptune in Aries

when well aspected fills a person with religious enthusiasm, though not always of the orthodox kind, and gives him the energy and ambition to push forward to the front rank in whatever line of thought and belief he espouses. There is a desire to elevate humanity to a higher and more noble plane of life and on that account this configuration or position usually brings the person forward as a public character of more or less importance, according to the general aspects

and tenor of the horoscope.

Neptune in the Tenth House

and trine to the Sun or Moon are sure signs of the ability to cultivate the spiritual sight in this life. A number of well-known seers [including Max Heindel] have this aspect.

The Horoscopes of Max and Augusta Heindel

A comparison of Max Heindel’s horoscope with that of Augusta Foss is interesting for many reasons. Heindel wrote about this

It is curious to note that we [Heindel and his wife] have each had three accidents, damaging the same parts of the body, but on opposite sides.

The editor’s left ankle and Mrs. Heindel’s right ankle were also hurt; and the editor received a blow from a pump handle above the left eye, while Mrs. Heindel received an injury in the same place above her right eye. A similarity of experiences has also been noted in many other matters, and they seem to come to Mrs. Heindel first because of the priority of her birth; later the editor meets with similar circumstances.

During the passing of Max Heindel, Augusta’s progressed Mars was in conjunction with Uranus, the ruler of the seventh house, signifying the husband. The Moon, which is in the seventh house, received a square aspect from the progressed Venus. Transiting Saturn was square to the M.C. At her passing on May 9th, 1949, the natal ascendant was square Mercury. □

—A Probationer

ASTROLOGY

The Devolution and Evolution of Astrology

ASTROLOGY WAS ONE of the seven sacred sciences cultivated by the initiates of the ancient world. It was studied and practiced by all the great nations of antiquity. The origins of astrological speculation are entirely obscured by the night of time which preceded the dawn of history. There are traditions to the effect that the astrological science was perfected by magician-philosophers of the Atlantean Period. One thing is evident, Astrology descends to this late day adorned with the discoveries and embellishments of a thousand cultures. The history of Astrology is indeed a history of human thought and aspiration. The readings for the planets as given in the cuneiform tablets of Sargon are still used by the astrologers of this generation. Only such modifications and changes have been made as the shifting foundations of cultural standards necessitated.

Two distinctive schools of Astrology have been recognized from the beginning of the historical period. With the decline of the late Atlantean and early Aryan priesthoods and the profaning of their mysteries, what are now called the sciences were separated from the parent body of religious tradition. Astrology and medicine were the first to establish independent institutions. The priests of the state religions no longer exercised a monopoly over the prophetic and medicinal arts. Beginning with Hippocrates, new orders of soothsayers and healers arose who were entirely ignorant of the fundamental unity, yes, identity of the spiritual and physical sciences.

The text of this article comes from the Preface to Augusta Foss Heindel's study of Astrology and the Ductless Glands.

The division of essential learning into competitive, or at least non-cooperative, fragments destroyed the synthesis of knowledge. Frustrated by division and discord, the whole structure of education broke into innumerable discordant parts. The science of medicine, divided from its spiritual source, deteriorated into the quackery and leechcraft of the Dark Ages, a condition of affairs so sorry that the Hermetic physician Paracelsus was moved to say, "Fortunate is the man whose physician does not kill him." Astrology was likewise corrupted into horoscope mongering. Divorced from its divine purpose, it drifted along, performing a half-hearted and pointless work which consisted for the most part of the bleating forth of dire predictions and the compounding of planetary salves against the itch.

A small group of enlightened and educated men preserved the esoteric secrets of medicine and astrology through those superstition-ridden centuries we now call the Middle Ages. Of such mental stature were the Rosicrucians, who honored Paracelsus as one of the chief of their "mind." Through Paracelsus and the Rosie Cross the spiritual secrets of nature were restored to the chief place among the ends of learning. Knowledge was interpreted mystically and the profane sciences were reflected as merely the outward forms of inward mysteries. The secrets of mystical interpretation were concealed from the vulgar and given only to those who yearned after things which are of the spirit. *The Mystical Divinity* [Theology] of Dionysius the Areopagite* became the textbook of an ever increasing number of devout and God-loving men and women who saw in all outer forms and institutions the shadows and semblances of

inner truth.

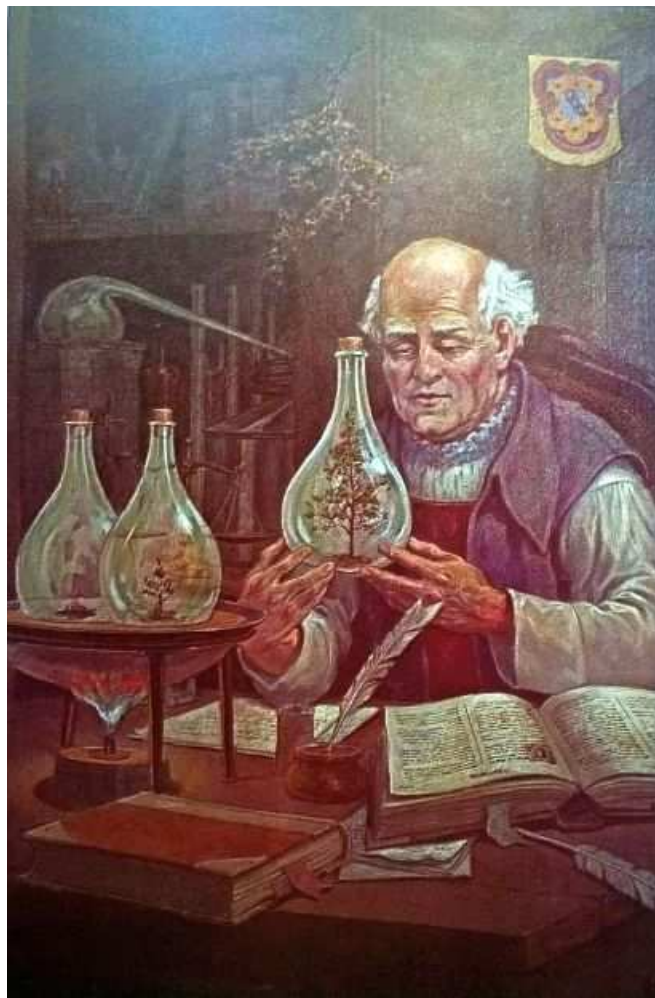
The modern world, which sacrificed so much for the right to think, has grown wise in its own conceit. Educators have ignored those spiritual values which constitute the priceless ingredients in the chemical compound we call civilization. Material science has become a proud institution—an assemblage of pedagogues and demagogues. There is no place for mysticism in the canons of the overschooled. Hypnotized by the strange fascination which matter exercised over the materialist, modern savants ignored the soul, that invisible reality upon which the illusions of the whole world hang.

It was Lord Bacon who said, “A little knowledge inclineth men’s minds towards atheism, but greatness of knowledge bringeth men’s minds back again to God.” This wonderful quotation expresses the tempo of the modern age. A disillusioned world saddened over the failure of material things is crying out again for those mystical truths which alone explain and satisfy. The return of mysticism brings with it a new interest in astrology and healing.

Mysticism brings with it a new standard of interpretation. To live up to the exacting demands of a mystical interpretation, all branches of learning must be purified and restated. To the mystic, astrology is not merely prediction, or even giving of advice, it is a key to spiritual truths to be approached philosophically, to be studied for its own sake.

Although science has classified, tabulated, and named all the parts and functions of the body, it cannot describe or explain what man is, where he came from, why he is here, or where he is going. In the presence of ignorance concerning these vital subjects, it is difficult to appreciate an elaborate learning in secondary matters.

The initiates of antiquity were concerned primarily with man in his universal or cosmic aspect. Before a person can live well he must orient himself, he must know in part at least the plan of living. With this knowledge he can then cooperate



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Paracelsus Performing the Experiment of Palengensis

“Palengensis [roughly equivalent to Rebirth] is the resurrection of the soul from the material organism. The human body is the Hermetic bottle. The Tree of the Soul is burned by human degeneracy. By palengensis, however, the spiritual elements can be reassembled by alchemical art and the Tree of Life caused to grow again within the human nature.”

with “the plan,” and the philosophic life recommended by Pythagoras is merely to know the truth and to live it.

Scientists looking for the cause of those energies which motivate and sustain the world have decided by a process of elimination that these causes must lie in a subjective structure of the universe, the invisible sphere of vibrations. So the modern fancy is to ascribe to vibration all that cannot be explained in any other way. The moment we acknowledge the universe to be sustained by an invisible energy which manifests through the law of vibration, physics becomes superphysics, physiology becomes psychology, and astronomy becomes astrology. Astrology is nothing more nor

* This work is dated from the late 5th to the early sixth century. He was quoted frequently by both Eastern and Western theologians, e.g., St. Gregory Palamas and St. Thomas Aquinas. Of all theologians, Dionysius is one who has stressed most the inaccessibility of God's divine essence. Yet, at the same time, he seems to be the one who has given countless names to the accessible attributes or energies of God.

less than the study of the heavenly bodies in the terms of the energies which radiate from them rather than merely an examination of their appearance and construction.

The original Rosicrucians held to a theory generally discarded by men of science and now known as the microcosmic theory. Paracelsus was the most prominent exponent of this concept of universal order and relationship. He said, "As there are stars in the heavens, so there are stars within man, for there is nothing in the universe which has not its equivalent in the microcosm" (the human body). In another place Paracelsus says, "Man derives his spirit from the constellations (fixed stars), his soul from the planets, and his body from the elements."

It is quite impossible for the most highly trained scientist to examine with any adequate appreciation of values the whole infinite diffusion of the cosmos with its island galaxies and incomprehensible vistas of immeasurable space. Yet the whole of the pageantry of worlds is evidently dominated by all-sufficient laws. Man himself is more compact, though possibly in other ways hardly less difficult to analyze. The cells in the body of man are as countless as the stars of heaven. Countless races of living things, species, types, and genera are evolving in the flesh, muscle, bone and sinew of man's corporeal constitution. The dignity of the microcosm gives the scientist some sense of the sublimity of the macrocosm. By the use of astrology it is possible to discover the interplay of celestial forces between the macrocosm and the microcosm. The centers in the physical body through which the sidereal energies enter were discovered and classified by the ancient Greeks, Egyptians, Hindus, and Chinese. There is great opportunity for work in examining not only the physical body itself but the auras which extend

from the body forming a splendid garment of cosmic light.

The last few years [*Astrology and the Ductless Glands* was copyright in 1936] have witnessed exceptional progress in that branch of medical science which is called endocrinology, or the study of the structure and function of the ductless glands, with research into therapeutic methods of treating derangements thereof. These glands are now accepted as the regulators of the physical function,

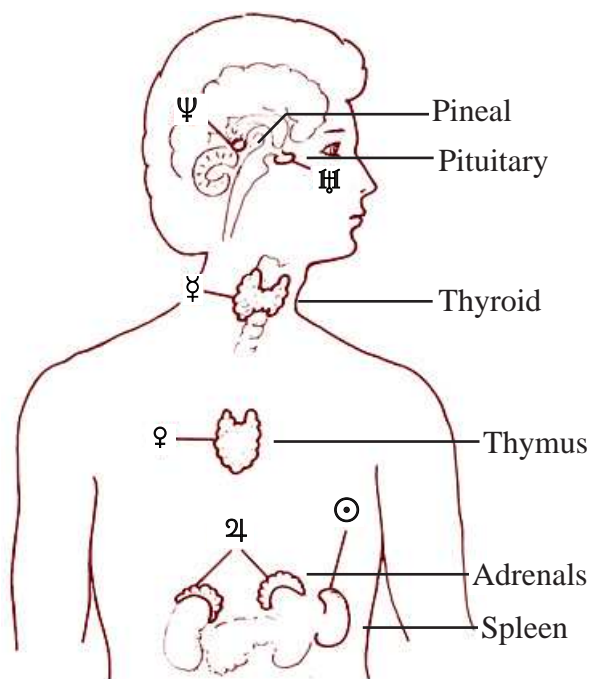
the governors and directors of bodily structure, profoundly significant not only in their physical reactions, but also their effect upon mentality, emotion, sensory reflexes, and the so-called spiritual or metaphysical functions.

Nearly all endocrinologists admit that the pineal gland is the most difficult to understand and the most difficult to treat. It can now generally be reached only by treating the other glands over which it acts in the capacity of generalissimo.

The physical functions of the glands are now fairly well classified, but there will unquestionably be much revision of the present opinions. Physicians are willing to admit that the function of the glands does not end merely with their effect upon the body, but scientists are not prepared to make any pronouncements beyond the field of material reaction.

It is especially significant therefore that through a combination of clairvoyance and astrology it is possible to examine the ductless glands and discover the metaphysical elements in their functioning. The modern clairvoyant uses the same method for his work as was used by the initiate priests of the ancient world, and like those older adepts he makes contributions to the sum of knowledge which are only discoverable to the materialist after centuries of ponderous experimentation. □

—Manly P. Hall



The Ductless Glands and their Planetary Rulers

Astrology—Is an Old Science Coming of Age?

HISTORIANS OF IDEAS inform us that the concept of human progress is of relatively recent vintage. While Enlightenment writers of the 18th century popularized the perfectibility of man (against the long-standing opposition of the established Church), their musings fueled the French Revolution where sanguine ideas turned into sanguinary carnage. Quickly the rationalist zest for moral improvement was deflected onto the material plane where technology was seen as the most promising way to advance the human condition.

While some historians propound a cyclical pattern to events, occult science teaches a helical scheme, whereby basic patterns are repeated with a positive difference. It would seem that the occult revelations of the last century are bringing us full circle to the knowledge last practiced in late Middle Ages, prior to the advent of “modern” science and the branding of beliefs such as astrology as superstition or mere hokum. Recently, a 15th century (1454) physician’s handbook was brought to light and purchased by the Wellcome Trust’s Library for the History and Understanding of Medicine. There is a piquant irony here: A subsidiary of the Glaxo-Wellcome empire, now known as Glaxo Smith-Kline, the world’s largest pharmaceutical company, spent £210,00 (\$243,100 US) to acquire a manuscript written in Middle English that invokes astrological data to calculate the best time to administer medical treatments, according to a patient’s time and date of birth.

Astrologer and occultist Max Heindel expands on this use of astrological data to: determine the most opportune times to schedule surgery (while the moon is increasing, when the vitality is greater and healing is more rapid); predict, and therefore prepare for and minimize, recurrences of episodic

diseases, based on septenaries (days and years) and lunations; to indicate appropriate therapeutic minerals and herbs based on the ruler of the patient’s ascendant (mars, venus, saturn) and its medicinal correlates. Heindel writes in *The Rosicrucian Mysteries* that “Astrology is invaluable in diagnosing disease and prescribing a remedy, for it reveals the hidden cause of all ailments.” Welcome indeed would be Wellcome Trust’s decision to resurrect this rare tome from its antiquarian state and use its principles to make modern medicine more effective. That prospect is improbable.

As with many other “discoveries,” such as that “food is your best medicine,” our well-intending traditional doctors may be the last to know what is good for what ails us, and what is good to keep us healthy. The stars can guide us in this understanding. Indeed, the authors of *The Message of the Stars*, at least one of whom was an advanced clairvoyant, state that “were the alternative placed before us involving choice between loss of spiritual faculties and loss of our knowledge of Astrology, we should not hesitate one moment, but decide at once in favor of our beloved science; neither ought this surprise anyone who will give the matter a moment’s thought. It is true that spiritual sight, even in its rudimentary form, enables us to see the condition of the human body to the minutest detail, and thus affords a much easier means of diagnosis than Astrology, but though it penetrates to the innermost core of the bone, mere clairvoyance is superficial compared to Astrology for it shows only present conditions of the body. To find the causes which led up to the state and judge of future tendencies, it is necessary to consult the memory of nature. We should have to do that personally, and this, time would not permit, as we are handling hundreds of cases. But a simple astrological figure,

which we may commission one of our students to cast, reveals as much at a glance. There are delineated the causes of mental, moral, and physical disorders; it shows accurately the stages that have been passed and the crises yet to come. It also indicates the direction from which a remedy may be looked for and the most favorable time for administering the same. It helps people Here and Now, and the astrologer who lives up to his privilege has a mission so high and so holy that the office of priest (in the esoteric sense) pales into insignificance by comparison" (pp 606-607).

In an associated story, suggesting that Astrology may be coming of age, King 5 News (King County, Washington) reports that Kepler College in Washington state is accredited to offer both a B.A. and an M.A. in astrology, becoming the first College of Astrology in the Western World and, according to its spokeswoman Jillian Yuhas, the program will provide "the most comprehensive astrological education available in the world today." The claim is impressive and the offering is encouraging. But how helpful can Astrology be without knowledge of the worlds of spirit? If the twin laws of Consequence and Rebirth do not factor into this applied science of the stars, an element of determinism, even fatalism, is likely.

Students at the University of Arizona are mustering to influence the faculty to offer astrology courses at their school also. But astronomy professor Phillip Pinto expresses a standard position: "Astrology has always been around, but it has nothing to do with the real world." According to another astronomy professor, David Arnett, horoscopes shouldn't be viewed as something to rely on: "It's stupid, but there's a lot of stupidity." Sometimes, descriptions are self-characterizations.

Unfortunately, most people are only familiar with the simplistic, cut-and-paste version of astrology in their newspapers. Others know better. Kepler College, named after the astronomer/astrologer Johannes Kepler, hopes to help restore astrology's reputation. It will offer courses in the history, philosophy, theory, and practice of astrology, including planetary cycles and zodiacal and planetary influences. In their home state, Kepler students and faculty have an uphill battle to gain

credibility and respect. For example, the Vice Provost of Research at neighboring University of Washington, Craig Hogan, intones the usual line: "It's important not to mistake astrology for a real scientific subject." It's "on a par with fairy tales."

At Kepler students plan to use their knowledge professionally; that is, for profit, by acting as consultants for small and large corporations to determine the timing of product marketing and advertising. This is not exactly what Max Heindel had in mind when he described Astrology as "an absolutely true science" and called his first correspondence course "*Spiritual Astrology*." The mathematical (quantitative) aspect of astrology must be supplemented with the spiritual (qualitative) side, for the latter is its "kernel" and its "essence." As the author writes in *Simplified Scientific Astrology*: "Each visible planet is the embodiment of a great and exalted spiritual intelligence Who is the minister of God in that department of His Kingdom, endeavoring to carry out His Will, the latter having in view the ultimate *highest good*, regardless of temporary ill."

The great loss that students at Kepler will not consciously realize, though some may intuit, is that what they will study is divorced from its spiritual firmament. The twelve zodiacal constellations that serve as the backdrop against which the sun and planets trace their apparent paths, the twinklings of these fixed stars from without our solar system, "are the pulsations of spiritual impulses sent forth by the guardians of the Greater Mysteries; and the Mercurians, the Gods of Wisdom, send out similar impulses pertaining to the lesser mysteries, hence Mercury twinkles like a star." What light years of difference between the Rosicrucian conception of Astrology and the mundane (literally) astrology that does not see the entire universe as a manifestation of God, and all manifest forms as vehicles used by spirits who are evolving toward conscious identity with God.

However, in due time, the true and complete form of Astrology will again draw the attention and credence of the general public, and this time around, it will be enhanced with the mind-expanding, life-enriching insights afforded by stellar seers such as Max Heindel. □

BOOK REVIEWS

Light in My Darkness

WHAT CAN A DEAF and blind person teach us? Possibly nothing but grim endurance and sympathy, were we but material beings, compounded solely of “dust of the earth.” But Helen Keller knows better. She knows more than many who have functioning eyes and ears.

Helen’s loss of sight and hearing occurred when she was nineteen months old. A mysterious ailment, then diagnosed as a “brain fever,” left her completely unable to see light and with neither bone nor air conduction in either ear. Through her unquenchable zest for life and learning, and with the help of her fiercely devoted first teacher, Annie Sullivan, Helen was eventually able to transcend her severe disabilities.

When she was seven, Annie made the intractable, violent child hold a mug under the spout of a well pump. As the cold water gushed forth, filling the mug, Annie spelled “w-a-t-e-r” in Helen’s hand. Helen was startled. Then she dropped the mug and, as Annie relates, “stood as one transfixed: A new light came into her face. She spelled ‘water’ several times. Then she dropped on the ground and asked for its name and pointed to the pump and the trellis, and suddenly, turning around, she asked for my name. I spelled ‘Teacher.’” Later, Helen recalled, “that word ‘water’ dropped into my mind like the sun in a frozen winter world.” Born June 27 (1880), Helen was a Cancer: Running water opened a path of light to her inner world.

On that day Helen grasped the idea of language: words made of letters can mediate between the external world (known through the senses) and an



© American Foundation for the Blind

For a life in the dark, love is the surest guide

inner landscape of ideas. With this epiphany her “soul was set free.” Further liberation of her spirit came through Alexander Graham Bell’s secretary, John Hitz, who became Helen’s spiritual guardian. He introduced her to the works of the 18th century Swedish theologian, scientist, and philosopher Emanuel Swedenborg. When she was sixteen, Hitz gave Helen Swedenborg’s *Heaven and Hell* in raised print. She writes, “I opened the big book, and lo, my fingers lighted upon a paragraph in the preface about a blind woman whose darkness was illumined with beautiful truths from Swedenborg’s writings.” So deeply was she moved by the seer’s words that she came to believe his writing compensated her for her complete loss of vision: “My heart gave a joyous bound. Here was a faith that I felt so keenly—the separateness between soul and body, between a realm I could picture as a whole and the chaos of fragmentary things and irrational contingencies that my limited physical senses met at every turn.”

Hitz transcribed Swedenborg's writing into Braille for Helen. She credited them with imparting "a richer interpretation of the Bible, a deeper understanding of the meaning of Christianity, and a precious sense of the Divine Presence in the world." The autobiographical book under review, *Light in My Darkness* (Chrysalis Books, West Chester, PA), takes its title from Helen's response to Swedenborg's writings, which were for her "the light in my darkness, the voice in my silence." Helen wrote Hitz, "I see the glory of the all-perfect that lies beyond the physical sight, and hear the triumphant song of love which transcends the tumult of this world." She added, "I cannot help laughing sometimes at the arrogance of those who think they alone possess the earth because they have eyes and ears. In reality, they see only shadows and know only in part." Paul tells us that now we know in part. Helen came closer to knowing even as we are known.

Helen became a highly educated woman. She knew several languages. She was the first deaf-blind woman to graduate from college (Radcliffe in 1904). Clearly, she came to Earth with a developed mind and an advanced soul. She most liked philosophy, which taught her how to guard against "the misconceptions which spring from the limited experience of one who lives in a world without color and without sound." Logic, Max Heindel reminds us, is the safest guide in all worlds and a necessary corrector of sensory experience. Philosophy confirmed Helen's faith that she could go "beyond the broken arc of my senses and behold the invisible in the fullness of the light, and hear divine symphonies in silence. I had a joyous certainty that deafness and blindness were not an essential part of my existence since they were not in any way a part of my immortal mind."

How does one learn to speak if one cannot hear spoken words, cannot even see lips moving as they form syllables? Yet she could touch Annie Sullivan's lips. When she was eleven she made her first recognizable words. But even in later years it was only by sheer force of mind that she could keep her speech "anywhere near intelligible," for there was no reference or template for comparison and correction.

What is most remarkable about this remarkable

soul is that her sensory separation from the physical world did not cast her into self-absorbed regret and isolation. Her work for the blind and other handicapped people throughout the world was enormous. She traveled the globe six times, speaking widely, visiting dignitaries, passionately advocating for the sense-deprived. She knew that "we begin heaven now and here if we do our work for others faithfully. There is no useful work that is not part of the welfare of mankind. Even the humblest occupation is 'skilled labor' if it contains an effort above mere self-support to serve a spiritual or social need."

Helen's words ring with hard-won wisdom, some of it imported from prior lives:

- "Religion is to live a doctrine, not merely to believe one."

- "[O]ur birth into life is a matter of choice: we have a very direct share in it, for no real spiritual life can be thrust upon us against our will."

- Conversion is not the acceptance of a particular creed but "a change of heart."

- "If we cannot succeed in our present position, we could not succeed in any other. Unless, like the lily, we can rise pure and strong above sordid surroundings, we would probably be moral weaklings in any situation. Unless we can help the world where we are, we could not help it if we were somewhere else. The most important issue is not the sort of environment we have, but the kind of thoughts we think every day, the kind of ideals we are following....The Arab proverb is admirably true, "That is thy world wherein thou findest thyself."

- "There is no such thing as 'otherworldliness' when we are convinced heaven is not beyond us but within us."

- "All things upon each represent and image forth all the realities of another world."

- "All human beings live both in this natural world and in the spiritual world at the same time."

Everyone can learn from Helen Keller and see better for the light that shines from her mind and heart: "I believe that life is given us so that we may grow in love. And I believe that God is in me as the sun is in the color and fragrance of the flower, the Light in my darkness, the Voice in my silence." □

—C.W.

Vegetarian Domestic Science

The Rosicrucian Teachings advocate a simple, pure, and harmless life. We hold that a plain vegetarian diet is most conducive to health and purity; also that alcoholic drinks, tobacco, and stimulants are injurious to health and spirituality. As Christians we believe it to be our duty to avoid sacrificing the lives of animals and birds for food, also, as far as possible, to refrain from using their skins and feathers for clothing. We hold vivisection to be diabolical and inhuman.

We believe in the healing power of prayer and concentration, but we also believe in the use of material means to supplement the higher forces.

COMPLEXITY in meal preparation not only leads to extravagance and to overeating with its attending ills, but serious bodily chemical warfare must inevitably follow a too great variety of foods consumed at the same meal. Two or three foods well selected for their balanced nutrient properties and rationally combined would invariably be perfectly sufficient. A breakfast or brunch consisting of one or two kinds of fruit is quite satisfying during spring and summer weather. As the protein (tissue-building) constituent and the fat content of fruits are low, they may be supplemented by tarts or unroasted nut butters, cottage cheese, avocado, olives, or raw milk—just one of these.

Foods of high starchy content are best not combined with high protein foods. It is strongly recommended that only one protein or one starchy food accompany a meal and that the balance comprise such salads and steamed vegetables as are available in season. For example, a salad dish followed by some steamed green leafy or other nonstarchy vegetables will combine harmoniously with baked pota-

toes, or in place of the latter, a few slices of whole wheat bread or any other hygienic carbohydrate (starch), like whole wheat spaghetti or corn on the cob—just one of these.

Where raw and cooked vegetables appear at the same meal, it is desirable to eat the raw salad first to offset any tendency to consume too little of the raw food and too much of the cooked foods. Never mix food in the raw state with the same or similar food in the cooked state, as for example grated raw carrots followed by steamed carrots and peas; there is danger of gas.

Eat without drinking. This will insure thorough mastication and insalivation. Do not take very hot or very cold foods or drinks at the same meal. Ice water and hot soups have ruined many stomachs. If a liquid such as water or a table beverage is craved, it should be taken at least half an hour after the meal.

Cooking must be done judiciously. Vegetables are, as a rule, so irrationally prepared that they are of little food value. The average houseperson boils vegetables in too much water and then drains them, not realizing that the larger part of the proteins, vitamins, and organic salts are dissolved in the water. The loss of soluble nutrients is about five to ten percent protein, thirty to fifty per cent carbohydrates, and about fifty per cent of organic salts. Thus the cellulose (fibre or roughage) is retained and little else that is of genuine merit for healthy nutrition. Then in order to replenish the loss of essential constituents, condiments and spices are added to contribute palatability to vegetables which have been rendered tasteless and valueless.

Vegetables should consequently be steamed, baked, or stewed for about fifteen to twenty minutes in their own juices by means of airtight waterless nonaluminum cookers. Of all methods of cooking,

steaming is preferable. The addition of water as used in ordinary cooking toughens the fibers of the vegetables and washes out nearly all of the life-sustaining ingredients. By steaming in little or no water for a short time—just long enough to soften the cellulose—the organic salts, vitamins, and the delicious natural flavors are nearly all retained in the food. There must be no parboiling, followed by the draining off of the best portion and the subsequent consumption of the residue—absurd practices which regrettably are still the vogue in our homes today.

Heat, especially if prolonged, not only destroys much of the natural essence, but considerably diminishes the nutritive value of vegetables. For the longer vegetables are subjected to heat, the more their subtle organic combinations are disorganized. Vegetables are thus softened to a degree that encourages hasty swallowing and overeating. With thorough mastication, a much smaller amount is needed than when food is bolted or washed down with some beverage.

Wholesome soup stocks can be made from leafy vegetables, especially the outer leaves of cabbage, lettuce, and kale, the tops of celery, green onions, beets, and other roots, spinach, chard, and tough parts of asparagus and cauliflower which are usually thrown away. The vegetables are best chopped into small pieces by means of a food chopper and then steamed with the addition of a little water in a steam cooker for about twenty minutes or longer to soften the cellulose. Then the vegetables should be pressed through a potato ricer to extract the juice and to remove the tougher parts of the cellulose. To enrich this vegetable soup with protein, add about one pint of evaporated milk or its equivalent in soy bean milk or thick nut milk (two ounces of unroasted nut butter to fourteen ounces of water). This is a sustaining easily digestible dish for growing children, adults, convalescents, and the aged.

Legumes, if properly prepared and used judiciously in the right combination and quantity, afford a pleasant change in the vegetarian dietary. They comprise the different varieties of beans, peas, and lentils. All legumes in their dry state require prolonged, slow cooking to render them thoroughly digestible and to bring out their rich flavors. Legumes should be steeped overnight in distilled or soft water; additional water may be added before cooking in order to cover them well. Steam cookers

or double boilers are very suitable for preparing legumes; two or three hours will generally be necessary before the legumes are done. A fireless cooker may be used to advantage for this purpose. Legumes may be ground to increase their digestibility and to reduce the time of cooking. The addition of a little lemon juice, some vegetables, and savory herbs will also promote their digestion. No starchy food should accompany this meal. Outdoor workers can digest legumes better than can sedentary workers; the latter group should eat them not more often than once or twice a week. Children will enjoy them if served in the form of puree, which can be readily accomplished by pressing the boiled legumes through a sieve.

Cereals should preferably be eaten dry, in order to insure perfect insalivation and mastication. Mushes should never be mixed with sugar and milk, as this mixture will usually cause fermentation. Honey is preferable as a sweetening agent. Highly acid fruits eaten with cereals will retard the digestion of starches. Cereals, even in their whole grain natural state, are deficient in lime, soda, and chlorine, and therefore they do not supply enough of the elements for building sound and healthy teeth and bones. Wherever cereals (I have reference to the whole grain varieties) are used as staple foods, they should always be supplemented by a liberal amount of green-leafy vegetables to supply the necessary alkaline elements, especially sodium, calcium, and iron. Whole brown rice, unpeeled and unpolished, is the least objectionable and the least acid-forming of all whole grains. Avoid the demineralized and devitalized breakfast foods, robbed of their rugged strength by mechanical modern milling processes.

Fruits require the least preparation of all foods. They may be eaten just as they come to us from Nature. The removal of the skins of many fruits is unnecessary so long as they have been thoroughly cleansed and are organic. Unsulphured sun-dried fruits are superior to bread and cereals, because their carbohydrates for the elaboration of bodily heat and energy are alkaline reacting. Dried fruits are best, soaked till soft from twelve to twenty-four hours, the water well covering the fruit. Cooking or stewing is unnecessary. Tart prunes are enhanced in palatability if a spoonful of honey or raw sugar, two slices of lemon and a dash of raisins are added to the water in which the fruit is soaked. The juice should be taken

together with the fruit. The juice and fruit may be slightly heated just before serving, but never boiled.

Natural uncooked foods, comprising two or three raw vegetables, attractively prepared as a wholesome salad, contain more vitamins and mineral salts than do cooked foods, as well as encourage thorough mastication. The dressing should consist of lemon juice, olive oil, or any other high grade vegetable oil, with the possible addition of grated nuts, unroasted and unsalted nut butter or cottage cheese, if the meal is a protein one. Wholesome mayonnaise or salad dressings may also be applied. The avocado provides a twenty per cent fat content in a very palatable and digestible form, superior to butter fat. It is an excellent addition to combination raw vegetable salads. So too are sun-dried olives, whose fat content is fifty per cent, rivaling some nuts in nutritive value: Only in the fully ripened sun-dried olives are all of the nutritive principles of the olive preserved, and although they still retain some of the bitter taste, which is very pronounced in the matured olives on the tree, they are undoubtedly more wholesome than are pickled olives.

The nutritive and therapeutic value of salads is often ruined by the addition of unwholesome preservatives and condiments. All condiments have an irritating effect on the mucous membrane of the stomach and retard proper digestion and assimilation. Pure apple vinegar of the highest quality is not particularly harmful in small quantities, but the great majority of vinegars, condiments, and relishes embody deleterious chemicals which exert a pernicious influence both on the food with which they are mixed and on the digestive organs. Many vinegars are the product of acetic acid fermentation of alcohol, and destroy the red blood corpuscles. However, hygienic salad dressings, skillfully united with wholesome ingredients, can be blended in such a manner as will simulate adroitly that irresistibly zippy tang craved.

In the place of vinegar, pepper, mustard, salt, white sugar, etc., either one or several of the following ingredients may be added in small quantities for flavoring and garnishing: lemon juice, honey, raw sugar, grated horse-radish, garlic, minced onions, finely chopped leaves of mustard, sorrel, dandelion, or watercress. Combination salads should be made at least an hour before they are served to, permit the harmonious blending of the different ingredients and

flavorings. The conspicuously inviting ways in which salads can be served tempt the most fastidious taste.

—Lillian R. Carque

SEEDS AND GRAINS

Seeds and grains are important foods, particularly for the vegetarian. Most seeds contain large amounts of phosphorous, particularly important in the development and maintenance of healthy brain tissue, bones, and teeth, and of magnesium, essential to the health of blood, kidneys, and hair. In addition, seeds which have been allowed to sprout are good sources of vitamins A, B, C, E, K, and F.

Sunflower seeds are prime sources of protein, unsaturated fatty acids, healthful carbohydrates, and almost all vitamins, minerals, and enzymes. When blended, they make a good substitute for cow's milk. They promote internal and external revitalization, thus helping promote abundant health.

Alfalfa seeds are a rich source of protein, vitamins, and minerals, particularly iron. Alfalfa sprouts are rich in vitamins A, B, C, D, E, F, K, and U. Chlorophyll content in six-day sprouted alfalfa destroys putrifactive bacteria in the digestive tract; this, in turn, permits an increase of the beneficial lactic-forming bacteria in the digestive tract.

Buckwheat is a good source of rutin, which helps maintain healthy blood. It builds up capillaries, is a good blood cleanser, and has been found helpful in cases of high blood pressure. When green, it has a high amount of lecithin.

Millet, an alkaline food, is a good source of protein (which is found primarily in acid foods). It is also well supplied with calcium and carbohydrates.

Wheat germ is a highly nutritious cereal food, containing protein, B-complex vitamins, calcium, iron, potassium, and a rich supply of Vitamin E.

Sesame seeds provide an exceptional source of calcium, B-complex vitamins, unsaturated fatty acids, and amino acids.

Flax seeds are generally used for their oil. They are also good sources of vitamin F and unsaturated fatty acids.

Fenugreek seeds contain large amounts of lecithin and other nutrients, and are about 30 percent protein.

Pumpkin seeds contain large quantities of unsaturated fatty acids and various other nutrients, and are said to build strength and vigor in advanced years. □

HEALING

Music and Healing

THE USE OF MUSIC for healing purposes becomes increasingly recognized as it is realized that music harmonizes the “organic rhythms” of the human body, which may bring better physical and mental health, raise moral standards, and heighten the level of accomplishment.

When one comprehends that “orderly rhythmic sound” is the builder of all that is, the healing power of music is more easily accepted. This is expressed in the Bible in the Gospel of St. John which tells us: “In the beginning was the Word... and without the word was not anything made that was made,” also and “the Word was made flesh.” Every human being created through the power of spiritual sound has his own “keynote,” which determines his vibratory rate and the type of music to which he will respond.

“Thus, since our bodies function at a certain vibratory rate, it is reasonable to expect that the diseases to which we are subject may be due to spiritual or physical inharmonies which we may produce within ourselves. If the direct cause of this inharmony can be determined and remedied, the physical discomfort will be overcome.”

Here music can perform a vital service, for it invites the indwelling Spirit, the Ego, to remember its divine source. The highest type of music speaks of the spiritual realms and awakens the dormant realization of our spiritual heritage. Thereby we are led to living consciously in accord with God’s laws, unfolding the innate spiritual powers which can overcome all disease and disharmony. □

Visible Helpers are just as necessary as Invisible



Oil on canvas, Adolphe-William Bouguereau, Museum at Forest-Lawn Memorial-Park, Glendale

Song of the Angels

Helpers, and our friends and patients may share in a high privilege, as well as add much to the power of liberated healing force, by joining us in prayer for the sick. Our Healing Service is held every evening in the Healing Temple at 6:30 (7:30 when Daylight time is in effect) and in the Pro-Ecclesia at 4:15 P.M. when the Moon is in a cardinal sign on the following dates:

March.....2—8—15—23—30
 April.....6—13—20—27

Relax, close your eyes, and make a mental picture of the pure white rose in the center of the Rosicrucian Emblem on the west wall of our Pro-Ecclesia, and concentrate on Divine Love and Healing.

The Three Trees

ONCE there were three trees on a hill in the woods. They were discussing their hopes and dreams when the first tree said, "Some day I hope to be a treasure chest. I could be filled with gold, silver, and precious gems. I could be decorated with intricate carvings and everyone would see the beauty." Then the second tree said, "Someday I will be a mighty ship. I will take kings and queens across the waters and sail to the corners of the world. Everyone will feel safe in me because of the strength of my hull." Finally the third tree said, "I want to grow to be the tallest and straightest tree in the forest. People will see me on top of the hill and look up to my branches, and think of the heavens and God and how close to them I am reaching. I will be the greatest tree of all time and people will always remember me."

After a few years of praying that their dreams would come true, a group of woodsmen came upon the trees. When one came to the first tree he said, "This looks like a strong tree, I think I should be able to sell the wood to a carpenter," and he began cutting it down. The tree was happy, because he knew that the carpenter would make him into a treasure chest.

At the second tree the woodsman said, "This looks like a strong tree. I should be able to sell it to the shipyard." The second tree was happy because he knew he was on his way to becoming a mighty ship.

When the woodsmen came upon the third tree, the tree was frightened because he knew that if they cut him down his dreams would not come true. One of the woodsmen said, "I don't need anything special from my tree, I'll take this one," and he cut it down.

When the first tree arrived at the carpenters, he was made into a feed box for animals. He was then placed in a barn and filled with hay. This was not at

all what he had prayed for. The second tree was cut and made into a small fishing boat. His dreams of being a mighty ship and carrying kings had come to an end. The third tree was cut into large pieces and left alone in the dark. The years went by, and the trees forgot about their dreams.

Then one day, a man and woman came to the barn. She gave birth and they placed the baby in the hay in the feed box that was made from the first tree. The man wished that he could have made a crib for the baby, but this manger would have to do. The tree could feel the importance of this event and knew that it had held the greatest treasure of all time. Years later, a group of men got in the fishing boat made from the second tree. One of them was tired and went to sleep. While they were out on the water, a great storm arose and the tree didn't think it was strong enough to keep the men safe. The men woke the sleeping man, and He stood and said "Peace" and the storm stopped. At this time, the tree knew that it had carried the King of Kings in its boat.

Finally, someone came and got the third tree. It was carried through the streets as the people mocked the man who was carrying it. When they came to a stop, the man was nailed to the tree. When Sunday came, the tree came to realize that it was strong enough to stand at the top of the hill and be as close to God as was possible, because Jesus had been crucified on it.

The moral of this story is that when things don't seem to be going your way, always know that God has a plan for you. If you place your trust in Him, He will give you great gifts. Each of the trees got what it wanted, just not in the way it had imagined. We don't always know what God's plans for us are. We do know that while His ways are not our ways, His ways are always best. □

—Author Unknown

