

Rays from the Rose Cross



"A Sane Mind, A Soft Heart, A Sound Body" NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1999—\$5.00

MEDITATION, PRAYER, AND DAILY RHYTHMS
THE HARVEST OF HUMAN EXPERIENCE
THE HIGHER STAGES OF THE PASSION—CROSS-BEARING
EVOLUTION AS SHOWN IN THE ZODIAC

A CHRISTIAN ESOTERIC MAGAZINE





THREE KINGS

Three kings, appointed to be guides of men,
 will always help you to achieve your goal
 in cosmic worlds, from plane to higher plane,
 and ever deeper regions of the soul.
 And should you only glimpse them from afar,
 know this: The earth will turn into a star.

A golden star, just like the little child,
 to whom they bore their birthday offerings,
 so that the relics and all sacred things
 kept in the temples might stay undefiled.
 Who rescues them? The God, who on the earth
 came to know death. They recognized His birth.

You bring the Christ gold, frankincense, and
 myrrh, for Him to use as spiritual gifts.
 You bow your head and will no longer err.
 You fold both hands upon your breast and lift
 your heart to heaven. You sink on bended knee,
 and whom you lead will walk erect and free.

If after death he wander into hell,
 he still would reach his sure angelic goal;
 and were he forced to live in chaos as well,
 he yet would bring forth Heaven from his own soul.
 For Melchior, Caspar, and Balthazar, true,
 and good, and beautiful, dwell deep in you.

—Albert Steffen

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

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Feature



The Offering of the Wise Men from the East, *Die Bibel in Bildern*, Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld (1798-1883)

Raine's poem from *Selected Poems*, Lindisfarne Books, Hudson, NY, 12534. Used by permission

Word Made Flesh

Word whose breath is the world-circling atmosphere,
Word that utters the world that turns the wind,
Word that articulates the bird that speeds upon the air,

Word that blazes out the trumpet of the sun,
Whose silence is the violin-music of the stars,
Whose melody is the dawn, and harmony the night,

Word traced in water of lakes, and light on water,
Light on still water, moving water, waterfall
And water colors of cloud, of dew, of spectral rain,

Word inscribed on stone, mountain range upon range of stone,
Word that is fire of the sun and fire within
Order of atoms, crystalline symmetry,

Grammar of five-fold rose and six-fold lily,
Spiral of leaves on a bough, helix of shells,
Rotation of twining plants on axes of darkness and light,

Instinctive wisdom of fish and lion and ram,
Rhythm of generation in flagellate and fern,
Flash of fin, beat of wing, heartbeat, beat of the dance,

Hieroglyph in whose exact precision is defined
Feather and insect-wing, refraction of multiple eyes,
Eyes of the creatures, oh myriadfold vision of the world,

Statement of mystery, how shall we name
A spirit clothes in world, a world make man?

—Kathleen Raine

Behold, I Make All Things New

AS THIS YEAR, this century, and this millennium conclude with the national festival of Thanksgiving and the world festival of the Christian Nativity, we reluctantly must admit that all three segments of time have been notable for the suffering brought about by man's inhumanity to man—be it two thousand years of "Christian" warring; twentieth century pogroms in Stalinist Russia, Hitler's Germany, Pol Pot's Cambodia, and tribal Africa, or most recently, in Kosovo-Serbia; and domestically, in the random acts of often gratuitous violence, such as those that have stunned the school communities of Littleton, Colorado, and Jonesboro, Tennessee.

None of these or other acts of mayhem and brutality should have taken place, but they did. Man should not slay and maim and offend his brother, but he does.

The Lord of love gave his life to atone and provide an antidote for humanity's self-inflicted pain and cruelty. The Virgin Mary was told by the seer Simeon that a sword would pierce her own soul, the sword of suffering sustained by our apparent powerlessness to prevent acts of anger and fratricide.

We wonder at these atrocities, these acts of individual and collective rage, or worse, the calculated, heartless canceling of holy human lives. How can impulses so radically opposed as love and hate be housed in the same soul? How can a father take the life of another father's son, or a mother's son snuff out the life of another mother? No answer suffices the enormity of these actions. We but know they happen. If we do not wield the sword, nor are its direct victim, the effects yet wound us. We are implicated in both the causes and consequences of each person's inhumanity. Remote as some outer events may seem, we all participate in the formation of the violent mind whose acts rip the fragile fabric of our world society.

What can we do to staunch the flow of bile and blood, to defuse the explosive charges of anger that fracture the bonds of human relatedness?

A line from Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* is not amiss here: "He who learns must suffer. And even in our sleep pain that cannot forget falls drop by drop upon the heart, and in our own despair, against our will, comes wisdom to us by the awful grace of God."

We know what the Elder Brothers of the Rose Cross do. They bare their hearts to the hurt and harm in the world and take it on, sop it up, suffer it into harmlessness, love it to death. This is nothing short of incredible. These are hearts that beat not for their private selves but for the world. They bless the world while wounding themselves for love.

The Rosicrucian path is the path of knowledge—knowledge which, when truly taken to heart, inspires acts of potent sacrifice, intimate and anonymous instances of world redemption.

Do we seek wisdom? Here is where it takes us. Are we ready? Let us start with what we can, but let us start, now—and not stop.

This is birth time. Christ's life is baptizing a new year, a new century, a new millennium, building toward the New Jerusalem—the new, the abiding, the real inner Peace. Our passions must go to the cross and know the real Passion. Our knowledge must be grounded, incarnated, and nailed to intentional acts.

Would you know? Christ edifies. Do you lament world conditions? With deeds plant seeds for its transformation and renewal. Would you have things change for the better? *Be* better. *Do* better. Do you want to stop humans shedding each other's blood? Purify your own through heart-centered, Christ-infused thinking, proved in service. The world's regeneration takes place in the heart and mind of each person. Now we prepare for Christ's birth in our souls. □

Meditation, Prayer and Daily Rhythms

MANY PEOPLE WISH for an answer to the question: How is meditation related to prayer? Not very long ago there appeared an article by the Marburg theologian, Friedrich Heiler, in which we were asked to choose whether we want meditation or prayer. If we were to choose the former we should sink back into Buddhism. Only prayer was really Christian. In this way of thinking the greatest Christians of the Middle Ages would be expelled from Christianity, for they have really meditated upon the death and resurrection of Christ in a way quite similar to that here recommended. And they owe their wonderful religious strength to the power of their meditation.

Naturally, it is not our opinion that anyone who is accustomed to say his prayers morning and evening should now give up prayer and put meditation in its place. But if an inquiry were held into the subject, one would learn that the number of people who no longer pray is terribly great. They go through life, have now and then by chance childish and usually superstitious thoughts about the higher world, and never notice what they miss. The frightful carelessness and demoralization which has seized upon the inner lives of men is, as a rule, not realized in religious circles. A course, like this, of instruction in meditation, must include a discussion with those who expect everything from prayer. However, even to look at those who still

This is the second in a series of articles taken from Friedrich Rittelmeyer's Meditation, Guidance of the Inner Life, published by Floris Books, Edinburgh. Reprinted with permission.



Detail, oil on canvas, Paolo Veronese (1528-1588), Musée du Louvre, Paris

The Supper at Emmaus

Christ Jesus prays to the Father before the breaking of bread.

pray is not encouraging. One can, indeed, never fully know. And occasionally an impression shows us that there is greater reality than one had thought. But how many who pray still do so out of real inward need, and not from custom or superstitious fear? How many pray from joy, without any intermingled fear of what would chance if they did not?

By far the greater number must confess that they simply do not know how to set about praying rightly. Prayer with them is dull and ineffectual. They continue willingly enough to pray, but they sometimes ask themselves if there is any sense in praying, and if it were not better to give it up entirely. The contact which they have with the divine world is weak. And sometimes it seems to them that they are scarcely honest with themselves.

A university professor of theology, who was strictly orthodox, once said to me, almost in tears, that he had always wished to be able to pray as his mother had prayed—but he left me in no doubt that he felt himself very far from that goal. And when people pray together, as in saying grace or in church, it does not require much sensitiveness of feeling to notice how much of it is done mechanically while the thoughts are entirely elsewhere. If one could hold an investigation into the prayer of men of our time, one would see *how rapid is its decline*. Quite apart from the egoism and all, the superstition which creep into men's prayers, the powers of the soul out of which alone men can pray still exist only in a terrifyingly small amount.

When it is told of Christ that He lifted His eyes to heaven, He looked up to His Father, it must have been as if a soul's pure mirror was turned towards the heaven of stars, which mirrored itself brightly in it

with great peace. The Gospels give us this impression very strongly, for example in the high-priestly prayer (John 17). When *we* turn our souls towards heaven, they are like mirrors which have become dull and blind, where, perhaps, a feeble reflection shows; but no starry heaven.

Thirty years ago, as a young theologian, I tried to find out what occurs in the souls of men when the word "God" is spoken. The result gave sufficient cause for thought. Only a quite common-place turning to the world above could be observed—an unilluminated longing and feeling for it. In the theology of today, which knows only a God who is mysterious and afar off, this fact is becoming apparent.

In this need of today, the need of an age which has learned to look outward and down, and thereby forgotten how to look upwards and within, it is in many respects only meditation which can bring help. First of all, we shall learn again by meditation how to represent to ourselves that which is

spiritual. We shall learn it slowly, but in a quite honest way. In every meditation, we practice taking something spiritual into our soul and pondering it. That will, as a matter of course, be beneficial to prayer also. For is it such a bad form of prayer to do nothing for once, but look steadfastly at the divine? Instead of asking, which we often do, heedlessly, we learn to be silent and look. Thus we are on the way to worship, which our race has lost.

It always seems to me that the first three petitions of the Lord's Prayer are meant to lead us upon such a way, and that we ought first of all to seek really to behold and to perceive that of which

they speak: the divine name, the divine kingdom the divine will. In the instruction of candidates for confirmation and in preaching, one is fond of calling prayer the converse of the soul with God. But that which we would not permit ourselves to do when talking to anyone of high position, we do in this case;

we do not wait until we are spoken to, we bring forward our own wishes and requests, we go fully into everything. And when we have said our say, we go hurriedly away without asking if the other has not also something to say. Many prayers would at once be answered if we could only once really look at God.

Meditation leads to a much purer kind of prayer than that which is usual. It allows God to speak. It teaches us to hear, and so it leads to the "hearing of prayer," which is quite a different thing from the prompt granting of our desires. It teaches us to become aware of the Divine Being, and from it really to receive the divine will for our life. That is a more worthy way of having intercourse with God, and a much more effectual way than when we think that He must be immediately at our service to do our will. Of course, direct help comes from our asking in all times of need. And he who knows how to ask aright will sometimes feel absolutely afraid when he sees how near help was, and how

Meditation leads to a much purer kind of prayer than that which is usual. It allows God to speak. It teaches us to hear, and so it leads to the "hearing of prayer."

he is surrounded by the heavenly servants of Christ at every moment in which he understands how to call them. But more important than that we ourselves should be helped, is this, that we should grow into the divine will. And meditation is of service to us in this.

But the last and greatest help is that it changes us wholly into petition. That is not saying too much. The more we learn to meditate, so much the more does our soul assume an attitude of petitioning and expectation. The highest meditation is the highest petitioning. Without understanding this one cannot meditate on a safe and high level. We learn to open ourselves more and more. We learn with a longing which we did not know before, which is itself a prayer, to look towards the divine world; we learn to change ourselves inwardly into prayer, not that we may attain the fulfillment of any particular wishes, but that we may ourselves become the vessels of divine “fulfillment.” It seems to me as if Christ had desired this of His disciples.

When we read His farewell talk, it occurs to us again and again how strangely and impressively He speaks of asking in His name. The picture of the disciples as He wished them to be is one of men who shall do outwardly much greater deeds, who shall show forth “greater works” in the world than He Himself, who shall lead their lives in mighty accomplishment of divine acts—but at the same time inwardly they are much more mighty in their continual petitioning. Their whole inner life is intended to be a perpetual asking from above, petitioning from above, receiving from above. One has the impression that Christ has imagined this inward power of receiving from above as being so great that we can scarcely divine it. To do mighty works outwardly, inwardly to receive the spirit—this is the mark of the true disciple.

The saying, “Ask in My Name,” which occurs so often and so urgently in the farewell talk, and which is usually so little and so externally practiced, is translated in the Act of Consecration of Man*: “May Christ live in our praying.”

The meditation which we are here describing

**The Act of the Consecration of Man is the Communion Service of the Christian Community, a movement for the renewal of religious life through a living experience of Christ.*



Watercolor, James J. Tissot (1836-1902)

Jesus Going up into a Mountain to Pray

leads to this, that first of all Christ can really be present with us; and then that Christ begins really to live in us. And if He begins to live in us, then no other thing can happen than that He also begins to pray in us. For this is His true life within. And then we understand in a new and clear and living way what it means to pray in Christ’s name. It is the highest happiness of man to experience something of this praying of Christ within us—it is a divine happiness. The Act of Consecration of Man brings us to those heights when it leads us after the transubstantiation to pray Our Father. Quite of itself it makes it easy for us to let Christ pray within us. With the words which He Himself once spoke, and which, at their request, He gave to the disciples as a prayer, He begins His most intimate life within us, and thus passes into us.

But we must reply to those who come to us with the complaint that they have made many attempts to meditate and yet have made no progress. In their impatience people always expect much more rapid

progress than is at all possible. We cannot fly up on to the mountains, we can only go slowly step by step. In my case it happened that after a year of straining to meditate I detected scarcely any progress. Then when I came to Dr. Steiner he immediately began to speak of progress; and when I began to express a different opinion he said: "You have made great progress, but you are not yet conscious of it." And so I have accustomed myself not to be always measuring my progress, but to think of the plants, and I have always reminded others, who were dissatisfied with themselves, of the plants.

One cannot be always digging in a flower-pot to see if the seed has grown; that would be the surest way to kill the plant. One must see that it has light, air and water, and then be able to wait. Even when a plant is already visible in a flower-pot, it often looks for a long time as if it were making no progress. A growing child also often seems for a long time not to be growing, although it is well-fed every day. Then suddenly a month comes in which it shoots up. It is exactly the same in the inner life. We must have for our inner life, if it is to prosper, the same mood of trust which we bring to the plant and the growing child. If we are dissatisfied, we must see to the air and water, but must not touch the growing seed. It will surely grow of itself if it has the right food.

For a long time the first and only thing that comes is the feeling that one is upon a good way. But sometimes not even that comes. Perhaps a kind of hungry feeling comes if we leave off our inward working at ourselves. There is something remarkable about this hunger of the soul. Usually it comes on, if we regularly cultivate our inner life, exactly at the hour when we have accustomed ourselves to meditate. Like an awakener, it recalls to us our duty. People who are obliged to travel much, and who are thereby thrown out of the regularity of their lives again and again, suffer very much from this lack of rhythm. The feeling is as if one were completely thrown into confusion. In this we can already discover something of the meaning of that which spiritual science calls the etheric body or the vital body. This lowest part of the being of our soul lives strongly in time and rhythm.

Therefore rhythm is so beneficial in meditation as well as in ritual. But besides this benefit, rhythm means also a strengthening of one's power; one learns this little by little. In the revolving stream of time, life ever brings back to us that which we last wrought inwardly, and we can then begin there, where we left off. Every right meditation, every deeply experienced Act of Consecration of Man, every Lord's Prayer strongly prayed, brings its own blessing when we turn to it the next time. It then seems as if friendly hobgoblins had built up the house a little further in the time between.

Still worse off than those who do not feel that they are making progress are those who cannot succeed in meditating at all. One often hears sad complaints that someone has for years tried vainly to meditate. The cultus [*forms of worship, here referring to the liturgy of Holy Communion —Ed.*] may be for many people a way by which they may also come to meditate. By the pictures and words which one calls to remembrance again in one's daily work, the service will awaken and train in the right way the mood of reverent, loving self-immersion. Of course the cultus is not simply meant for such people as do not or cannot meditate. Each word which is derogatory to the cultus is keenly felt, by those who know what a ritual really is, to be a sin against a solemn divine reality. In the Christian cultus Christ is present and is dealing with men. All selfish wishes are dumb in the presence of the sublime act which is being performed. But it is the characteristic and truly Christian mark of the cultus, that it comes down to those also who are not able to meditate actively themselves. It helps those, as it helps others also in another way. Let each one see what most helps him forward, and that is best for him. And then there can be no dispute.

But it can also be said that the honest attempt to meditate, repeated unweariedly, already leads one forward, even when one must ever admit one's powerlessness and lack of skill. I must admit that I know of exercises which I have attempted a thousand times throughout a whole decade, and yet have never been able to complete. Just this calm, consecutive endeavor, even when it does not succeed, may have high spiritual and moral value. But

in many cases it happens that one has no idea of what actually occurs. For example, many people complain that they cannot attain to a living feeling of tranquillity. That is really because for the first time they discover how poor and weak their feelings generally are. In their life up to now in which one feeling has trod upon the heels of another—and the feelings have always been reflected by the outward world, and so have seemed greater than they were—they did not become conscious of the fact.

And it is the same when a man complains that he cannot hold fast a spiritual content. It is an advance when he begins to notice how feebly until now his thoughts have flickered like a will-o'-the-wisp. Michael Bauer, to whom I owe many very helpful inspirations to meditation, once told me of an acquaintance who said to him: "As soon as I sit down to meditate, it is as if I had upset a bee-hive and all the bees had flown out; my thoughts flutter about like that." The bee-hive had always been there, and the bees also, but not the man who saw them: he had first awakened in meditation.

But if we wish to proceed in building up the content of our meditations, it would be well if in the background we kept a firm hold upon the two great fundamental meditations for day and night: I am Love! and, I am Peace! He to whom Christ is not yet a living reality may think of God or of the ideal man. From these fundamental meditations let us now go on to become more at home in the "I" which is speaking.

It would indeed be of very great significance if we could come to feel directly this "I" which is speaking. That would be the very greatest gain for a man's life. One may prepare oneself for it by trying to feel other "I's." For example, read a few lines of Goethe, put the book aside and ask yourself, what kind of a man, what kind of an "I" has there revealed itself to me? So one would look into a being whose spirit was light and free and open to the world. One can always find refreshing food in such an "I" without distinguishing any particular perceptions or feelings. As a contrast, one may then read a page of Nietzsche and look closely at this spirit or rather this "I." One then looks into an unusually distinguished, finely developed "I"



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

"This is my whole desire, that my heart may be united to Thee."—Thomas à Kempis, My Imitation of Christ

which scorns liberty. Such experiments are seldom made by men to-day; but they open up great depths of human spiritual history.

After such preparation, it may be a unique experience to look at the "I" which speaks in John's Gospel. Its purity is that of pure light. It has a sure force which contains in itself no violence, a freedom which radiates sincerity yet contains no license, and endless power of giving, in which is no weakness. When a man's senses are awake to this, he knows of nothing higher than simply to gaze into this "I" and take a "sun-bath" in it. It is still more, it is a baptism of purification, a Lord's Supper which ever endures. In this, one can hold fast to history. One understands so well the evangelist John, who also desires simply to gaze into this light and who, after he had heard this word "I" in Christ's mouth, does not like to use it for himself—he calls himself only "the disciple whom the Lord loved." (Continued) □

MYSTIC LIGHT

The Harvest of Human Experience

NO HOLIDAY that calls itself “Thanksgiving” can be purely secular—not if on this day one gives thanks. For thankfulness has an object. It may be only implicit. It may be unrecognized. But it is there. And all objects, save One, mediate that One, Who is immediate God. We may thank our fellows, the earth, the weather, our health, or our good fortune. These are all contingent causes or benefits. There is the uncaused First Cause, pure Beneficence, the Alpha of our life. In thankfulness we point toward our identity with Christ as Omega. And adoration, the sacred heart of thankfulness, is key to attaining that identity.

Not all American holidays are holy days. One of them commemorates the end of a war; two honor American presidents; another pays tribute to a champion of civil rights; yet another celebrates the American worker. Thanksgiving, although arising out of unique historical circumstances, shares a common impulse with most societies that are both agrarian and theistic.

To take one example, the Israelites instituted the Feast of the Tabernacles to commemorate and give thanks for their fall harvest. Also called the Festival of Booths, or Succoth, during this week-long celebration many Jews journeyed to Jerusalem from all regions of the Mediterranean, bringing portions of their finest crops to give to the Temple priests. Here was a material giving. What Jehovah gave, they in part returned. The festival’s name derives from the booths (*succoth*) or huts made from tree branches, which put the Israelites in mind of their God-



Watercolor, Estella Louisa M. Canziani (1887-1964), Leicester Galleries, London, England

Pentecost

The fruit of death in Christ is abundant life, the harvest of Golgotha, whereby the (Holy) Spirit was poured out upon the disciples at Pentecost and is sowed to the Earth’s evolution. Above, flames of inspiration transfigure each disciple.

protected, forty-year sojourn in the Sinai desert. As Jehovah told Moses, the people “shall live in booths for seven days...that your generation may know that I made the people of Israel live in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt” (Lev. 23:42-43).

The Pilgrims initiated America’s day of annual Thanksgiving in 1621. They knew to Whom their thanks were due. They were steeped in religious piety. However, Thanksgiving did not become a national festival until the untiring efforts of Sarah Hale, a descendent of the Pilgrim Fathers, persuaded Abraham Lincoln to issue a proclamation for the observance of Thanksgiving Day to acknowledge this Republic’s many blessings.

As the ancient Israelites were pilgrims journeying toward their land of promise, so present day students of spiritual science are also pilgrims journeying toward a spiritual destination, who have frequent occasion to give thanks. In the modern

equivalent to Succoth, the huts or booths are our physical bodies, the fruit or harvest of our previous lives' deeds. For the modern pilgrim, the festival of booths is more fluid, more continuous—it is a daily, ideally, a moment-to-moment observance.

Human beings assume physical bodies in order to germinate, nurture, and harvest knowledge, aptitudes, and powers that only existence in earthly bodies can give. When the allotted time for this project is completed, the life's harvest is gleaned. There is nothing grim about the reaper with his figurative scythe, the saturnian reaper who cuts the silver cord. He is the hierophant dispatching the whole life's harvest, when we offer up and *are* the harvest of our entire sojourn in the physical world.

Any residual tendency of the spiritual aspirant to devalue earthly experience upon his initial entry into nonphysical worlds will be quickly and compellingly corrected. He realizes that without experience in visible reality he is totally powerless in that other invisible reality—for both the vision of the higher worlds and the ability to function in them are predicated on first having mastered life in the visible worlds. To see in the invisible worlds one must first be able to correctly see in the visible world. For humans the physical world is the seed ground of the supraphysical worlds.

Unless a grain of wheat fall to the earth and die, it cannot be reborn. Whereas, he who at all cost would save his (physical) life will lose much of its spiritual benefit. Dying makes the earth fertile for rebirth, for newness in spirit. Pentecost was made possible by the Crucifixion. The gifts of the Holy Spirit showered upon the Apostles was the harvest of a cosmic sacrifice, the reaping of unmerited suffering for humanity's sins in a holocaust of divine self-giving.

By the time the silver cord breaks, the basis for a new embodiment, a new life's planting, has already been gathered. It will be processed, ordered, elaborated, and spiritually reconstituted in heaven worlds. The harvesting provides the soul food for spiritual metabolism ensuing between death and a new earthly embodiment. Thus the wealth of this life's experiences shall be the inheritance we bequeath to



Fresco, 1816, Luigi Ademollo, Room of the Ark, (Palazzo Pitti), Florence

Transportation of the Ark of the Covenant

Led by the High Priest of the Temple, who carries a censer billowing clouds of aromatic incense, the solemn pageant processes into Jerusalem with the Ark, which contains the two tablets of the Law.

our future incarnate being.

The assay of what is reaped takes place during the panoramic retrospection immediately following death. This conscious inventory determines what soul-yield is transmitted to the Desire and Thought Worlds, which in turn determines the quality and vigor of the spiritual seeds for the ego's new earthly instruments.

To live esoterically is to transcend, at first in thinking, and eventually in full spirit-consciousness, the restrictions of time and space. The Rosicrucian student practices the activities of soul-planting and soul-harvesting on a daily basis. He plants toward his future being during waking life in the physical body through the intentional deeds of right thinking, right feeling, and right willing. Each night he mentally gathers and stores in the granary of memory the results of the day's activities. Much as a quality con-

trol technician on an assembly line, he focuses on the passage of the day's events with an observant inner eye, separating out the defective from the good grain and burning it in the fire of conscience.

A seasoned farmer's general rule of the green thumb is to plant at the new moon and harvest when the moon is full. So too does the aspirant who farms the soul's fields. This practice was first instituted with the new and full moon observances in the ancient Tabernacle in the Wilderness. The previous fortnight's deeds done while in the body were then brought to the Holy Place, and a spiritual extract was made from the daily loaves of processed experiences. This extract was symbolized by the smoke of incense, the quintessence of the shewbread, both of which were thanksgiving offerings to the Lord, Who is the God that is encountered in the candidate's Holy of Holies, expressed by the words, "I and the Father are one."

As the aroma of the shewbread is the only harvest the human spirit takes with it into the heaven worlds, it is clear that much of our earthly experience is *not* spiritually nourishing. An interesting experiment could be devised to measure all the substances (solid, fluid, and gas) taken into and eliminated from the human dense body. The sum of each would be found to be nearly equivalent. That is, most of our ingested daily bread becomes ash; very little is retained by the body. The ability of saints to live on virtually nothing but the "word" of God, on etheric food, prefigures the time when we shall breathe our food, which nutritious breath will be processed by the pituitary gland.

We are planted in this world, rooted in the soil of physical experience so that the flower and fruit of spiritual faculties can here be developed. And only here can this take place. Not in heaven. God cannot give it. Rather do we give it to macrocosmic God and to the God in our individual being.

We remain bound to the world until the world no longer binds us, until we have developed within ourselves everything that can here be gained. We can only be useful collaborators in other worlds by acquiring the requisite faculties in this physical world. Our previous lives and experiences are gleanings whose fruits nourish and fortify our present endeavors, making possible not mere

perpetuation, but a qualitative improvement, the spiritualizing of consciousness.

Such is the human view. But what of God and the host of heavenly Beings? Our thanksgiving is food for the gods, their ambrosia. Our experience is nutriment for creative Hierarchies who have rayed substance of their very being into humanity. So are we constituted. We are condensations of cosmic forces, we are crystallized starlight. Our energies originate in heavenly impulses. What we do with these energies, our broadcasting of these forces in the fields of human endeavor, has a cosmic impact, promoting the evolution of all those Beings who are participating in the "the human experiment."

This human-suprahuman symbiosis explains the occult fact that while the sun-centered Copernican conception of the Cosmos is correct from a material standpoint, the earth-centered Ptolemaic universe is true for those worlds above the physical plane. Humanity's growth in spiritual consciousness advances the evolution of cosmic powers.

While plants grow by virtue of etheric forces, they can only regenerate by being blessed, in a figurative laying on of hands, by the approach of Desire World forces, which initiate the flowering and fruiting process and the resultant seed formation. So it is with humans. We live not by physical bread alone, nor, as *homo sapiens*, by the bread of thought or *manas*. Our spiritual regeneration requires life spirit; specifically, the Christ life described in the Prologue of the Gospel of John as the life of the Word, which is the light of the world.

If we humans make harvest of the visible sun for our material livelihood, for our spiritual well-being we make harvest of the Christ Impulse. And that Impulse has inoculated the entire substance of this planet. Over eons of time, since the Fall of man into generation, the field of the earth had become increasingly insupportable for contacting the worlds of Spirit. But through the revivifying blood of the crucified Christ Jesus, the earth sphere has once again been made fertile for attaining to spiritual experience in full waking consciousness.

Many Gospel parables are based on organic metaphors that vividly and powerfully describe human reliance on the Christ life. He said, "I am the vine." He also said, "I am the bread of life."

These two sayings identify the world eucharist, by which the body and the spirit of mankind and its earth are continuously rejuvenated. The parallel between a farmer working the earth and Christ cultivating the receptive soul is developed by the English poet John Masefield toward the end of his long poem “The Everlasting Mercy”:

*O patient eyes that watch the goal,
O ploughman of the sinner’s soul.
O Jesus, drive the coulter deep
To plough my living man from sleep...
And as I drove the clods apart
Christ would be ploughing in my heart,
Through rest-harrow and bitter roots,
Through all my bad life’s rotten fruits...
And we will walk the weeded field,
And tell the golden harvest’s yield,
The corn that makes the holy bread
By which the soul of man is fed,
The holy bread, the food unpriced,
Thy everlasting mercy, Christ.*

Biblical Paradise is pictured as a self-sustaining garden in which Adam and Eve had the pleasant assignment of effortlessly gathering its fruits. This describes a passive, if idyllic, existence. Living in uninterrupted etheric consciousness, Edenic humanity was not conscious of death and was in continuous communion with the gods. Goaded to willful and self-centered behavior through the infusion of Luciferic influences, early man harvested an impermissible fruit, resulting in a fortunate fall to material consciousness—a covert blessing, providing the opportunity to know freedom through knowledge of good and evil, and to choose one’s destiny in fully awake consciousness.

Disease and death express the fact that the original supersensible world of early humanity reached a point beyond which it could not progress by itself. Universal death would have overtaken it, had it not received a fresh life-impulse. From the remnants of a dying, rigid world there sprouted the seeds of a new one. The decaying portion of the old world adheres to the new life blossoming from it, even as new life in the physical body is immediately offset by anti-life processes. Thus does evolution slowly progress.



Orthodox icon of unknown provenance

Christ as Sower of the Word

The crucifixion is a figure for the collision of life-giving etheric forces and form-destroying desire impulses, whose interaction creates consciousness. The human physical body is gathered from remnants of the old world, but with this sheath the germ of a new being is matured, which will live in the future.

Man’s task is precisely to gather the fruits of the mortal for the immortal, or, to use the Apostle Paul’s language, from the terrestrial we extract a quintessence for the celestial. The corruptible is the ground for cultivating the incorruptible. Here is the metaphor for spiritual alchemy, for Christian self-transformation. We have in us the elements of a decaying world, but we can break their power by new immortal elements coming to life in us.

Indeed, we may thank the mortal, the dying world for the powers it impels us to unfold, just as we may thank our personal pain and suffering, which mature into a harvest of wisdom. Yes, suffering is a consequence of past misdeeds and nondoing. But it is also a cause that will have fruitful effects. It gives occasion to insight and ennoblement. It is a purifier, a focuser, an updriver, a spur towards Godwardness. Illness itself may be viewed as the efflorescence of dying portions of the past. Bitter fruit, perhaps. But also the means by which spiritual wholeness is restored and transfigured.

Among the many agrarian parables in the Gospels, the parable of the sower is especially relevant to the line we are pursuing. In this extended metaphor we may naturally be inclined to identify ourselves with the good ground that yielded fruit. But few if any of us are not at times so preoccupied with worldly concerns that the ever-sounding creative word cannot take root in our consciousness. Likewise, whenever we take an irrationally entrenched position on a matter, or are prejudiced by the outward aspect of a person or issue, the seed of creative understanding and a new opportunity for soul growth falls on the rocky soil of a hard heart or a closed mind. In a rush of momentary enthusiasm, we may embrace a spiritual truth, only to leave it deprived of further attention, and so it withers and perishes. The truths about the kingdom of heaven may be choked out by the vigorous weeds of materialistic thinking, or be consumed by the birds that represent scoffing skepticism, or scattered by vagrant gusts of mere curiosity.

The parable of the enemy that sows the tares refers to those spirits who seek to harness human thinking to their own purposes, and are constantly flashing thoughts before our mind's eye to divert and deter our rightful progress. Generally, the less awake and aware we are, the more we leave unprotected the ground of consciousness to receive these tares. That is the significance of the enemy sowing at night, or at those times when we are not vigilant and spiritually informed.

At the final harvest of Earth evolution, what St. Matthew describes as "the end of the world" (13:39), and elsewhere is called the Last Judgment, the lambs will be separated from the goats, the wheat will be separated from the tares. The children of the Kingdom, by having sought

and used opportunities for development in the physical realm (the "field" of the world), shall pass on to the Earth's next planetary embodiment, Jupiter, in their etheric bodies. The children of "the wicked one" (Matt. 13:38), the goats and tares, will occupy a lunar satellite of Jupiter as laggards who will still to be able to join their more evolved brethren, if they change their ways and make the necessary advances.

As for those egos now ripe for the good news of esoteric Christian teachings, we may cite the view of the religion's Founder Who, two thousand years ago, saw multitudes seeking but not knowing what they sought. To His disciples he said, "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few" (Matt. 9:37). So it is today. Those ripe for the knowledge of the science of spirit are numerous, but they are not hearing the right word. Rosicrucian Christianity has that word. Max Heindel has something to tell us on this point: "If we hoard the spiritual blessings we have received, evil is at our door. So...let us bring forth in the physical world of action the fruits of the spirit sown in our souls." (*Teachings of an Initiate*, p. 102)

The act of thanksgiving is always appropriate in and of itself. It vivifies and elevates the heart, directs it toward the Source of all being, and must call down continuous favor from the supersensible worlds, because, as a form of self-emptying, it is an irresistible invitation for spiritual beings to fill that emptiness with divine influences. Thanksgiving cultivates the soil of our soul, making it fertile for new creative impulses emanating from these spiritual beings.

Thanksgiving is ever appropriate; it cuts through the tendency to self-satisfaction; it bursts the bubble of self-esteem which promotes the mortal person and demeans the one God from Whom *all* blessings flow. Thanksgiving clears a path to the Giver of life. More than commemorating the ongoing harvest of experience as wisdom and soul growth, thanksgiving *invokes* this harvest by deepening the communion between the original Giver and the thanks-giver, bringing the sons and daughters of God into increasing attunement with the inner Christ and, through Him, our heavenly Father. □

—C.W.

Symbology of Christmas

DEEP IN THE HEART of humanity exists the mystic yearning implanted within it at the first Christmastide when the Light of Man made definite place for Itself within and upon this dense earth planet.

The word *Christmas* is derived from the Latin medieval term *Christe Masse*, the Mass of Christ.

The story of the Christ birth is for the Occident what the birth of Krishna is for the Orient. Whether literally, mystically, or symbolically understood, or all these ways in one, it brings to man fundamental truth which, as his Spirit faculties unfold and function to perceive and accept such truth, raises his entire being to a height not reached hitherto.

“No man cometh to the Father save by Me,” carries a transcendent meaning to the spiritual aspirant. Parsifal inquires, “Who is the Grail?” and the reply indicates high spiritual perception:

“If thou hast by him been bidden,
From thee the truth will not be hidden.
The land to Him no path leads through,
And search but severs from Him wider
When He Himself is not the Guider.”

A true interpretation of the Christmas legend necessitates first of all an understanding—however dim it may be at first—that the birth of the Christ Child in the manger in the stable among the animals, symbolizes the first faint upspringing of the Christ consciousness in animal man. The tiny indwelling flame which *is* the Christ flame has been hitherto dormant in the human constitution. It now receives sufficient stimulus to enable it to grow and enlarge until eventually the Spirit makes itself a potent factor in the life of the individual



William Blake (1757-1827), Illustration for Milton's "On the Morning of Christ's Nativity," Nativity Ode 6, 1809, 25.5 x 19.3 cm, Whitworth Art Gallery, University of Manchester

The Night of Peace

Blake envisions the Nativity as both intimate and local and cosmic. A birth sanctuary is created by angel wings (energies) On high shines the guiding star as jubilant angels make music.

and the first step toward the Father by way of the Christ is taken.

The Ego-self has taken note of its expressing vehicle, the personal man, and has vivified it, so that among the “animals” of the lower nature of man, in the manger or feeding place of the animal faculties, is born the wee babe of the Christic self. Always the manger or cradle of the Christ Child is a place of sanctuary.

A great solar manifestation comes into fruition at Christmas. Groups of forces composing this manifestation have been personalized down through the ages. The Biblical story properly interpreted

contains a near approximation of the actual truth.

The entire story of Christmas is a universal symbol. It is found in all accounts of Avataric births in all races and nations. Krishna, Mithra, Horus, Orpheus, Hermes, as well as many heroes, gods, and saviors, were born in “mangers,” wrapped in swaddling clothes, visited by Wise Men bearing gifts, worshiped by shepherds, and shone as Stars of Redeeming Light for their peoples and nations.

December twenty-fifth is the date of birth of the physical light bringer in nature, the sun. Jesus, representative of the Universal Christ, Light of the World, is the spiritual light bringer to mankind, and His birthdate should properly be the solar date of the sun’s birth. December twenty-fifth, as the birthday of Jesus, was first celebrated some 200 years after the actual event.

Many myths since dim antiquity concern the mystic Christ birth. Whether born in a cave, a stable, or elsewhere in a literal sense, the birth has two great symbolic meanings: (1) The birth of Love—Goodwill to men. The giving of a new law to mankind. “Love ye one another.” “Love is the fulfilling of the Law.” (2) The birth of the Christic consciousness in the Spirit of man—of all men who aspire to the heights of spiritual truth. No true argument can controvert this universal truth.

In its Cosmic sense, the birth signifies the descent of the Divine Light, Spirit penetrating and permeating matter. In the human sense it refers to the descent of the Son of God (spiritual Light) into matter, descent of the Spirit into the physical body.

Like all great spiritual teachings this one concerning the origin and celebration of Christmas has been perverted and commercialized through greed and selfishness.

Christmas Eve, December 24-25, is considered the Holy Night of the whole year because spiritual influences are strongest on this midnight. In the Mysteries, the candidate through spiritual vision saw the mystic Star of Bethlehem that shone on Holy Night, which guided him onward and upward. In his heart echoed the deathless and prophetic song—“On earth peace, Goodwill toward men.” “Rejoice, ye children of earth, for unto you is born this day a King”—the Seraphs sang on that long ago Holy Night.

At Sunrise

Soul of mine, the sun is rising,
Glorifying sky and sea.
Hear the wild birds improvising
Madrigals from roof and tree.
Sun of Glory, rise in me.

Rise in me, illuminating
All I meet upon the way.
Rise in all men, radiating
Light and love and peace, I pray.
Rise in all mankind today.

—Irene Stanley

The beautiful custom in Britain of the Yule log was kept in ancient times. It first became a public ceremony in 1577. *Yule* is a Germanic word meaning Christmas. Large candles were lighted on Christmas Eve and a large oak log was laid upon the fire to illuminate the house. It was thought that the remains of the Yule log would protect the house against fire and lightning if kept throughout the year.

The Christmas tree is itself a universal symbol. It originated in Egypt in the worship of the Goddess Isis at a period long antedating the Christian era. A palm tree with twelve short shoots, to represent the twelve months of the year, was used in Egypt at the time of the winter solstice. In northern climes, instead of a palm, a fir tree was used. The origin of exchanging gifts occurred in early medieval days. In some countries the custom of foretelling the future from cakes is celebrated on Christmas Eve.

Gifts were brought to the birth of Jesus who was born in a manger—precious gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Spiritual power, love-wisdom, and intelligence were poured upon the newborn child, the Christic Light atom in the human heart; the babe in its mother’s arms, the great earth mother which carries, nurtures, and preserves the tiny life vehicle. These gifts (qualities) were showered by the glorious Magi of the Cosmic realms, who bless and enrich each individual spiritual birth. These powers, en rapport with and irradiated by the silver light of the splendid Christic Star, pour

into weak and suffering humanity their stimulating light and strength without which man's evolutionary course would be far more difficult and prolonged.

The Magi—High Initiates—were drawn to the Holy Place by their inner perception and knowledge of the Cosmic event pending, the birth of a world Savior. The three Wise Men represent those of higher earthly prominence brought together in their common purpose from the primary races of the earth. Their gifts signify the various elements entering into the process of manifestation. They are led by the glorious Star to the World Savior, to Jesus, the body form which was to be a vehicle for the Universal Christ Power.

He of India brought gold, mentioned in symbology as the emblem of the Spirit. We read of the alchemists of old trying to transmute base metal into gold, which is the occult way of saying that they wanted to purify the dense body, to refine it and extract the spiritual essence. He of Egypt brought frankincense or incense. It is a physical substance of a very light nature, often used in religious services. It serves as an embodiment for the ministering unseen forces, and thus symbolizes the physical body. He of Greece brought myrrh. It is the extract of a rare aromatic plant. It symbolizes that which man, the Spirit, extracts through experience in the physical world—the soul.

Mary, the mother, was the center of light, the crucible wherein the transmutation of the elements took place and gave the human touch needed to impress the ages yet to be.

The shepherds who saw the Star typify the appearance of Divine Fire as it came to those of the earth plane—the lowly of earth, but highly sensitized as to Spirit faculty, high in spiritual attainment. Their discernment enabled them to see the glory in the heavens and to feel the impulsion of the wondrous Star.

In one sense it was a material star. In a higher sense it was the flame of forces concentrated to bring into material manifestation a physical presentment of the Logos, a World Savior.

The earth was hushed. The air was hushed for it was concentrated on Bethlehem (birth) at that moment. Silence and solitude develop the discerning eye, the hearing ear, the sensitive Spirit.

Shall we not at Christmastide center our thought upon these truths?



Tempera on panel, 1485-1488, Domenico Ghirlandaio, Ospedale degli Innocenti, Florence

Adoration of the Magi

Meditate upon the true interpretation of the sublime Christmas legend, enlarging our knowledge and understanding, and center our effort upon an expanding power to serve? Celebrate Christmas by rendering to the Central Sun Glory the love and homage which is His right, and say with the Shepherds, “For we have seen his Star in the East, and have come to worship him”? He stands, pointing the Way, revealing the Truth, giving the Life; He, the Star of Light leading the Way to the Father. “For where I go, ye shall also go.” □

—Katharine Hillwood Poor

The Higher Stages of the Passion— Cross-Bearing

IN THE PRECEDING Chapter [three previous *Rays* articles], we studied Foot-washing, Scourging, and Crowning with Thorns as principles of the Christian Rosicrucian method, as karmic necessities, and as events of the spiritual history of the future. The subject was treated from the point of view (of course, it might be treated from many points of view) of the adjustment of relationship between above and below, right and left, frontal and dorsal. Now, in order to apply this method of study to the further stages of the Passion, it is necessary to understand the inner connection between the first three and the fourth.* For the Cross-bearing results from the simultaneous experience of Foot-washing, Scourging, and Crowning with Thorns.

As the *Cross* comprises all those Space-relationships of which we were speaking in connection with the first three stages of the Passion, so are those three stages comprehended in the stage of Cross-bearing. For the “Cross” which is to be carried is nothing other than the man himself. It is he who has formed within himself a cruciform system of currents: the currents of Foot-washing, Scourging, and Crowning with Thorns. And this gives the man a new experience, which is at the same time a further test. For up to this stage in his evolution, he had always felt himself enlightened, strengthened, carried by the Spirit.

Now a fundamental change takes place. He now experiences within himself a higher, spiritual man interpenetrating him in the form of the currents of the Cross. But this higher, spiritual man does not



Oil on wood panel, Marco Palmezzano, Pinacoteca, Vatican Museums

Christ Bearing the Cross

In its fullest sense, this phase of the Passion represents the human personality bearing both “the Radiant Cross of the higher man, and the dark Cross of the bodily organization.”

carry him as he had felt himself carried by the Spirit before. On the contrary, he feels that it is he who must carry the higher man within him. The ordinary lower man experiences within himself the higher, spiritual “brother,” and throughout the whole course of his spiritual destiny he hears the voice of the command: Thou shalt be thy brother’s keeper (guardian).

But this command means that the man must feel himself the sheath and bearer of the other. His

*Used by permission of Anthroposophic Press, Hudson NY 12534

experience is that he must surrender all the fruits of his toilsome work in acquiring knowledge on Earth and of his earthly deeds to the other who, however, does not give the fruits of his spiritual experience and his spiritual capacity to the lower man, but places it at the service of humanity. He also experiences that the higher man within him perpetually lays bare his inadequacies and imperfections. He experiences, in fact, that this man in the form of the Cross of Light causes the lower man to appear to his own consciousness as the earthly Cross of Darkness. The bodily organism now appears to be a wooden, dead organism, which seems in the highest degree ill-adapted for the reception of the Spirit.

Thus, the human, personal consciousness stands between two Crosses: the Radiant Cross of the higher man, and the dark Cross of the bodily organization, both of which must be carried. In this situation, an inner resentment arises in Man, a feeling of protest, which cannot fail to set in. This resentment may come to a point in either of two directions: in the direction of the higher man or in the direction of the human organism. Prompted by resentment, the personal consciousness may say to itself: "Am I my brother's keeper?" And an urge may make itself felt in the personal consciousness to cast off the Cross of the higher man within, that is, to "kill his brother."

On the other hand, the personal consciousness may acquire a deep aversion to itself, regarding itself as a Philistine in body, temperament and character. A self-hatred may spring up in the man, which may lead to murder, as surely as indignation against the higher man. For the temptation arises to cast off the Cross of earthly personality, which then appears eminently unprofitable, commonplace and cowardly.

Until we have had experience of these trials, we shall never understand in its full significance what went on in the depths, for instance, of the souls of the two great suicides of the nineteenth century—in the souls of Friedrich Nietzsche and of Otto Weininger. For Friedrich Nietzsche committed spiritual suicide by "killing" the higher, Christian man within him—that is, by casting off the shining Cross. And Otto Weininger could not endure

himself as an earthly being—and laid the dark Cross down by actually committing self-murder.

These tragic figures are cited here not merely to show the earnestness of the Cross-bearing Trial, but also because an understanding of these catastrophes as a definite test which was not withstood is the chief service which we are bound to render to those who experience them. But the test which was *not* withstood by these men consisted essentially in developing the relationship to the bright Cross and the dark Cross, which is indicated in the words: "Love thy neighbor as thyself."

These "simple" words contain, in truth, a further fundamental principle of the Christian Rosicrucian method of Initiation. This method entails the unavoidable demand to strive to practically solve the problem "love of humanity—love of self." This must be striven for such that man protects the higher man—which lives for humanity—in as loving a manner as he cares for the lower man. This means that he carries the bright Cross not out of duty, but out of love, and that he strives to lighten the dark Cross through patient and unforced educative work, such as is possible only out of love. Man must not be loveless towards his own psychophysical organism, and, on the other hand, he must not feel his relationship with the higher man, who is oriented towards humanity, as a mere duty.

But the path leading to a balance between these two poles is the personal consciousness which stands between the two Crosses, learning to share the higher man's love of humanity so that his neighbor becomes as dear to him as his own being, and affirming his own being—that is, his earthly personality—because that is the only way in which he can manifest his love to his neighbor.

The neighbor—that is, he who stands nearest—is thus the school in which, on the one hand, he learns love of man, and on the other, preserves his own self-love for new reasons. For love is not a quantity; learning it at one point makes it possible to vibrate in unison with the radiation of the higher man within towards the universal; and, on the other hand, no one will be cold to his own being when he has received his neighbor unconditionally into the warmth of his heart.

Thus Man has to develop, waken, and maintain

three kinds of love at the same time: the spiritual man's universal love of humanity; the love of one's neighbor; and the love of one's own earthly personality. When a man makes a reality of this—that is, when he fills spirit, soul and body with love—there remains no room within him for hatred; however imperfect his love may be, yet his being has no room for hate.

As the Crowning with Thorns was the victory over Shame and Fear, so the Carrying of the Cross is the definite victory over Hatred in the form of resentment against what is higher, and aversion to what is commonplace. When hate has been overcome in the spirit of the principle, “Love thy neighbor as thyself,” then a cooperation in love between body, soul and spirit will have been achieved. A harmony of the three parts of the human being sets in—and this harmony is both the fruit of passing the Cross-bearing trial, and also the fulfillment of a fundamental demand of Christian Rosicrucian occultism. For the method of this occultism depends on the principle of harmony between spirit, soul and body.

Other spiritual currents set up either the spirit of asceticism—that is, the denial of the Body—or the principle of the supremacy of the earthly personality—that is, the denial of the Spirit. Yet the personality must follow the Spirit if it is not to be entirely consigned to what is transitory.

The purity striven after on the path of Christian training does not consist in subjecting human nature, but in ennobling it. The more freely earnestness and courage flow into the human nature, the more clearly can it be learned that actually all human faculties may offer service to the great work of Goodness. And the freedom of the human being on this path consists in his learning to love his spiritual duty.

These experiences of Cross-bearing, which a man may meet on the paths of spiritual training and destiny, confront mankind during that epoch of the future in which “white” humanity will stand in opposition to Ahrimanic humanity. By that time, however, this opposition by white humanity will be characterized not only by fidelity to truth, but by a realization of responsibility to the other part of mankind. That section of mankind which has fallen a prey to darkness will be borne by them as



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

their Cross.

At the same time, each individual will be inwardly penetrated by the cruciform rays of the spiritual man borne by all. For that “white” section of humanity will take upon itself, then, the task of the Angel—performing for Ahrimanic mankind a service similar to that which the Guardian Angel performs for Man today. On the other hand, it will bear within itself the higher man—taking the place of the Guardian Angel. But the higher man will so represent the Guardian Angel that he will not overshadow Man, but will be actually present within him as an incorporated being.

And as the result of this incorporation, the higher man will, to a certain extent, be given over to the personal man. He will entrust himself to the latter so that the latter will be his “keeper.” For mankind will always have to experience Cross-bearing in the history of the world, and thereby will learn to overcome hatred and to establish the harmony of body, soul and spirit. (Continued) □

—Valentin Tomberg

The Mystic Message of Christmas

CHRISTMAS BELLS! Have you ever felt their magic in childhood days before doubt crept into your heart and shattered the ideals inculcated by the church? The same bell rang for church on Sundays and for prayer meeting at mid-week, but there was a different ring at Christmas, something unusually festive, something which we now attribute to childish imagination. We miss this something, however much we may congratulate ourselves upon emancipation from what we are pleased to term "the mummeries of the church."

Wordsworth, in his "Ode to Immortality," voiced the keen feeling of regret due to loss of childish ideals; nothing the world has to give can take their place, and however we may be blessed with material wealth we are truly poor when the "glamour" of youth has gone and intellectual conceptions stifle such so-called "superstitions."

Paul exhorted us to be always ready with a reason for our faith, and there is a mystic reason for many practices of the church which have been handed down from hoary antiquity. The sounding of the bell when the candle is lit upon the altar was inaugurated by spiritually illumined seers to teach the cosmic unity of light and sound. The metal tongue of the bell brings Christ's mystic message to mankind as clearly today as when He first enunciated the graceful invitation: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Thus the bell is a symbol of Christ, "The Word," when it calls us from work to worship before the illuminated altar where He meets us as "The Light of the World."



Oil on canvas (16 ft. x 12 ft.), Edwin Howland Blashfield (1848-1936), Brooklyn Museum

Christmas Bells

Also the particularly festive feeling awakened by the Christmas bells is produced by cosmic causes active at this time of the year, and the present season is holy in very truth as we shall presently see. Those who study the stars know the signs of the zodiac as a cosmic sounding board, each sign vibrant with a particular quality; and as the marching orbs travel in kaleidoscopic procession from sign to sign in ever varying combination, the chords of cosmic harmony known to mystics as the "song of the spheres" sound a never ending anthem of prayer and praise to the Creator. This is not a fanciful idea but an actual fact patent to the seer, and capable of demonstration to thinkers by its effects.

The harmony of the spheres is not a monotone;



Stained glass (detail), ca. 1521. Master of St Severin, Lower Rhine, Germany

Scenes from the Nativity

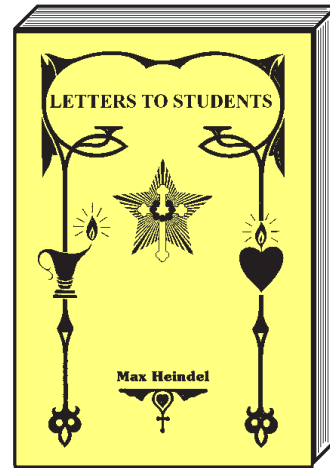
it varies from day to day and from month to month as sun and planets pass from sign to sign in their orbits. There are also yearly epochal variations due to precession of the equinoxes. Thus there is infinite variety in the song of the spheres, as indeed there must be, for this constant change of spiritual vibration is the basis of spiritual and physical evolution. Were it to cease even an instant, Cosmos would be resolved to Chaos.

For demonstration, observe the nature and quality of the love life poured through the Christ-star, the sun, when it transits the belligerent sign of Aries, the Ram, in spring. Sex love is the keynote of nature; all its energies are applied in generation; then the passional propensities run riot. Compare this with the effect of the sun during December when it is focused through the benevolent Sagittarius, ruled by the planet Jupiter. Its ray is then conducive to religion and philanthropy; the air is vibrant with generosity, and the love life of the Christ-star finds its highest expression through this congenial sign. Outwardly reigns the gloom of winter, for the visible symbol of "The Light of the World" has been obscured; but on the darkest night of the year Christmas chimes evoke a ready response to the Christmas feeling which makes the whole world akin, children of our Father in Heaven.

May the mystic music of the Christmas chimes awaken the tenderest chord in your heart, and may the keynote of joy be uppermost in your being during the coming year—this is the Christmas wish of the workers on Mt. Ecclesia. □

Letters To Students

By Max Heindel



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READERS' QUESTIONS

A Shortcut to Heaven?

Mother Love as a Factor in Materialization Post-Mortem Fate of Vivisectors

QUESTION: *SOME WRITERS seem to teach that it is possible to go straight from the physical world to the higher spiritual world without having to pass through the lower region of the Desire World, thus escaping all the noisome sights which are peculiar to that region. You, on the other hand, always speak as if it is necessary to pass through every realm of Nature in succession*

Answer: We are well aware that some people make statements as above relative to the transition from the physical to the higher spiritual realms by way of what they learnedly call “the atomic sub-planes,” and for guidance as to who is right we can only refer you to the Law of Analogy—“As above so below”—which is the master-key to all mysteries, spiritual or physical, for the law is one, in whatever realm of Nature we investigate. You know that it is impossible for a diver to get to the bottom of the sea without starting at the surface and descending through the intervening water; it is also evident that it is impossible for an airplane to ascend above the clouds without first passing through the intervening space of air between the earth and the clouds.

The soul after death also gradually ascends through the various spiritual realms to the Third Heaven and at the time of rebirth it gradually descends through the Region of Concrete Thought, the Desire World and the Ether to physical rebirth. These are facts known to many who have investigated and beyond dispute or argument to the occult scientist as much as it is beyond argument to the

material scientist that the earth moves on its axis, and anyone who contends otherwise is simply mistaken.

Nor does the writer say this solely upon the basis of his own experience, for he is acquainted with hundreds of others who possess the ability of functioning outside the body in the various spiritual realms. He has never expressly discussed this phase of super-physical experience with any of them, but their repeated reference to things which happened to different ones when passing through the lower realms of the Desire World and the Ether make him feel certain that none of his acquaintances have ever mounted to the higher realms of the Desire World or the Region of Concrete Thought without first passing through the Ether and the lower strata of the Desire World, the Purgatorial Region.

Furthermore, even if there were such a short-cut as that mentioned from the physical world to the higher spiritual realms do you think that one of God's helpers would ever make use of it for the sake of escaping the noisome sights seen and the suffering to be found there? Most assuredly not! The Christ never turned in disgust from a leper or anyone else in sorrow and in affliction. He always sought them out in order that He might heal and help them.

What good do you think there is, and what work do you think an Invisible Helper can do in the First Heaven and the Region of Concrete Thought, where there is no sorrow, suffering and misery, but where all is happiness and joy? There he is not needed by any means. His work lies in the very

regions which these writers profess to be able to skip and if there were such a short-cut as mentioned no true Invisible Helper would ever want to make use of it. But as a matter of fact there is no such byway to Heaven.

MOTHER LOVE AS A FACTOR IN MATERIALIZATION

Question: *Is it possible for a mother who has passed into the invisible world to help her children directly or indirectly? Does she make hands of flesh with which to work, or in what way does she aid them?*

Answer: The Society for Psychical Research has investigated a number of cases where it has been shown that the mother has materialized in order to save her small children from disaster or accidents. There is no doubt that many young mothers are earth-bound for a long time by the love they bear their small and helpless children. We feel certain that if they were able they would often manifest to give them help and comfort, but the seed atom having been ruptured at the time of death, they are not able to draw to themselves even the most attenuated gaseous matter that would make them visible, except in a very few cases where the need is so great that it begets in the mother a desire of such dynamic intensity that for a moment or two it compels the physical atoms to marshal themselves into her body and enables her to do that which she desires.

Thus she performs a magical feat, without knowing how she has done it, and of course she cannot repeat it unless it happens under similar circumstances.

In this respect the people who have passed into the invisible worlds differ radically from the Invisible Helpers who leave their body at will. The silver cord is intact in their case, and this gives them a continuous connection with the physical seed atom. Its magnetism is therefore exerted and it requires a subconscious effort on the part of the Invisible Helper to keep the physical particles from flowing into the etheric vehicle in which he travels.

On the other hand, when he desires to aid anyone who may be in distress or to perform a certain work, he materializes a hand or an arm with the

greatest of ease simply by allowing the physical atoms in his closest environment to flow into the etheric matrix.

When he has performed the desired task, another effort of thought scatters the strange atoms and dematerializes the hand or arm. Thus, for instance, when working inside the body of a patient to manipulate a diseased organ or stanch the blood in an artery, fingers are made temporarily from the flesh of the patient without causing him the least discomfort, and are as readily dissolved when the work is done.

POST-MORTEM FATE OF VIVISECTORS

Question: *Does a surgeon feel in Purgatory all the pains his patients have felt in the operations he has performed. This would seem unfair in cases of constructive surgery.*

Answer: Certainly not. The sufferings in Purgatory are the results of moral delinquencies, and the resentment of those who are injured thereby. A surgeon who performs a constructive operation is doing a service which merits the gratitude of the person operated upon and the picture of such an operation in the panorama of life will react upon him in the First Heaven with the gratitude of the person he helped. It will make him more ambitious to serve his fellow men.

On the other hand, those unscrupulous surgeons who persuade people to have operations performed for the love of experimentation, or who take them out of charitable institutions for that purpose will certainly be as severely dealt with as they deserve.

As for the vivisectionist's purgatory, we have seen some cases compared with which the orthodox hell with its devil and pitchfork is a place of mild amusement. Yet there are no exterior agents of outraged nature to punish such an one—only the agonies of the tortured animal contained in his life panorama reacting on him with threefold intensity (because the purgatorial existence is only one third the duration of the physical life).

Those people do not realize in the slightest degree what they are storing up for themselves, or the torture chambers would soon be emptied and there would be one less horror in the world. □

Miscellaneous Interpretations

Part 3

THE CHRISTIAN FEASTS

THE FEASTS OF THE YEAR have a very deep occult significance. From the material point of view, the planets are but so many masses of matter revolving in their orbits in obedience to so-called blind laws, but to the occultist they appear as Great Spirits, moving about in space as we move in the world.

When a man is seen gesticulating, we attach a certain significance to his gestures. If he shakes his head, we know that he is negating a certain proposition, but if he nods, we infer that he agrees. If he beckons, having the palms of his hands turned toward him, we know that he is motioning for someone to come to him, but if he turns the palms outward, we understand that he is warning someone to stay away. In the case of the universe, we usually do not think that there is any significance to the altered position of the planets, but to the occultist there is the very deepest meaning in all the varied phenomena of the heavens. They correspond to the gestures of man.

Krishna means anointed, and anyone who had a special mission to perform was so anointed in olden times. When, in the winter time, the Sun is below the equator at the nadir point of its travel, the spiritual impulses are the greatest in the world. For our material welfare, however, it is necessary that the Sun should come again into the northern hemisphere, and so we speak of the time when the sun starts upon its journey northward as Christmas, the birthday of the Savior, anointed to save us from



Tempera and oil on wood panel, Nicola Filotesio (c. 1480-1559), Picture Gallery, Vatican

The Assumption of the Virgin

The Feast of the Assumption is celebrated on August 15, when the Sun is in its dignity in the zodiacal sign of Leo.

the famine and cold which would ensue if he were to stay at the nadir point always.

As the Sun passes toward the equator, it goes through the sign Aquarius, the water-man. At that time the Earth is deluged with rain, symbolizing the baptism of the Savior. Then comes the passage of the Sun through the sign Pisces, the fishes, in the month of March. The stores of the past year have been all consumed, and the food of man is scant, hence we have the long fast of Lent, where the eating of fish symbolizes this feature of the

solar journey. Then comes the Passover, when the Sun passes over the equator. This is the time of Easter, when the Sun is at his eastern node, and this crossing of the equator is symbolized by the crossification or crucifixion, so called, of the Savior.

The Sun then goes into the sign of Aries, the Ram, and becomes the Lamb of God, which is given for the salvation of the world at the time when the plants begin to sprout. In order that the sacrifice may be of benefit to man, however, he (the Sun) must ascend into the heavens where his rays will have power to ripen the grape and the corn, and so we have the feast of Whitsunday and the Ascension of the Savior to the Throne of the Father, which is at the summer solstice in June. There the Sun remains for three days, when the saying "Thence he shall return" takes effect as the Sun commences his passage towards the western node.

Thence he passes into the sign Leo, the Lion of Judah, and we have the feast of the Assumption, on August 15, in Leo. Next he traverses the sign Virgo, the Virgin, the nativity of the virgin, who seems, as it were, to be born from the Sun.

The Jewish Feast of Tabernacles occurred at the time when the Sun was crossing the equator on its passage into the winter months, and this feast was accompanied by the weighing in of the corn and the harvest of the wine, which were the gifts of the solar God to his human worshipers. Thus all the feasts of the year are connected with the motions of the stars through space.

MELCHIZEDEK

We are told that Melchizedek was king of Salem and also a high priest. We are told that his priesthood was far above that of Aaron, for it was unchangeable, while that of Aaron and the Levites was subject to frequent change.

During the times of which we have record in history, there has been a division of the temporal and the ecclesiastical powers. Moses was the temporal



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

Abraham Meets Melchizedek

Artists have represented Abraham's meeting with the Atlantean Hierarch as a prefiguring of the Adoration of the Magi and a sign of the Christian Eucharist.

ruler and leader of the Jewish people, while Aaron was the priest who looked after their spiritual welfare. Down the ages this division of the church and the state has ever been apparent, at times causing great strife and bloodshed, for their interests seem ever to be diametrically opposite. However, at the time of this Melchizedek, king of Salem, which interpreted means "peace," there was no such division, the two offices were combined in one individual.

The story of Melchizedek, a being without earthly pedigree, refers, of course, to the time in early Atlantis when humanity had not yet been divided into warring nations, but were one vast, peaceful brotherhood, and the leaders of the people were Divine Beings, who were both kings and priests. The later division of the church and state has been one of the most fruitful sources of enmity and war among humanity, for each of these powers has striven for supremacy over the other. In reality there should be no prejudice, for no one who is not as spiritual as a priest should be is fit to rule as a king; and no one who is not as wise and just as a king should be is fit to have the spiritual guidance of humanity as have the priests.

When these qualities are combined in one leader again, the reign of universal peace and brotherhood will become a fact. The Christ has been heralded as such a leader, capable of uniting church and state as king and priest after the order of Melchizedek. His Second Coming inaugurates the millennium, the age of peace and joy, where the symbolical New Jerusalem, the city of peace (for *Jerusalem* means "there shall be peace,") reigns over the nations of the Earth, united into one universal brotherhood.

THE APOSTLES' CREED AND THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY

The Apostles' Creed was not composed until centuries after they had passed away, and then it was taken to embody what they had believed. Neither they nor the Bible teach the resurrection of the body. That phrase is not to be found in the Good Book at all. In King James' version we read that "though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God" (Job 19:26). This passage is the chief reliance of those who endeavor to establish that absurd doctrine. However, the translators appointed by King James were poor Hebrew scholars, and most of them died before the translation was completed. In the Revised Version you will find another interpretation as follows: "And after my skin, even this body, is destroyed; then without my flesh shall I see God."

Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God; therefore what in the world would be the use of having a body such as we have now? Furthermore, this body must be perpetuated at the present time, and we hear that in the resurrection there shall neither be marrying nor giving in marriage, another argument that shows that a vehicle of a different kind from the flesh will be used. Besides, it is a well-known, well-established scientific fact that the atoms in our bodies are constantly coming and going. Now, if there is to be a resurrection of the body, which set of atoms is to be that which shall come forth in this resurrection? Or, if every atom that ever was in our body from birth to death is to be in that resurrection body, would it not be an enormous conglomeration, for we should then have immense bodies composed of layers; in fact, it would be a scientific conundrum. Now, as Paul

says, the seed is put in the ground each time to gather a new body (I Cor. 15).

"Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."

The meaning of the Christ's words obviously rests upon the interpretation of the word "world." If by that word we understand the whole Earth, it may be right to send missionaries to foreign countries; but the Bible tells us that the disciples to whom the command was given returned after having accomplished their mission, showing that word of command could not have been meant to include the whole Earth. In this connection the word "world" should rather have been given the interpretation "polity," which will also be found in some of our dictionaries as another meaning for the word.

At the time of Christ people did not know the whole world. We find even to this day the westernmost cape of Spain called Finisterre—the end of the Earth. Therefore this term at the time when Christ spoke His command could not have included the whole Earth as we know it today. The statement is, therefore, not contrary to Bible teachings. It is wrong to send missionaries out to the people we call "heathen," for their development is as yet such that they cannot understand a religion which preaches love to one's neighbor, a religion which even we have not yet learned to practice.

Besides, if the great Recording Angels who have charge of man's evolution are capable of judging our needs, and placing each one in the environment where he will find the influences most conducive to progression, we must also believe that they have given to each nation the religion most salutary to its unfoldment.

Therefore, when a man has been placed in a country where the Christian religion is taught, that religion holds the ideal for which he should strive. But to try to force it upon other people who have been placed in a different sphere is to set our judgment up as greater than the judgment of God and His ministers, the Recording Angels. It is safest to rest in the religion of our country, to study and practice that, leaving to other nations the privilege of doing the same in respect to their own religions. □

—Max Heindel

ASTROLOGY

Horoscope Interpretation Part 3

IN LEARNING ASTROLOGY, we first apply ourselves to learning the general principles thereof; we learn the general idea of signs, houses, planets, aspects, qualities, dignities, etc. Then we concentrate our attention more specifically on each one of these factors and each part of each factor, until we have a good basic knowledge of what each part signifies. This is the involutory part of astrology, in which the student has gone from the whole to the parts. He started with a general understanding of astrology as a whole, and then, one by one, singled out each separate factor for careful examination.

After having gone through the involutory stage, the astrology student next earnestly begins to apply his knowledge to individual horoscopes. He tries to recombine the several separate factors in the horoscope according to the various placements and configurations found there, to arrive at a composite picture of the whole. This is the evolutionary part of astrology, in which the whole is built up out of the parts. Each piece is fitted together with the others, one at a time, as in a puzzle, until the complete picture appears.

But, as is so often said, the whole is more than the sum of the parts (though in astrology, the whole is built up out of a *synthesis* of the parts). In addition to involution and evolution, there is a third factor in the development of man—Epigenesis. This is the capacity to initiate something that did not exist previously as potential. It is the power to introduce new forces and new trends that are an outgrowth of past causes. It is the power that man has to change his future no matter what



Liber Diviorum Operum, Hildegarde von Bingen (1098-1179), Biblioteca Lucca, Florence

In one of her last visions, the medieval German mystic, Hildegarde von Bingen, perceives in spirit the "Wheel of the World" surrounded by the twelve creative hierarchies (four groups of three animal heads in cardinal directions)—all constituting the cosmic body of the Son, colored red in the original. The Father encompasses and unifies the totality.

the past may have been or the present may be. It is the power that can eventually raise man to the stature of the gods and free him from being the puppet of fate. It is creativity in the true sense. Epigenesis implies free will, and as discussed in the last *Ray's* article [September/October], this is exactly what the astrologer should be aiming to awaken in people. The will is generally strengthened as a direct function of evolutionary progress,

for greater self-mastery brings more power to choose as the Spirit *wills* and not as the lower self desires. The astrologer who follows the natural law of evolution in his horoscope interpretation stimulates people's consciousness accordingly and, thus, makes it possible for them to exercise more Epigenesis.

The more self-knowledge a person has and the more knowledge he has of the choices that he must face, the more self-control he will be able to exercise, the more intelligently he will be able to choose, and the more possibility he will have to *make entirely fresh choices that were not indicated previously*. Astrologers, take note! To help a person understand himself and to help him be an individual is to help him be more creative and more free. Such is the mission of the true astrologer.

To do a horoscope interpretation that moves from the whole to the parts creates a background impression of being "taken apart." This does not create a great deal of discomfort for many people because that is similar to the line of involution which they have followed in the past, and of which they are therefore most conscious. For the same reason, this method seems to many astrologers to be more comfortable and easier to use.

To do an interpretation from the parts to the whole creates a background impression of being "put together," which for several reasons can be somewhat uncomfortable for both the astrologer and the person he is helping. First, it is relatively unfamiliar to our consciousness, and therefore, requires a more creative effort on the part of both the astrologer and the person—effort that we are often reluctant to make. Second, we are so used to having our lives divided into separate parcels that it is sometimes a bit disquieting to feel the insulation being removed. But this second method is the one most productive of the kind of results that the spiritually-minded astrologer wants to produce.

It is understandable why the method of interpreting horoscopes from the parts to the whole (henceforth called the "evolutionary method") has fallen into some disfavor as of late, aside from the above reason. Just as it is not possible to have evolution without preceding involution, so also it is not possible to use the evolutionary method of

chart interpretation with much success until the necessary involutory work has been done. A good basic grasp of signs, planets, houses, aspects, elements, qualities, horoscope calculations, etc., must be in place before any serious attempt at interpretation can be made.

Aha! Now *there* is the sticking point. In the past there has not been enough clear understanding of the difference between the several astrological factors and their several parts. A whole cannot be built up of the parts until those parts are first entirely separated from each other so that they may be recombined according to the proper design.

So often, definitions are given that list different qualities without making clear any real qualitative differences. When the astrologer tries to put such definitions together in interpreting a horoscope, he first has to wrestle with a cumbersome list of qualities; if he manages that, he ends up with such a confusion of contradictions and unrelated statements that only the most persevering and imaginative of people can make a success of it.

A builder who constructs buildings from scratch has a limitless choice of designs, while the one who uses prefabricated materials is extremely limited in what he can do because certain parts are already attached to certain other ones in specific ways, and he is therefore limited by the design of the one who devised the prefabrication.

So much of what has been handed down by traditional astrology is prefabrication, designed on the concepts of group consciousness, in which everyone fits into a similar mold. Certain astrological concepts have been attached to certain other ones in definite patterns which may have been perfectly valid and applicable in the past, but which are less and less suitable as we move toward the Aquarian Age. The development of the individual demands the development of individual patterns. The old prefabrications must be disassembled so that in getting down to the basic building blocks, we will be free to build up any individual whole which the pattern of the horoscope calls for. Examples of prefabricated notions in astrology can be found in the blur among signs, houses, and planets, in which, for instance, such notions as "the first house equals Aries equals Mars." While these

three factors may have a definite relationship to one another, they signify entirely different viewpoints.

In previous articles of this series, we have tried to make distinctions that would avoid such confusions as the above. However, we realize that these efforts are at best feeble and not at all entirely adequate or complete. We hope that other astrologers of a spiritual bent will be able to improve upon them in their own applications of the principles given here.

To get a clearer picture of how to interpret the chart, let us consider more closely how a building is constructed, and then draw the proper analogy to a horoscope interpretation.

First, the architect ascertains the need for a building and then draws up blueprints of an appropriate nature. He next contracts various phases of the work to different craftsmen. Each craftsman contributes his skill to the construction of the building, adding to what the previous one has done and preparing the way for what the next one will do. Finally, the building is finished and ready for occupancy.

First, the astrologer ascertains the need of one who comes to him for an interpretation, requesting a written statement of his reasons. Then, he draws up appropriate plans; which is to say, he calculates the horoscope. Next, he calls on the craftsmen; meaning that he calls on his knowledge of the several astrological factors and fits them together according to the pattern of the horoscope. Each factor builds upon the previous one and prepares the way for the one to follow. Finally, the interpretation is complete and ready for the person to take and act upon.

Now let us be more specific. Assuming the calculations done, the method of building the parts into a whole is as follows: the planets are first con-

sidered separately, as they are the motivating forces in the horoscope. Each planet will tell what facet of character is being considered, such as inner strength of character (Sun), mode of thought (Mercury), mode of feeling (Venus), etc. The sign

position of each planet will tell in what manner each facet of character (planet) basically is being influenced.

The house position of each planet will show in what area of life the particular facet of character (planet) that is being influenced (sign) will be most active. Along with each particular planet, consider if there are any planets in the sign that it rules and what house or houses that sign covers.

This will show what additional forces are affected by the first planet, and in what additional areas it tends to operate strongly.

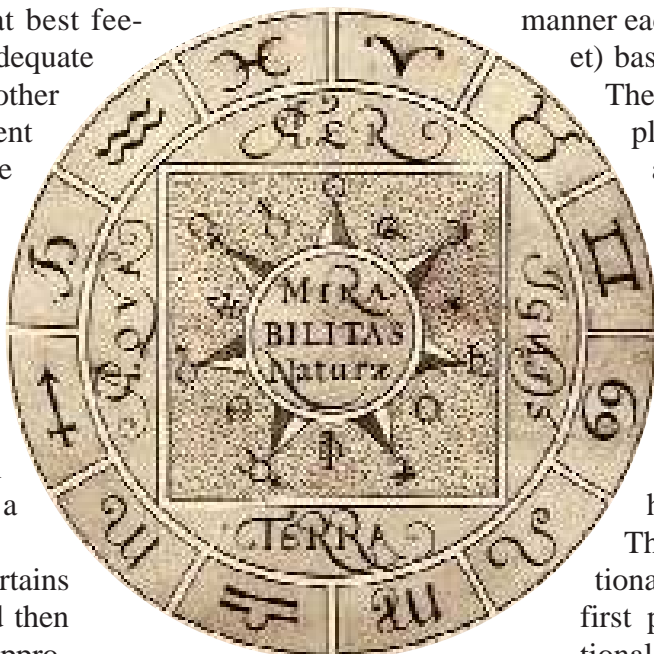
After each planet (or, more accurately, each sign-planet-house combination) thus has been considered separately,

aspects showing how these different factors interrelate with each other can be taken into account.

Lastly, major patterns such as element emphasis and quality emphasis can be considered as showing general trends. Thus, the whole pattern emerges in the end.

There is a saying that we are three people: the person we think we are, the person other people think we are, and the person we really are. These three are indicated respectively by the Moon, the Ascendant, and the Sun, and it seems best to start with these three in a horoscope interpretation. Let us make a tentative list of the order in which to consider the planets, realizing that modifications may be necessary in certain cases.

1. **Sun**—Sense of purpose and inner strength of character.
2. **Moon**—Self-concept.



From *Viatorium*, Michael Maier, Oppenheim, 1618

Signs and words designating the creative energies sourcing "Wonderful Nature" include the twelve zodiacal hierarchies, the seven planetary spirits, and the four etheric elements (earth, air, fire, and water).

3. **Ascendent**—How others see us; outward appearances and actions.
4. **Mercury**—Mode of thought.
5. **Venus**—Mode of feeling.
6. **Mars**—Mode of initiative.
7. **Midheaven**—Conduct in positions of authority; opportunities for spiritual advancement.
8. **Jupiter**—Spirit of helpfulness and being helped; philosophical attitudes.
9. **Saturn**—Mode of consideration and thoughtfulness toward and from others.
10. **Uranus**—Mode of intuition, inspired idea-
tion, impartiality, and perception of the
emotional states of others.
11. **Neptune**—Mode of heightened awareness,
inspired understanding, communication
with superphysical reality, and perception
of the thought of others.
12. **Pluto**—Mode of co-operation with others as
an individual for a common interest.
13. **Part of Fortune**—(optional) awareness of
how to handle opportunities for material

advancement.

It will probably be necessary to abandon any set order when dealing with the aspects, as consideration of one aspect will often lead naturally to the next. After the aspects and general patterns have been examined, a general summary may be in order, depending on the situation.

The astrologer should tell the person for whom he is interpreting about his evolutionary method of chart interpretation in order to avoid premature objections. A part by itself may often seem very awkward until it has been connected to all the other parts, just as the pieces of a puzzle by themselves, or in partial combination, tend to be so. The whole picture is built up one piece at a time, and final judgment is reserved until the picture is complete. The astrologer is able to say only one thing at a time, and although he may say something that seems a little out of place, it may not be so when the additional information is added to complete the picture. □

—Karl Kleinstick

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Around the Planetary Peace Table

THUNDER ROLLED along the horizon for one final drumbeat. Lightning tore the heavens asunder and lit the solemn faces of the Planetary Lords gathered about the peace table.

Just then Mars came running in, with his helmet askew and his scarlet mantle ballooning behind him. In one quick move he unbuckled his mighty sword and sent it clattering into a far corner. Then he sat down near Mercury, the silver winged, and said loudly, "Wars are erupting like brushfire in dry weather, smoke gathers over the fields of battle, and peace conclaves are called! What we need is more action, not so much talk!"

Saturn, entering on the stroke of the cosmic hour, as became the Keeper of Time, bent a grave glance upon the impetuous Lord of Mars.

"Cease this rash frivolity," he commanded. It's time you attended the School of Wisdom, brother. Since when has action minus thought ever brought good? Talk in itself may be childish, but talk with a dedicated purpose moves worlds."

Lady Moon drew a wisp of cloud veil across her slim shoulders and said with mild patience, "Wait as I do, Young Lord, for the Old Ones to speak. Have you not caused enough damage with your undisciplined action? When all have contributed, then I, the Intermediary, shall do my part to fructify the seeds of peace among the men of the earth."

When the Lady Moon had ceased speaking, the kingly Sun arose, in a whirl of golden cloud draperies, and majestically advanced from his throne to the table. In royal tones he spoke:

"We meet to give our gifts to the planet Earth, so



William Blake (1757-1827), Illustration for Milton's "On the Morning of Christ's Nativity," Nativity Ode 1, 1809, 25.5 x 19.3 cm, Whitworth Art Gallery, University of Manchester

The Descent of Peace

The birth of the Prince of Peace in a physical body has consequences not only for Earth but also for the harmonious effect of planetary energies as they impinge on the Earth.

that peace shall become a reality in the hearts of her people. The Evil Powers have led them into the depths of selfishness and cruelty, but now great sorrow and suffering are bringing them to a realization of the folly of war. Peace shall come to earth."

He paused and drew from his hand a great ring of a single ruby, so radiant that it spilled glorious sunfire in all directions.

“This ring I give to symbolize the healing our suffering Earth must have before life can replace the death that follows selfishness. I bring her confidence in the power of good, prosperity, and success in right living. Take my life-giving gift, O Sorrowful Star. Weep no more. Arise.”

Then they heard a deep sigh as of one ceasing from bitter weeping, faintly borne upon the dawn wind, and they knew Earth was aware of the giving of the First Gift.

Now stately Jupiter came forward, his flowing robes shining with the blue of heaven. He placed upon the table a huge tin-covered tome, heavily inlaid with gleaming turquoise and amethyst and filled the far corners of the heavenly hall with sonorous tones of noble kindness as he spoke:

“I bring my gift for peace on Earth in this symbol of truth and wisdom found only in realms above the material. May our torn and bleeding sister planet use well my gift and build wiser in years to come, for no peace is permanent unless erected upon the truths of Spirit.” He faced the outer space which lay beyond and held out his mighty arms. “O Earth sister, here is my gift. Learn to walk happily in the ways of the higher self.”

Then through the darkness beyond came a faint glow, pulsing brighter and ever brighter, glad news that the Earth took new heart as she received the Second Gift.

Next came Saturn, with indigo garments contrasting strangely with the smooth chaste white of the onyx covered leaden box held between his knotted hands. Placing the box upon the table, he said slowly:

“I bring you new foundations made from the stern lessons of experience—endurance, patience, and chastity. Build well with my gift, for I, the Great Reaper, will require full payment at some future day. My gift I offer freely, yet you cannot partake of its treasures unless you learn to obey the laws of the universe. I sift you and weigh you, O people of Earth. Learn, and my gift will prove rich. Resist, and it shall bring only pain.”

Slowly the bent figure moved to his seat. There was a dead silence. Then from Earth came a groan, for the Third Gift was as myrrh of the Magi giving.

From her chair of yellow roses now stepped the

gracious Venus. Tiny cupids smilingly carried her lustrous golden train. Flowers sprang up at the touch of her fairy feet. Bluebirds flew about her. Her beautiful eyes shone softly as she glided near the table. She held an exquisite vase of gleaming copper, richly studded with agates, emeralds, opals, and diamonds, which she placed with the other gifts as she spoke in tones sweet and gentle.

“Here is my gift. Take it to your heart and cherish it, O Sad Planet, for with it comes harmony and affection—magnetic powers that will dissolve the germs of hate and make your hearts new. Here, O Sister, is love!”

And now, as the far light grew, a sudden soft music began within the changing vibrations of the Earth’s aura. It was a sign of the receiving of the Fourth Gift.

Then Mars arose slowly, bent forward and picked up his sword. His beetling brows wrinkled with intense thought. Then his proud face cleared. He strode forward, holding out the shining sword, as his voice rang like a bugle call.

“Take my sword, brothers. I need it no longer, since peace comes to reign. With it I pledge my organizing genius, my unconquerable courage, and my boundless energy. I give this sword of steel to be forged into things that bless instead of curse. Long ago, O Sister Earth, I would have given this had you called it forth. Now, with a brave spirit and dauntless strength, strive forward in eternal progress.”

He ceased as all the Planetary Lords broke into spontaneous applause, nodding their heads in deep approval. Down the distant wind came a mighty choral of human voices, as though men were united in singing a thanksgiving. The rosy light was now shot through with sparkles of diamond blue; the tense heavy atmosphere was lifting.

Then came Uranus with a mantle of rainbow blue tipped in crystal points of light so blindingly bright that none could bear to look long upon it. He, carried in his mighty arms a chest of chalcidony and opal—brilliant and strangely fascinating as it gleamed through his Aquarian aura. He set it down amid the gifts on the table and unclasped the lock. Instantly out shot a magnificent rainbow which hung in the air like a shimmering miracle of God.

“This is my gift,” said he. “The rainbow of hope for the grace of brotherhood which has now come to the Earth. In this prism of color lies the source-root of every country’s flag based on liberty, truth, and justice. I give my gift in the new awakening of all peoples to unity and equality, making a world government possible. With my lightning I purged you, O Sorrowful



Tapestry, 1909. Morris & Co. weavers. Based on painting of Sir Edward Burne-Jones (1833-1896), Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, England

Love Leading the Pilgrim

Star. Now through my vision let me raise you up to that peace in Christ that passeth all understanding.”

The challenging words faded, but the rainbow grew in brightness, bent to stretch over immeasurable space, and came to rest upon the distant Earth. Then could be heard the ineffably sweet tones of the astral chimes ringing in the giving of the Sixth Gift.

Now Neptune moved forward with magical grace, his robes of iridescence and silver melting and breaking like waves of foam, his crown blazing with light. In his hands he bore a shining trident of platinum, set with aquamarines and corals of mystic beauty.

“Lo! my gift is this, great Lords,” came the lurking music of his voice. “A realization of divinity—an ideal of men to become gods. I bring initiation for those who thus seek the way of divine awareness. In the offering of this gift, I lift you up, O Sister Earth, so that you may know the wonders of divinity.”

Upon this, there came a great symphonic music out of the mysterious void so vast, so overwhelming, as to sweep through the Hall in waves of unearthly beauty that made every heart tremble for the joy that it envisioned. The stars were singing

their great cosmic upswelling to the Father-Mother Spirit.

And this was the giving of the mystic Seventh Gift.

Up strode the dark Lord Pluto, in dusky red garments cunningly woven in black with mysterious designs. From his somber brow a polished lodestone emanated terrifying sparks of fire; a jewel of gleaming malachite and red jasper looked out from his breast like a huge eye. He held his cupped hands closed, then slowly opened them as he whispered the words:

“See I give the seed which all must plant. Herein lies the mystery of birth, death, and regeneration. I give it, though I know Earth man is yet unable to realize the fullness of its message. I must give it so that man may be taught the mysteries of transmutation and thus be prepared to use the secrets yet to be revealed to him. Take this seed, O men of Earth, and in its planting pray to see life in truth—life transmuted from base to realms divine. Carefully tend the seed Pluto gives you!”

Now came a sound as of a giant seed breaking through the crust of ground with its new-sprouting power, and from that far spot gleamed a tiny gold ray. This was the giving of the Eighth Gift.

Into the pregnant silence now stepped Mercury, with his staff of climbing wisdom, winged shoes,

and silver cap. Light as flashing quicksilver were his brilliant words that made such a contrast to the gloomy Lord of Death.

“I bear a gift as invisible as air!” he proclaimed. “I shall give to the people of our Sister Planet a pair of wings to lift their minds, to give them a memory of all they have seen and an image to create what they will become. By means of my gift men shall use thought and reason and never again give credence to the madness of war. Earth Star, I give you these wings.”

He flung wide his arms, and a pair of wings, resembling a violet and golden butterfly, flashing with crystals, seemed to fly down to rest among the other gifts.

From the Earth came a clear murmur of approval. And this was the giving of the Ninth Gift.

Finally came the Lady Moon, in flowing robes of green and silver, flecked with pale moonstones and opalescent pearls. Her fair face glowed with an inner radiance as she floated light as a moonbeam

to the pile of noble gifts given by the Planetary Lords.

With one sweep of her bright arms, she embraced these symbolic offerings, and cried, “Now, at last I may give my gift! Through my magic touch the children of Earth shall receive your gifts and nurture them to full maturity in their hearts. Angels shall attend them until they come to join the ranks of the gods. Peace flows in the music of my moonlight—wisdom, peace, love, and brotherhood. Here are your gifts, O Sister Earth.”

She rose to a magnificent height, with stars in her compassionate eyes and trailing moon clouds far behind her, gathered all the glory of the heavens to her tender bosom where rested the treasure of a lordly host, and then descended with the speed of light into the dimness until she was naught but a spark in the outer spaces.

There ensued a long and vibrant hush. Then spoke a Voice from the infinite heights above: “Peace on earth, good will to men.” □

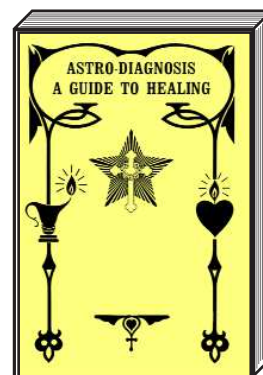
—Marguerite A. Wing

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Evolution as Shown in the Zodiac

IT IS CHARACTERISTIC of the region of Concrete thought, that the Archetypes which are there—those of the past, the present, and also the Archetypes that are forming for work in future ages—will speak to the investigator, when he compels by his will power. And they will then tell him of all they are, or will be, their whole being; their innermost nature is laid bare before him. Also the scroll which we call “the memory of nature,” may be thus interrogated by one who is sufficiently qualified, and anything in the universe, past or present, may thus be made to yield up its secrets to the investigator who then obtains a wonderful light upon any subject he undertakes to investigate.

This the writer has often experienced; he has felt illumined through and through; his whole being has vibrated at the joy of being filled with an intimate knowledge of the most secret and intricate subjects, which have become to him, at such times, as clear as noon day. And he has felt on such occasions that it would be possible for him with this information, so easily obtained, to bring to the world a new and wonderful light, which should dispel all doubt of anyone who came within its radiance, just as he had himself been convinced and charmed by the volume of the light he had obtained.

But alas and alack, the illumination gained when looking at these wonderful archetypes, the joy felt and the hope engendered, were not greater than the bitter disappointment experienced upon returning to the body and finding that that which had been learned could not be transmitted to the physical world as it had been perceived; for in yonder spiritual realm there is neither beginning nor end to any subject that



British Museum, London

Frontispiece (relief-etched, hand colored), *Europe: A Prophecy*, William Blake (1757-1827)

The Ancient of Days

Jehovah, both Angel and an Elohim (Lords of Form), helped shape primordial physical matter into myriad cosmic forms.

we may investigate. *Here* we begin to tell a story word for word from beginning to end; *there* the whole idea is impressed upon us at once in its entirety, and the difficulty in getting things back from thence lies in finding where to begin and how to end.

It is easier to read in the sidereal light, generally used by mediums and such people, for there events are seen consecutively. But these ethereal records gradually fade and are usually lost, even to the most important events, in a few thousand years, while the great records in the Region of Concrete Thought, on the very borderland between matter and spirit, are of much longer duration; in fact they cover the whole Earth Period.

It is a matter of common understanding among mystics that the evolutionary career of mankind is indissolubly bound up with the divine hierarchies who rule the planets and the signs of the Zodiac, and that the passage of the Sun and the planets through the twelve signs of the Zodiac marks man's progress in time and in space. Therefore it is not to be wondered at that in the course of his investigation into the spiritual development of mankind, the writer has also encountered much that deals with the Zodiac, which is the boundary of our evolutionary sphere at the present time.

So much has been perceived in the memory of nature that sheds light upon obscure passages of the Bible, and notes have been made from time to time of different points, but how to collect and collate these dissociated writings into a united whole has been a great problem for a long time. Even now, the writer knows and feels that what he has to bring forth is only a very, very weak attempt to set before the students that great body of facts which have come to him through the memory of nature. He feels, however, that this will give a new and more profound meaning to the old symbols, and that by passing on what has been found he puts himself in line to perceive more light.

Concerning the future evolution of planets, the *Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* teaches, on page 256, that "when the beings upon a planet have evolved to a sufficient degree, the planet becomes a Sun—the fixed center of a Solar System. When the beings there have evolved to a still greater degree, and consequently it has reached its maximum of brilliancy, it breaks up into a Zodiac, becoming, so to speak, the womb of a new Solar System.

"Thus the great hosts of Divine beings who, until then, were confined upon that Sun, gain freedom of action upon a great number of stars, whence they can affect in different ways the system which grows up within their sphere of influence. The planets, or man-bearing worlds, within the Zodiac are constantly being worked upon by these forces, but in various ways according to the stage they have reached in evolution.

"Our Sun could not have become a sun until it sent out from itself all the beings who were not sufficiently evolved to endure the high rate of vibration and the great luminosity of the beings who were qualified for that evolution. All the beings upon the

different planets would have been consumed had they remained in the Sun.

"This visible Sun, however, though it is the place of evolution for beings vastly above man, is not by any means the Father of the other planets, as material science supposes. On the contrary it is itself an emanation from the *central Sun*, which is the invisible source of all that is in our solar system. Our visible Sun is but the mirror in which are reflected the rays of energy from the spiritual Sun; the real Sun is an invisible as the real Man."

From this teaching it is apparent that the great spiritual hierarchies which are now guiding our evolution, have had their training for this path in previous schemes of manifestation, also that what they are now doing, we shall some day do for others. Already the foremost among our race are treading the path of initiation and have thereby advanced into other stages far beyond the general status of present humanity. It has been learned that those who have gone through the Mercurial School of the lesser Mysteries and have graduated from the School of the Greater Mysteries are now preparing human evolution in the Jupiter Period. They have entered the planet Jupiter by way of one of its moons, which serves as a stepping stone.

Others there are, unfortunately, who have gone the other way. We read in the *Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* that even as the whole population of the earth was at one time expelled from the present Sun because of their inability to keep up with the vibrations of the beings thereon, thus hindering them and being hindered themselves, so also it became necessary in the Lemurian Epoch to expel a number of the stragglers upon earth. Thus the Moon was cast out into space to revolve as a satellite around our present planet. Those unfortunates are gradually degenerating and the time will come when they will all go to the planet Saturn, which is the door to Chaos. Thence they will be expelled to interplanetary space to await the time when, in a new system, there will be a favorable condition for their further evolution.

The Gate of Life and Death

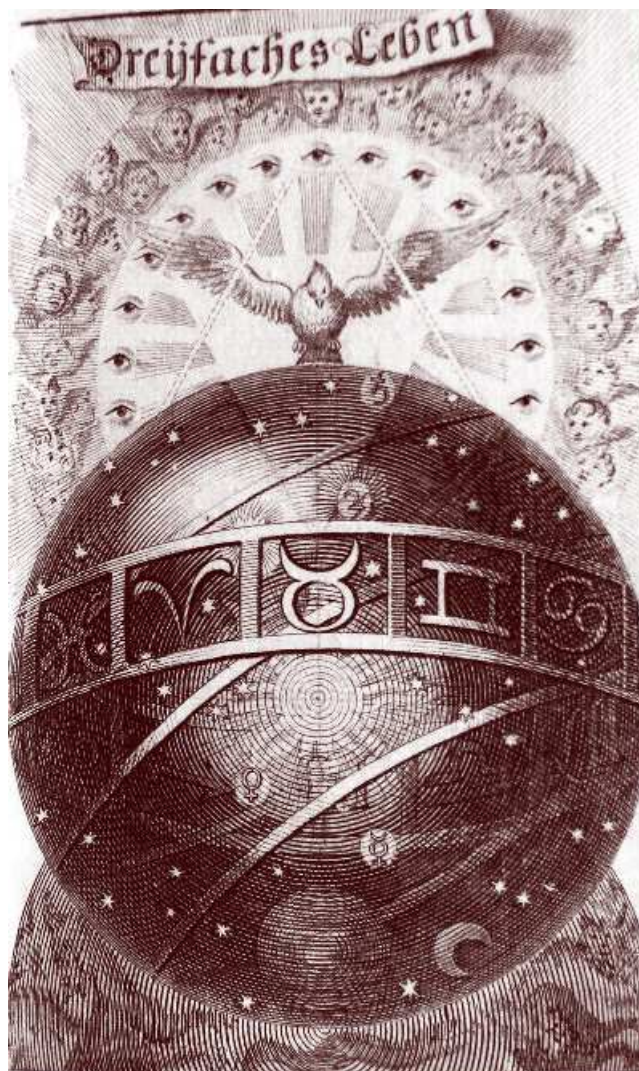
Thus the Zodiac and the planets are as a book in which we may read the history of humanity during past ages, and it also gives a key to our future. In the famous Zodiac in the Temple of Denderah Cancer is not pictured as we have it in modern days. There it is a beetle, a scarab. [A picture of the Denderah Zodiac

will appear in the next issue of the Rays.—Ed.] This was the emblem of the soul, and Cancer was always known in ancient times, as well as among modern mystics, as the sphere of the soul, the *gate of Life* in the Zodiac, whence the spirits coming into rebirth enter our sublunary conditions. It is therefore aptly ruled by the Moon, which is the planet of fecundation, and it is noteworthy that we find Capricorn, which is its opposite, ruled by Saturn the *planet of Death* and Chaos, who is mystically depicted as the reaper with his scythe and hour glass in hand.

These two opposite signs are therefore turning points in the soul's career. Cancer and Capricorn mark the highest ascent of the Sun into the Northern Hemisphere and its lowest descent into the South. Observation shows us that during the summer, when the Sun is in the sphere of Cancer and allied signs, fecundation and growth are the order of the day. But when the Sun is in the south, in Capricorn, we have winter, when nature is dead. The fruits of the summer are then consumed and assimilated by us. As the circle dance of the Sun among the twelve signs determines the seasons of the year *when direct*—causing the germination of myriads of seeds cast in the earth, also the mating of the fauna, which then makes the world alive with the sights and sounds of manifested life, and at another time, leaves the world dumb, dull and drear in winter's gloom, under the sway of Saturn—so by the slower backward movement, known as the *precession of the equinox*, does it produce the great changes which we know as Evolution. In fact, this precessional measure of the sun marks the birth and death of races, nations, and their religions, for the pictorial Zodiac is a symbolical presentation of our past, present and future development.

Capricorn

Capricorn, the goat, is not a goat at all as we know that animal, but part fish and part goat. Its Saturnine rulership, and the fact that it receives the Sun at the dawn of each New Year, naturally by analogy associates it with the beginning of precessional epochs. It represents the stage in evolution, covering transition from fish, through amphibia to the mammalian form. The belligerency of the goat, is well known, and an apt symbol of the struggle for existence, in which the weak perish unless able to outdistance their foes. This phase of the matter is sometimes expressed in the symbol, when drawn as part fish and part antelope.



Jakob Böhme (1575-1624), *Dreyfache Leben*, 1682, Amsterdam, British Library, London

Threefold Life

The created world (cosmos) is positioned between Chaos (darkness) below and Divinity (supernal light) above. Threefold God is symbolized by the omniscient, omnipresent eye (Father), creative light (Son) and the dove of the Holy Spirit.

Jacob, in the thirty-third chapter of Deuteronomy, pronounces blessings upon his children, who symbolize the twelve signs; there he speaks of Naphtali as a “hind” let loose. This a very apt symbol of Capricorn, for when the Sun is there at each winter solstice, it is starting a race through the circle of twelve signs, which it must complete in a given time—a year.

Sagittarius

When the sun leaves Capricorn, by precession, it enters the sign Sagittarius, and this is pictured in the symbolical Zodiac as a Centaur, part horse and part man. Thus it shows aptly the fact that we have evolved through the animal stage into the human.

The centaur is in the act of drawing his bow, showing that there is something for which the human spirit, on pilgrimage through matter, is seeking; that it aspires to something that lies beyond it, as a lofty ideal, for the bow points upward to the stars.

Scorpio

The next step in human unfoldment is not so much along the physical lines as along the mental, its nature is shown by the Sun's passage through the sign Scorpio, which is pictorially represented as a serpent or scorpion, emblems of cunning and subtlety. It is plain from this symbol that the first faculty of the mind evolved by infant humanity was cunning, and we still see that that is a characteristic trait among the lower races, the lower classes and the lower natures even among our present-day humanity.

Libra

But when the Sun enters the sign Libra, "the Scales," by precession, the balance of reason gives him a new start upon the evolutionary path. Under the care of divine instructors man had at that time advanced to the point where because of this new faculty, reason, he could be made fully responsible to nature's laws, and thus reap what he sows, that he may learn the lesson of life by actual experience, be able to reason out the connection between cause and effect, and in time learn to govern himself upon the path of progress.

Virgo

Thus, under the guidance of the spiritual hierarchies focused through the signs of Capricorn, Sagittarius, Scorpio, and Libra, were man's physical, moral, and mental attributes acquired, and he was equipped to commence the spiritual side of his evolution. The germ of this progress is hidden in the celestial virgin, the sign Virgo, which is the vehicle of the immaculate conception, the heavenly mother of Christ; not of one Christ only, but of many. This is one of the most sublime signs of the Zodiac and one of the most mystic, so fraught with hidden meaning that its full import can not be fully understood save when viewed by the internal light of spiritual illumination. Yearly, at the Winter solstice, the immaculate Madonna is ascendent at midnight, when the new born Sun commences to rise to the task of growing the grain and grape, to save humanity from the cold and famine, which would inevitably result were he to remain in the southern declination. The Sun is therefore an apt symbol of the Savior, born to feed his

flock on the spiritual bread of life. But as we must have eyes attuned to light to see the Sun, so must the Christ be born within. As Angelus Silesius says:

*Though Christ a thousand times in Bethlehem
be born*

*And not within thyself thy soul will be forlorn
The Cross on Golgotha thou lookest to in vain
Unless within thyself it be set up again.*

Therefore, by the precessional passage of the Sun through the sign Virgo, the germinal impulse, was given towards the birth of the Christ within. The "mystic marriage" of the lower self to the higher, "the immaculate conception," and the "divine motherhood" which nourishes deep in its bosom, unseen by a scoffing world, "the new born Christ," is an actual experience of a growing number of people. And without the celestial prototype, fructified by the solar precession, this would be an impossibility. Neither has this ideal been realized in such fullness during the past ages as today. The reason of this will appear when we take up the joint consideration of opposite signs of the Zodiac.

Leo

A great future is in store for this offspring of the celestial virgin. Listen to the wonderful prophesy of Isaiah: "for unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders and his name shall be called *Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace*, of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end."

Humanity is to rise to a wonderful spiritual height and this is symbolized by the Sun's precessional passage through the royal sign Leo, pictorially represented by the king of beasts, the lion. This is an apt allusion to the king of creation, who will then embody the three great virtues of the Master Man—Strength, Wisdom, and Beauty.

It is wonderful to see the various phases of the religions given to the great Aryo-Semitic race, from the time they were "called out" in the later third of the Atlantean Epoch, to the end of the Aquarian Age, when a new race will have been definitely born. This aspect of the Zodiac will form the subject of our next article. It will shed light on many of the most obscure passages of the Bible, as only study of this cosmic science can. □

—Max Heindel

SPIRITUAL SCIENCE AND ART

The Ring of the Niebelung

REBIRTH AND THE LETHAL DRINK & THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

To make this point [of guidance by previous lives' experience] clear we may perhaps liken this record, graven upon our subtler vehicles, to a phonograph record, which playing, will cause a battery of tuning forks placed near it to vibrate as each note is struck. From the outward point of view there seems to be no reason why a certain indentation on a phonographic record should correspond to a certain one on the tuning fork, and when the needle falls into that indentation, a definite sound should be produced which sets the tuning fork vibrating. But whether we understand it or not, demonstration shows that there is a tie of tone between that little indentation and the tuning fork. And this does not depend upon a knowledge of how the impress came to be imprinted on the record, or what caused the tuning fork to respond to that vibration. It is there, whether we know all the facts about it, or not.

Similarly, when we have had a certain experience in life, be it joyful or the reverse, it is condensed in the postmortem experience, leaving an impress upon the soul to warn, if the experience is purgatorial; to urge, if heavenly. And in a later life, when an experience comes up similar to the one which caused the impress, the vibration is sensed by the soul; it awakens the tone of pain or pleasure, as the case may be, in the record of the past life, far more speedily and accurately than if the experience itself were called up before our mind's eye. For we might not, even at the present time, be able

This is the last of four consecutive articles which have reproduced the complete text of Max Heindel's study of Richard Wagner's four-part opera The Ring of the Niebelung.



Watercolor, 1910, from *Rackham's Color Illustrations for Wagner's Ring*, Arthur Rackham
Erda, the all-knowing earth goddess, appears to admonish Wotan to relinquish the ring. Disappearing just as suddenly, she warns Wotan that the race of the gods is doomed.

to see the experience in its true light while we are hampered by the veil of flesh, but the fruit of the experience, gathered in heaven or hell, tells us unerringly whether to emulate our past, or shun it.

Moreover, supposing we did really know our past lives—that by our present endeavors to live well and worthily we had acquired that faculty. Supposing that we had lived lives of debauchery, cruelty, crime, and selfishness! If people now despised us accordingly, we would then hold that they ought not to judge us by the past—that they

were wrong in ostracizing us. We would contend that our present life of worthy endeavor should be made the basis of judgment, to the exclusion of former conditions, and in this we should be perfectly right. But then, for the same reason, why should we claim honor in the present life, adulation or admiration, because in the past life we were kings and queens? Even if it were true that we had held such positions, why should we lay ourselves open to the ridicule of skeptics by telling such stories? So, whether we have memory of our past lives or not, it is better to concentrate our efforts upon the highest possibilities of today.

There is no doubt, that one who is able to search the Memory of Nature, and who does so for the sake of investigation in connection with the progress and evolution of man, will, at some time or other, come into touch with glimpses of his or her own past. But a true servant who really feels himself to be a laborer in the vineyard of Christ will never allow himself to swerve from the path of service and follow the trail of curiosity. The Disciple who receives instructions from the Elder Brothers is warned at the first Initiation never to use his power to gratify curiosity, and on all subsequent visits to the Temple this idea is dinned into his ears. The distinctions between the legitimate and illegitimate use of spiritual powers are so fine and so subtle, that, as one grows, the restrictions whereby one seems beset, multiply to such an extent, that, were the tale told to others, ninety out of a hundred would say: "But what is the use then of having spiritual sight or of being able to leave the body? When you are so restricted, it seems that the possibility of trespassing is multiplied to such an extent, that there is scarcely any use of having these faculties." Nevertheless, they are of great value, and the responsibility is only the natural result of added growth.

An animal takes freely anything that it wishes. It commits no sin and is not held responsible for its action because it knows no better. But as soon as the idea of "mine" and "thine" has been imprinted upon our consciousness, then also the responsibility comes. As our knowledge grows, so does our responsibility; and the finer the soul qualities, the finer the distinctions between right and wrong.



Dover Publications

Watercolor, 1910, from Rackham's *Color Illustrations for Wagner's Ring*, Arthur Rackham

The "lethal" drink Gutrune gives to Siegfried immediately upon entering Gunther's court, causing him to forget his solemn marriage to Brunhilde (Truth), symbolizes the loss of memory of one's past lives upon entering a new embodiment.

This we observe in our daily lives, that the standards of the permissible or non-permissible vary according to the quality of each individual.

And when we aspire to that power whereby we may know the past, we shall find that we are no more justified in using this power for aggrandizement than we would be justified in using it to obtain worldly wealth or power. So the life, or the lives, we have led are hidden from us for a purpose, until we know how to unlock the door; and when we have the key we shall probably not want to use it. For that reason, then, Siegfried is given the lethal drink the moment he enters the court of Gunther, and straightway he forgets about his past life with Mime, the dwarf, who claimed him as a son. He forgets how he forged the magic sword, "the courage of despair," which stood him in such good stead in the fight with Fafner, the spirit of

passion and desire. He forgets that he had thus won the Ring of the Niebelung, the emblem of egoism, whereby he gained knowledge of his true spiritual identity and slew Mime, the personality, who wrongfully claimed to be his progenitor. He forgets how, as a free Spirit undaunted by fear, he broke the spear of Wotan, the warder of creed, and followed the bird of intuition to the abode of the sleeping spirit of truth. He forgets his marriage to her and the vow of unselfishness, implied when he gave her the ring.

But each and every one of these important events has left its impress upon his soul, and now it is to be tested: whether that impress has been deep or superficial. Temptation comes to us, life after life, until the treasure laid up in heaven has been tested and tried by temptation on Earth—whether or not it will withstand the moth of corruption. After the Baptism, when the Spirit of Christ had descended into the fleshy body of Jesus, it was taken into the wilderness of temptation to prove its weakness or its strength. And, similarly, after each heavenly experience we must expect to be brought back to Earth, that it may be learned whether we shall stand or fall in the furnace of affliction.

THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

When Siegfried reaches the court of Gunther, Gertrune, the fair sister of the king, hands him the magic cup of forgetfulness. Forthwith, he loses memory of the past and of Brunhilde, the spirit of truth, and stands a naked soul ready to fight the battle of life. But he is armed with the sublimated essence of former experience. The sword of Nothung, the courage of despair, wherewith he fought greed and creed, symbolized by Fafner the dragon and Wotan the god, is still with him; also Tarncap, or the helmet of illusion, which is an apt symbol of what we in modern times call hypnotic power, for whoever put this magic cap on his head appeared to others in whatever shape he desired; and he has Brunhilde's horse Grane, discernment, whereby he, himself, might always perceive truth and distinguish it from error and illusion. He still has powers which he may use for good or evil according to choice.

As we have said previously, our idea of what



Dover Publications

Watercolor, 1910, from *Rackham's Color Illustrations for Wagner's Ring*, Arthur Rackham
When Siegfried marries Brunhilde (truth) he acquires the faculty of discrimination, symbolized by her horse Grange.

truth is changes as we progress. We are gradually climbing the mountain trail of evolution, and as we do phases of truth appear which we never before perceived; and what is right at one stage, is wrong at another. Though, whenever we are in the flesh we see through the veil of illusion symbolized by Loge's flame which encircles the rock of Brunhilde, her swift charger Grane, discernment, is also with us; and if we only give him free rein, the material brain mind, which is charged with the lethal drink of forgetfulness, can never gain the ascendancy over the Spirit.

The early Atlantean Epoch, when mankind lived as guileless "Children of the Mist" (Niebelung) in the foggy basins of the Earth, is represented in the Rhinegold. The later Atlantean time is an age of savagery, where mankind has forsworn love, as Alberich did, and forms "the Ring" of egoism, where it devotes its energies to material acquisitions symbolized by "the hoard" of the Niebelung,



The Three Norns

At the root of the great World-Ash, Urd, Skuld, and Verdande, the past, present, and future, spin the thread of fate. Below them the Midgaard serpent, like the Ouroboros, bites its tail.

over which giants, gods, and men fight with savage brutality and low cunning, as set forth in the “The Valkuerie.”

The early Aryan Epoch marks the birth of the idealist, symbolized as the “Walsungs” (Siegmond, Sieglinda, and Siegfried), a new race which aspires with a sacred ardor to new and higher things—valorous knights who had the courage of their convictions and were ever ready to fight for truth as they saw it, and to give their lives as forfeit to uphold their heartfelt convictions. Thus the age of realistic savagery gave place to an era of idealistic chivalry.

We are now in the latter part of the Aryan Epoch. The truth seekers of the past have again left the fire-girt rock of Brunhilde. We have again assumed the veil of flesh and partaken of the lethal drink, and we are today actually playing the last part of the great epic drama, “The Twilight of the Gods,” which is identical in its import with our Christian Apocalypse. “The gospel of the Kingdom” has been preached to us, “the Way, the Truth, and the Life” has been opened to us, as it was to Siegfried; and we are on trial now, as he was at Gunther’s court, to see if we will live as “married to truth,” or whether we will drag her from her retreat and prostitute her, as Siegfried did.

In order to gain the hand of Guttrune, he wrested the emblem of egoism, the Ring of the Niebelung,



Watercolor, 1910, from Rackham's Color Illustrations for Wagner's Ring, Arthur Rackham

Waltraute implores her Valkerie sister to return the ego-feeding ring to the Rhinemaidens to cleanse it of its curse and lift the doom hanging on the gods. Brunhilde refuses, valuing the token of Siegfried's love more than the pomp of Valhalla.

from Brunhilde’s hand and put it on his finger again; he bound her and carried her to Gunther to be his wife; he prostituted her, and himself committed adultery with Guttrune—for having once married truth, it is spiritual adultery to seek the honors of the world.

Heaven and Earth are outraged at this colossal betrayal of truth. The great World-Ash, the tree of life and being, shakes at its root, where Urd, Skuld, and Verdande, the past, present, and future, spin the thread of fate. It grows dark on Earth; Hagen’s spear finds the only vulnerable point in Siegfried’s body—his life is the forfeit, and as the highest ideal of the age has failed, there is no use in perpetuating the existing order of things. Therefore, Heimdal, the heavenly watchman, sounds his trumpet, and the gods ride in solemn procession over the rainbow bridge for the last time, to meet the giants in final battle involving the destruction of heaven and Earth.

This is a very significant point: At the opening of the drama we find the Niebelungen “at the bottom of the river.” Alberich later forges “the Ring” in fire, which can only burn in the clear atmosphere such as we have in the Aryan age. During this age the gods also hold their sacred councils at the rainbow-bridge, which is the reflection of the heavenly fire. When Noah brought the original Semites through “the Flood,” he kindled the first fire. “The bow” was then set in the cloud to remain for the age and during that time it was covenanted that the alternating cycles, summer and winter, day and night, et cetera, should not cease.

In the Apocalypse (4:3), John is offered instruction concerning “things which must be hereafter,” by One having a rainbow around Him; and later (10:16), a mighty Angel with a rainbow on its head solemnly proclaims the end of time. Thus it is plain from the northern myth and the Christian teaching, that the epoch began when the bow was set in the cloud; when the bow is removed the epoch will end and a new condition of things physical and spiritual, will be ushered in.

The other phenomenon attending this time of trouble is set forth in the ancient myth. Loge, the spirit of illusion, has three children: the Midgaard Serpent which encircles the Earth, biting its own tail, is the ocean which refracts and distorts every object immersed therein. Men fear the treacherous element; their cheeks have always paled at the thought of what it may do when unleashed. The wolf Fenris, the atmosphere, is also a child of illusion (optical), and the dread roar of the tempest may strike fear into the stoutest heart. Hel, death, is the third of Loge’s children, and the “queen of terrors.” Before man entered concrete existence, as described in the beginning of the great myth and in Genesis, his consciousness was focused in the spiritual worlds where the illusive elements, Loge (fire), Fenris (air), and the Serpent (water), are nonexistent; hence, death also was an unknown quantity. But during the present epoch when the constitution of the human body is subject to the action of the elements, death also holds sway.

At the sound of the trumpet of Heimdal, all the factors of destruction press forward to the plain Vigrid, the counterpart of Armageddon, where the



Watercolor, 1910, from *Rackham's Color Illustrations for Wagner's Ring*, Arthur Rackham
Air god Wotan rallies to do battle with fire breathing Fenris.

gods of creed and their sworn supporters have assembled to make a last stand. The sons of Muspel (physical fire), press forward from the south, demolishing the rainbow bridge. The Frost Giants advance from the north. With an awful roar, Fenris, the tempest-driven atmosphere, rushes upon the Earth. So terrific is its velocity that the friction generates fire, hence it is said that its lower jaw is upon the Earth, its upper reaches the Sun, and fire streams from its nostrils. It swallows Wotan, the god in charge of the age of air, when the bow was in the cloud. The Midgaard Serpent or watery element is vanquished by Thor, the god of thunder and lightning, but when the electrical discharges have finally disposed of the element, water, there can be no thunder and lightning, hence the northern myth informs us that Thor dies of the fumes from the Serpent. In our Christian Apocalypse we also hear of thunders and lightnings, and are told that finally “there shall be no more sea.”

But as the Phoenix arises rejuvenated and beautiful from its ashes, so also a New Earth, fairer and more ethereal, was seen by the ancient prophetess to arise from the great conflagration where “the

elements melt with fervent heat”—“Gimle,” she called it. Nor was it without population, for while the great conflagration was in progress a man and a woman called Lif and Liftharaser (*lif* means life) were saved and from them springs a new race which lives in peace and close to God.

*A hall I see,
More brilliant than the sun,
Roofed with gold.
On the summit of Gimle,
There shall live
A virtuous race,
And enjoy blessedness
To eternity.
Thither cometh the Mighty One, all-Father,
To the council of the gods,
In His strength from above.
He who thinketh for all,
Issueth judgments;
He causeth strife to cease,
And establisheth peace
To endure forever.*

Thus the ancient northern myth teaches, but from a different angle, the same truths as found in greater fullness in the Christian Scriptures from Genesis to the Apocalypse, and it is important that we should realize the truth of these tales. There are, alas, too many in the class described by Peter as saying:

“Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were in the beginning.”

There are few who realize the import of the statement in the second chapter of Genesis, that “a mist went up from the ground and watered the earth before it rained,” and that thus the children of the mist must have been physiologically different from the man of today who breathes air since “the Flood,” when the mist condensed and became the sea.

But just as sure as these changes happened in the past, so there is now another change impending. True, it may not come in our time—“that hour knoweth no man, neither the Angels, neither the Son,” and repeatedly the warning of Noah is held up before us in this connection. In that day they ate and drank, married and were given in marriage, but sud-



Watercolor, 1910, from Rackham's *Color Illustrations for Wagner's Ring*, Arthur Rackham
Realizing the need to purge the world of the ring's curse, Brunhilde, astride Grange, mounts Siegfried's funeral pyre.

denly the waters engulfed them and all who had not evolved the physiological requisites, lungs, necessary to live in the new condition perished. The Ark carried the pioneers safely through the catastrophe.

To make the next change safely, a Wedding Garment is required, and it is of utmost importance that we should work upon it. The same *soma psuchicon* or “soul body” which Paul mentions (1 Cor. 15:44) is an etheric vehicle of paramount importance; for when the present elements have been dissolved in the impending change, how shall we survive if we can function only in a dense body as now?

The Germano-Anglo-Saxon race will of course be succeeded by two more before the Sixth Epoch is definitely ushered in, but today, and from our stock, there is being prepared the seed for the New Age. It is exactly the mission of the Rosicrucian Order, working through the Rosicrucian Fellowship, to promulgate a scientific method of development suited particularly to the Western people whereby this Wedding Garment may be wrought, so that we may hasten the day of the Lord. □

—Max Heindel

RELIGION AND THE PUBLIC REALM

Religion, Science and the Environment

The integration of art, science, and religion is one of the objectives of Western Wisdom Teachings. Efforts in this direction are being made from other quarters as well—under duress. As the beauty and integrity of our planet are being severely compromised by human ignorance, negligence and greed, scientists and religious leaders are working together to alert and educate the general public about their imperiled environmental and to rally all concerned citizens to take remedial action. We are reprinting three documents, in the order of their public presentation, that express this concern for an endangered planet: (1) An appeal by concerned scientists to “the religious community” to help resolve the environmental crisis; (2) a joint declaration by scientists and religious leaders to the U.S. Congress and; (3) a petition by “senior religious leaders” delivered to Congress.

OPEN LETTER TO THE RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY FROM CONCERNED SCIENTISTS, January 1990

The Earth is the birthplace of our species and, as far as we know, our only home. When our numbers were small and our technology feeble, we were powerless to influence the environment of our world. But today, suddenly, almost without anyone’s noticing, our numbers have become immense and our technology has achieved vast, even awesome, powers. Intentionally or inadvertently, we are now able to make devastating changes in the global environment, an environment to which we and all other beings with which we share the Earth are meticulously and exquisitely adapted.

We are now threatened by self-inflicted, swiftly-moving environmental alterations about whose long-term biological and ecological consequences we are still painfully ignorant: depletion of the protective ozone layer; a global warming unprece-



Oil on canvas, 1849, Asher Durand. New York Public Library

Kindred Spirits

Durand depicts early America as a natural Eden.

dented in the last 150 millennia; the obliteration of an acre of forest every second; the rapid-fire extinction of species; and the prospect of a global nuclear war which would put at risk most of the population of the Earth. There may well be other such dangers of which we are still unaware. Individually and cumulatively, they represent a trap being set for the human species, a trap we are setting for ourselves. However principled and lofty (or naive and shortsighted) the justifications may have been for the activities that brought forth these dangers, separately and taken together they now imperil our species and many others. We are close to committing—many would argue we are already committing—what in religious language is sometimes called Crimes against Creation.

By their very nature these assaults on the

environment were not caused by any one political group or any one generation. Intrinsicly, they are transnational, transgenerational and transideological. So are all conceivable solutions. To escape these

“For humans to cause species to become extinct and destroy the biological diversity of God’s creation, to degrade the integrity of the Earth by causing changes in its climate, stripping the earth of its natural forests, or destroying the wetlands...to contaminate the earth’s waters, its land, its air, and its life with poisonous substances—these are sins.”

Greek Orthodox Patriarch Bartholomew I

traps requires a perspective that embraces the peoples of the planet and all the generations yet to come.

Problems of such magnitude, and solutions demanding so broad a perspective, must be recognized from the outset as having a religious as well as a scientific dimension. Mindful of our common responsibility, we scientists, many of us long engaged in combating the environmental crisis, urgently appeal to the world religious community to commit, in word and deed, and as boldly as is required, to preserve the environment of the Earth.

Some of the short-term mitigations of these dangers, such as greater energy efficiency, rapid banning of chlorofluorocarbons, or modest reductions in nuclear arsenals, are comparatively easy and at some level are already underway. But other, more far-reaching, long-term, and effective approaches will encounter widespread inertia, denial and resistance. In this category are conversion from fossil fuels to a nonpolluting energy economy, a continuing swift reversal of the nuclear arms race, and a voluntary halt to world population growth without which many other approaches to preserve the environment will be nullified.

As with issues of peace, human rights, and social justice, religious institutions can be a strong force here, too, in encouraging national and international initiatives in both the private and public sectors, and in the diverse worlds of commerce,

education, culture and mass communications.

The environmental crisis requires radical changes not only in public policy, but also in individual behavior. The historical record makes clear that religious teaching, example and leadership are able to influence personal conduct and commitment powerfully.

As scientists, many of us have had profound experiences of awe and reverence before the universe. We understand that what is regarded as sacred is more likely to be treated with care and respect. Our planetary home should be so regarded. Efforts to safeguard and cherish the environment need to be infused with a vision of the sacred. At the same time, a much wider and deeper understanding of science and technology is needed. If we do not understand the problem, it is unlikely we will be able to fix it. Thus, there is a vital role for both religion and science.

We know that the well-being of our planetary environment is already a source of profound concern in your councils and congregations. We hope this appeal will encourage a spirit of common cause and joint action to help preserve the Earth.

[Here follows the names of signers]

DECLARATION OF “THE MISSION TO WASHINGTON”
—A JOINT APPEAL BY RELIGION AND SCIENCE FOR
THE ENVIRONMENT, Washington D.C. May 12, 1992

We are people of faith and of science who, for centuries, often have traveled different roads. In a time of environmental crisis, we find these roads converging. As this meeting symbolizes, our two ancient, sometimes antagonistic, traditions now reach out to one another in a common endeavor to preserve the home we share.

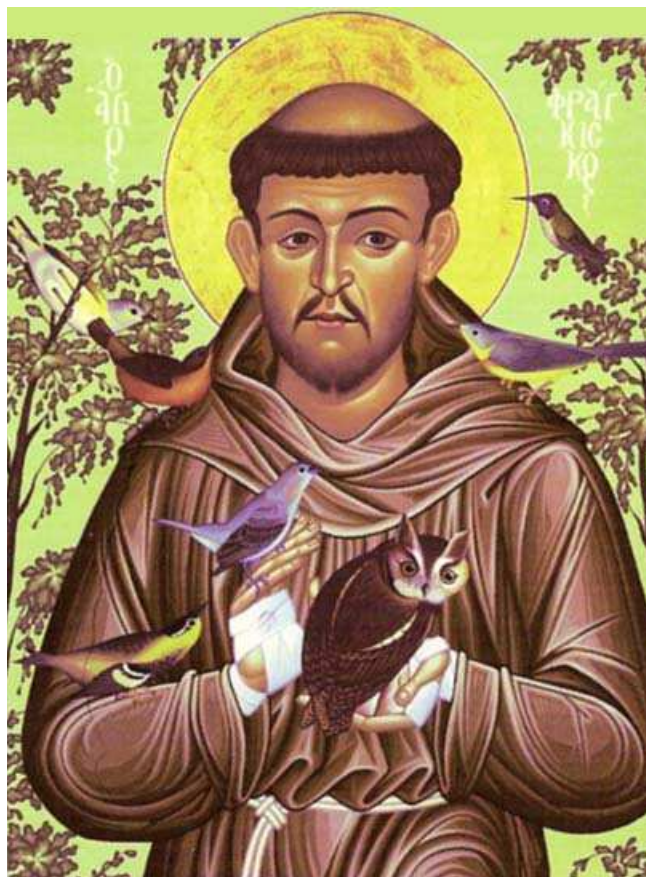
We humans are endowed with self-awareness, intelligence and compassion. At our best, we cherish and seek to protect all life and the treasures of the natural world. But we are now tampering with the climate. We are thinning the ozone layer and creating holes in it. We are poisoning the air, the land and the water. We are destroying the forests, grasslands and other ecosystems. We are causing the extinction of species at a pace not seen since

the end of the age of the dinosaurs. As a result, many scientific projections suggest a legacy for our children and grandchildren of compromised immune systems, increased infectious disease and cancer rates, destroyed plants and consequent disruption of the food chain, agriculture damaged from drought and ultraviolet light, accelerated destruction of forests and species, and vastly increased numbers of environmental refugees.

Many perils may be still undiscovered. The burdens, as usual, will fall most cruelly upon the shoulders of the poorest among us, especially upon children. But no one will be unaffected. At the same time, the human community grows by a quarter of a million people every day, mostly in the poorest nations and communities. That this crisis was brought about in part through inadvertence does not excuse us. Many nations are responsible. The magnitude of this crisis means that it cannot be resolved unless many nations work together. We must now join forces to that end.

Our own country is the leading polluter on Earth, generating more greenhouse gases, especially CO₂, than any other country. Not by word alone but by binding action, our nation has an inescapable moral duty to lead the way to genuinely effective solutions. We signers of this declaration—leaders in religion and science—call upon our government to change national policy so that the United States will begin to ease, not continue to increase, the burdens on our biosphere and their effect upon the planet's people.

We believe that science and religion, working together, have an essential contribution to make toward any significant mitigation and resolution of the world environmental crisis. What good are the most fervent moral imperatives if we do not understand the dangers and how to avoid them? What good is all the data in the world without a steadfast moral compass? Many of the consequences of our present assault on the environment, even if halted today, will take decades and centuries to play themselves out. How will our children and grandchildren judge our stewardship of the Earth? What will they think of us? Do we not have a solemn obligation to leave them a better world and to insure the integrity of nature itself? Insofar as our



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St. Francis of Assisi

*In treating the human body, the Hippocratic Oath enjoins doctors to **do no harm**. This prescription applies as well to the body of our Lord Christ—the Earth, reverence for which might well designate St. Francis as ecology's patron saint.*

peril arises from a neglect of moral values, human pride, arrogance, inattention, greed, improvidence, and a penchant for the short-term over the long, religion has an essential role to play. Insofar as our peril arises from our ignorance of the intricate interconnectedness of nature, science has an essential role to play.

Differences of perspective remain among us. We do not have to agree on how the natural world was made to be willing to work together to preserve it. On that paramount objective we affirm a deep sense of common cause.

Commitment to environmental integrity and justice, across a broad spectrum and at the highest level of leadership, continues to grow in the United States religious community as an issue of utmost priority—significantly as a result of fruitful conversations with the scientific community. We

believe that the dimensions of this crisis are still not sufficiently taken to heart by our leaders, institutions and industries. We accept our responsibility to help make known to the millions we serve and teach the nature and consequences of the environmental crisis, and what is required to overcome it.

We believe that our current economic behavior and policies emphasize short-term individual material goals at the expense of the common good and of future generations. When we consider the long-term as well as the short-term costs, it seems clear that addressing this problem now rather than later makes economic as well as moral sense. We impoverish our own children and grandchildren by insisting that they deal with dangers that we could have averted at far less cost in resources and human suffering.

We reaffirm here, in the strongest possible terms, the indivisibility of social justice and the preservation of the environment. We also affirm and support the indigenous peoples in the protection and integrity of their cultures and lands. We believe the wealthy nations of the North, which have historically exploited the natural and human resources of the Southern nations, have a moral obligation to make available additional financial resources and appropriate technology to strengthen their capacity for their own development. We believe the poor and vulnerable workers in our own land should not be asked to bear disproportionate burdens. And we must end the dumping of toxic waste materials disproportionately in communities of low income and of people of color. We recognize that there is a vital connection between peacemaking and protecting our environment. Collectively, the nations of the world spend one trillion dollars a year on military programs. If even a modest portion of this money were spent on environmental programs and sustainable economic development we could take a major step toward environmental security.

We commit ourselves to work together for a United States that will lead the world in the efficient use of fossil fuels, in devising and utilizing renewable sources of energy, in phasing out all significant ozone-depleting chemicals, in halting deforestation and slowing the decline in species

diversity, in planting forests and restoring other habitats, and in realizing worldwide social justice. We believe there is a need for concerted efforts to stabilize world population by humane, responsible and voluntary means consistent with our differing

“Care of the earth—our mandate from the Creator—is the responsibility of us all.”

—Lutheran Bishop Herbert W. Chilstrom

values. For these, and other reasons, we believe that special attention must be paid to education and to enhancing the roles and the status of women.

Despite the seriousness of this crisis, we are hopeful. We humans, in spite of our faults, can be intelligent, resourceful, compassionate, prudent and imaginative. We have access to great reservoirs of moral and spiritual courage. Deep within us stirs a commitment to the health, safety and future of our children. Understanding that the world does not belong to any one nation or generation, and sharing a spirit of utmost urgency, we dedicate ourselves to undertake bold action to cherish and protect the environment of our planetary home. [*Signers' names omitted*]

CARE FOR GOD'S EARTH REQUIRES JUSTICE FOR THE POOR, A STATEMENT BY SENIOR RELIGIOUS LEADERS, February 5, 1997, Washington, D.C.

Americans are more clearly than ever committed to protection of the environment. For most, it is a moral issue which draws upon deep values and rises above partisan politics.

Over the past several years, major American faith groups, across a remarkably broad spectrum, have worked to establish a distinctively religious voice and comprehensive program. Scholars have prepared authoritative theological analyses. Program manuals have been sent to over 100,000 congregations. Regional trainings have been convened for several thousand clergy and lay leaders. Moral perspectives on public policy have been circulated through extensive legislative networks to federal, state, and local governments.

This is not, however, yet another campaign on yet

another issue. We engage this challenge not so much as “environmentalists” but rather as people of faith seeking to better understand what it must mean to be religious, now and henceforth, as stewards of God’s handiwork amidst a crisis in creation.

We come to the nation’s capital, following the State of the Union address, to affirm that care for creation is now an irreversible priority for the American religious community. But we also wish to emphasize one perspective of fundamental importance to people of faith, and of particular urgency in this moment and political climate.

Some have called it “environmental justice”. It springs from hundreds of years of teaching and struggle for social and economic freedom and opportunity, calling us now to the new challenge of distributing equitably the benefits and burdens of environmental protection.

This is an ancient, religious concern. Scripture teaches that justice among God’s people and protection of God’s land are indivisible. Great biblical stories are played out intimately within the natural world. They begin in a garden. God’s promised land is what awaits the faithful, freed from slavery. After the flood, the rainbow of redemption is God’s “covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature” (Gen 9:15). How we treat one another, then, affects all life and habitat. Where “there is no fidelity, no mercy...the land mourns and everything that dwells in it languishes” (Hos 4:3). For Jews, these themes are reinforced in the Talmud and later legal codes. For Christians, they live in the example and teachings of Jesus Christ, where a measure of our love of God’s gift of life is our care for the oppressed and needy, “the least of these.”

The biblical vision of the relation between human justice and ecological sustainability is vivid in present-day global conditions. God’s creation is afflicted by unmoderated greed and unmet need. Over-consumption of natural resources by the wealthiest nations is the single greatest cause of global environmental degradation. Widespread poverty among developing nations, in turn, leads to the destruction of habitat and extinction of species. Economic justice, therefore, is central to the our approach to such global environmental



Photo courtesy of Save-the-Redwoods League, San Francisco, CA 94104, (415) 362-2352

California redwoods have become iconically associated with the environmental movement and the need to preserve wilderness areas. The grandeur of these venerable trees and the threat to their extinction by logging has helped focus attention on our imperiled natural habitat and already produced eco-martyrs.

issues as sustainable development, climate change, biodiversity, deforestation, and pollution of land and water.

Here at home, in the very communities we serve, we see first-hand how low-income and vulnerable populations bear a disproportionate burden of environmental destruction. The health, homes, children, and communities of the poor are more likely to be poisoned environmentally. In turn, those who dwell in polluted conditions are likely, as a result, to suffer still greater economic burden. An overwhelming majority of studies concludes that race even more than income is a critical factor in this cycle. The cycle is exacerbated by a political process which too often deprives communities of the right to know the sources and help shape the remedies of their afflictions—particularly when set against powerful, well-financed special interests. When solutions are devised, they often come last

and least to the poor—those whom we believe have a preferential claim on compassionate initiative.

As we speak, people in our congregations are in the midst of the immediate struggles for environ-

“If we are ever able to stop destroying our environment, it will be because person by person we decide, by God’s grace, to turn aside from greed and materialism. It will be because we learn that joy and fulfillment come through right relationship with God, neighbor and earth, not an ever escalating demand for more and more material consumption. Nowhere is that more possible than in local congregations that combine prayer and action, worship and analysis, deep personal love for the Creator and for the Creator’s garden.”

—Baptist Professor Ronald Sider

mental justice. Harlem’s Church of the Intercession, where John Audubon lies to rest, works to reduce bus emissions causing high rates of pediatric asthma. Minneapolis’ Jewish Community Action is engaged in efforts to reclaim polluted urban land for job creation. West Dallas’ New Waverly Baptist Church seeks adequate health services and financial settlements for congregants suffering from illness and disability caused by a nearby lead smelting plant. Parishioners in the diocese of Houma-Thibodaux, Louisiana have initiated an effort to prevent coastal erosion because loss of wetlands means loss of jobs and a way of life. The Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns in Portland, Oregon is helping provide citizen input to protect low-income neighborhoods from the effects of urban sprawl.

Air pollution, which contributes to thousands of deaths from lung disease, has greatest impact in congested, low-income urban areas. Three out of every five African-and Hispanic-Americans live in communities with dangerous abandoned toxic waste sites. One hundred thousand workers die annually from exposure to poisonous chemicals. Poor children suffer serious neurological damage and death from lead poisoning at twice the rate of

others. These circumstances spring from degradations of God’s creation, falling hardest upon the poorest of God’s children, and this is not justice.

We understand that their causes are complex. We value the deep commitment of officials in this Administration, and a growing number of members of Congress from both parties, to the cause of environmental protection. The nation will long be in debt to those who, in these years, stood firm and fast for America’s common ground. We will continue to affirm, against any renewed challenge, the moral consensus of the American people in favor of strong and effective environmental protection.

But the recent bipartisan retreat in the struggle against poverty compels us to question whether standards of justice with courage of commitment will guide environmental policy over the next four years. Perspectives which led to this retreat must be challenged, in government and outside, if programs to protect the environment are to be equitable and effective. We fear that the poor and the vulnerable, already suffering from current social and economic policy, will also be denied the full benefits of environmental protection.

Since “God will champion the cause of the poor, the rights of the needy,” (Ps 140:13) opportunities to do God’s will lie before us here. We must protect our children’s health. Stop toxic poisoning of poor communities. Save lives by cleaning our air and water. Renew urban environments. Assure communities the right to know the hazards which threaten their families, jobs, and neighborhoods. And guarantee racial justice within all such initiatives.

For these, as with all other national policies, the measure of present and future moral stature at the very highest levels of leadership must be courageous action to protect the most vulnerable in the American community.

In this cause, we will seek to work closely with other sectors of society. Issues which link environmental protection and economic justice are coming before the new Administration and Congress. We will watch them closely, and, as they move toward policy, share our viewpoints through the leadership and networks of our respective faith groups. We encourage national environmental organizations to give greater priority to protecting afflicted people

as they choose how and where to defend endangered ecosystems and other species. The environmental movement could grow in vision, analysis, and endurance from a deeper engagement with historic struggles for social justice. We reach out to senior executives of key industries whose corporate decisions so widely affect the public's health. Lives are at stake here. And we support communities directly afflicted by poverty and pollution in their efforts to defend their interests, define their needs, and participate from the outset in programmatic remedies. In these communities lie reservoirs of wisdom, culture, and the unique knowledge which comes from direct experience.

Because the cause of environmental justice embraces the whole of God's creation, it would seem the perfect arena for all to work together for the common good. But only on a level playing field, where disproportionate power does not lie with special interests.

For our part, we are extending past efforts further forward through a three-year, \$4 million campaign to allow individual partner groups to shape distinctive responses to ongoing issues of environmental sustainability and economic justice. This effort will help us enhance existing programs by integrating environmental initiatives directly into them.

The ultimate goal of this work, finally, is the renewal of religious imagination and devotion. So, when traditional liturgies resonate afresh with praise of divine handicraft...when a theologian writes of a sacramental universe, and a parish priest reads that work and is stirred to his best sermon of the year...when endangered species and habitats are included in the prayers of the people...when clergy bring youth gangs to community gardens to broker peace agreements...when a child suddenly remembers a religious school lesson during a walk in the woods: all these are occasions when care for creation brings life to faith, and draws all of us closer to God. □



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Animal Magic

Protecting the environment includes caring for our younger brothers.

*The foregoing and other related documents are available through the **National Religious Partnership for the Environment**, a group founded in 1993 on the premise that "caring for Creation is a fundamentally religious imperative that transcends denominational differences and partisan politics." As NRPE's director, Paul Gorman, states, "Ancient faith traditions are engaging in a new world historical challenge here, in a way which is both strengthening the cause of environmental sustainability and justice and renewing religious life itself." Howard Ris, executive director of the Union of Concerned Scientists, who helped assemble the Partnership's science advisory panel, says of what may be the largest interfaith organization ever formed: "We could disagree comfortably on how the earth's creatures were created, but we really needed to work together to save what was left." For more information, contact NRPE at 1047 Amsterdam Ave., New York, NY 10025; (800) 200-8850; or www.nrpe.org.*

Globalization— Bane or Blessing?

IT WAS THE BEST OF TIMES, it was the worst of times,” English novelist Charles Dickens wrote in his classic *A Tale of Two Cities* about 18th century France. And an observer of the current scene has noted that “glitz meets gloom.”¹

Why? Because of globalization. It has “expanded trade and created great wealth, but this has a dangerous downside as well.”² What is this downside?

“There is downward mobility.”³ “These are volatile things.”⁴ “One million longtime workers...lose their jobs each year.”⁵ And for those who keep their jobs, “real income...has been shrinking steadily for some time.”⁶ “Americans will need extra help to survive global markets.”⁷ And it’s no better in Europe.⁸

Why is all this going on? In some parts of the Third World “workers earn as little as 12 cents an hour.”⁹ In one country, just 6 cents.¹⁰ Meanwhile, First World wages are “among the highest of all human history.”¹¹ Hence “we are not playing on a level playing field.”¹²

And this situation is not being allowed to continue. We are moving toward the new age of Aquarius. That sign’s symbol is the Water Bearer, *balancing* a pitcher on his head.¹³ Moreover, Uranus, ruler of Aquarius, is esoteric lord of Libra,¹⁴ the sign of the scales, *balance*.

And much of recent history has been a balancing act. Colonialism—a small part of the world controlling the rest—has had its day, as has most of slavery, and less than fair treatment of minorities. The present globalization is simply an outgrowth of all that, a regeneration.



Image of Marble Blue Earth 2000, Nasa

Pluto is the planet of profound regeneration, and it has been closer to Earth than Neptune, a phenomenon which occurs rarely and for only relatively brief periods.¹⁵ The last instance of this occurrence was between September 30, 1736 and July 21, 1747.¹⁶ And what was transpiring then? The global *balance* between the superpowers of the day, France and Britain, shifted in favor of the latter. Also during this time three famous men were born: Thomas Jefferson, Thomas Paine, and John Hancock, founding architects of America, the country that was destined to play the leading role in ushering in the New Age—of which the present trend toward economic globalization is a harbinger.

Often it is only in retrospect that one can see “God’s hand at work in particular situations.”¹⁷ albeit in the long run, much good will accrue from all this. How can one be sure? Globalization, by gradually eradicating the present-day still huge differences between the rich nations and the poor, the haves and the have nots, will remove a major, if not *the* major, cause of war. “Prosperity needs peace.”¹⁸ “Excessive fortunes are a menace.”¹⁹

They create instability. Rich individuals are envied by the impoverished, wealthy nations by the poor.

There's much truth in the statement that "each war is a reprise of the last one."²⁰ World War II, for instance, was initiated by certain powers who regarded themselves poor, primarily owing to the belief of having been cheated by the treaties following World War I. What border has for decades been the most unstable? That between the U.S. and Mexico.²¹ If the people to its south had the same income as those on the other side, would they seek to cross the American border illegally, and at great risk? As for the Arab-Israeli "border trouble," the GNP of the latter is several times that of the former.

Current trends in Europe are an example of economic union leading to political union and possibly more. Let it be recalled that after the American Revolution there was no one United States; there were several quarreling *disunited* colonies. Until, that is, Virginia and Maryland settled their economic differences, inspired the other colonies to do the same, and that produced the United States.

A few decades later, thirty-nine separate German entities started the Zollverein, an economic union of sorts, which led to a United Germany in 1871. Just as surely as a new economic order leads to a new political one, a new social one will follow.²²

And in the New Age it will also be different spiritually, thereby promoting prosperity, for in the long run the roots of lasting prosperity and all other blessings are always and only spiritual. □

—A Probationer

1. *The Christian Science Monitor*, February 15, 1996, page 87.
2. *U. S. News & World Report*, February 19, 1996, page 92.
3. *Newsweek*, March 18, 1996, page 44.
4. Former Senator Bill Bradley, *The Christian Science Monitor*, February 27, 1996, page 3.
5. *U. S. News & World Report*, March 18, 1996, page 71.
6. *The Christian Science Monitor*, March 4, 1996, page 31.
7. *U. S. News & World Report*, February 26, 1996, page 31.
8. *Newsweek*, February 26, 1996, page 50
9. *The Christian Science Monitor*, March 11, 1996, page 16.
10. *Life*, June 1996, page 38
11. *World*, March 30, 1996, page 24.
12. *The Christian Science Monitor*, February 27, 1996, page 3.
13. And the Age of Aquarius began to dawn last century. *The Rosicrucian Philosophy in Questions and Answers*, Volume II, Max Heindel, pages 110, 353.
14. *Astrology, the Divine Science*, Marcia Moore and Mark Douglas, page 703.
15. *The Astrology of Transcendence*, Philop Sedgwich, pages 151-2.

Our Blessing

Sitting today in the sunshine,
That touched me with fingers of love,
I thought of the manifold blessings
God scatters on Earth, from above;
And they seemed, as I numbered them over,
Far more than we merit, or need,
And all that we lack is the Angels
To make Earth a heaven indeed.

The winter brings long, pleasant evenings,
The spring brings a promise of flowers
That summer breathes into fruition,
And autumn brings glad golden hours.
The woodlands re-echo with music,
The moonbeams ensilver the sea;
There is sunlight and beauty about us,
And the world is as fair as can be.

But mortals are always complaining,
Each one thinks his own a sad lot;
And forgetting the good things about him
Goes mourning for those he has not.
Instead of the star-spangled heavens,
We look on the dust at our feet;
We drain out the cup that is bitter,
Forgetting the one that is sweet.

We mourn o'er the thorn in the flower,
Forgetting its odor and bloom;
We pass by a garden of blossoms
To weep o'er the dust of the tomb
There are blessings unnumbered about us,
Like the leaves or the forest they grow;
And the fault is our own—not the Giver's
That we have not an Eden below.

—Ella Wheeler Wilcox

16. *The Sun is Also a Star*, Dane Rudhyar, pages 192-3.
17. *World*, March 12, 1996, page 30.
18. *The Christian Science Monitor*, May 24, 1996, page 5.
19. *U. S. News & World Report*, March 18, 1996, page 12.
20. *Sojourners*, March-April 1996, page 14.
21. *The Christian Science Monitor*, February 13, 1996, page 11.
22. *National Review*, April 18, 1996, page 46.

Bearing the Marks of the Lord Jesus

BOTH THE OCCULT and mystic paths of Christian initiation converge at Gethsemane, where the candidate “is saturated with sorrow which flowers into compassion.” There the union of the mind and the heart ready the candidate for the development of the stigmata, “a necessary preparation for the mystic death and resurrection” (*AMI*, p. 114). Underlying the mystic facts of this phenomenon is the dissolution of the interlocking grip between the etheric and physical bodies, which are most closely bound together in the palms of the hands, the arches of the feet, and the head.

While the occultist concentrates his efforts upon severing the connection at these points, producing the stigmata invisibly, the Christian mystic lacks knowledge of how to perform the act without producing an exterior manifestation.

“But whether the stigmata are visible or invisible, the effect is the same. The spiritual currents generated in the vital body of such a person are so powerful that the body is scourged by them, as it were, particularly in the region of the head, where they produce a feeling akin to that of the crown of thorns” (*AMI*, p. 119).

There are no recorded instances of the stigmata before the crucified Jesus appeared to St. Francis in the form of a six-winged seraph and told him, “I have given you the stigmata, which are the emblems of my Passion, so that you may be my standard-bearer.” For the next seven centuries, at least four hundred individuals, nearly all Roman Catholic, most of them female and Italian, were reported to have borne the stigmata, in various forms. One of the few documented stigmatists who was not a Roman Catholic was Elsa Nilsson Gjessing, a Lutheran from Minnesota. Two



Giotto di Bondone (1267-1337), from the Church of San Francesco, Pisa, now in the Louvre

St. Francis Receiving the Stigmata

other stigmatists who lived during the same time were Therese Neumann (1898-1962), a Bavarian laywoman, and Padre Pio (1887-1968) an Italian Capuchin priest.

The apostle Paul wrote “I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus” (Gal 6:17). He also said, “I die daily.” Figuratively, that is. Therese Neumann died about twenty-six times a year for forty years—physically. No, the silver cord was not ruptured. But at the ninth hour (3 PM Israel time) on Passion Friday, when Jesus gave up the ghost (vital body and higher vehicles), her heart stopped beating and her lungs were motionless for about forty minutes. As many times she was reborn like a baby, yawning for air and squirming.

Scarcely less remarkable, she ate no food nor drank

any water over these forty years, during which time she actually gained weight! Moreover, the loss of blood from the eyes (the agony in Gethsemane), hands and feet (nail wounds), head, (crown of thorns), back (scourging marks) and shoulder (where cross was borne), amounting to as much as a liter, and weight losses of up to 15 pounds during Holy Thursday through Passion Friday, would be regained in two days.

How did medical science explain this living on thin air (inedia)? It didn't and couldn't, although it was not for lack of trying. For a period of 15 days, a team of two physicians and four nurses monitored Neumann's every move, measured her weight losses and gains. Her survival, indeed, robust health, remained a mystery. But not to her. For she daily received the consecrated host. This was her sustenance, the life-giving body of her Lord.

Neumann experienced the Passion over seven hundred times, on most Fridays during forty years. She was transported in vision to the immediate site of Christ Jesus' ordeal, beginning in Gethsemane and concluding on the Cross, which events were later narrated while in a state of childlike prepossession.

In addition, Neumann performed a calculated ten years of victim-soul suffering, in which she took on the tribulations of individuals and groups of people—their illnesses, temptations, or estrangement from God. She most frequently expiated for souls in purgatory.

Three books make for fascinating reading on Neumann's visions and life: *A Light Shone in the Darkness* (Doreen Rossman, Queenship Publishing Co., 1997) is the most recent and comprehensive treatment and contains the best pictures; *Therese Neumann, Mystic and Stigmatist* (Adalbert Vogl, Tan Books, 1987) gives the most biographical information; *Visions of Therese Neumann*, (Johannes Steiner, Alba House, 1976), which readers may find the most interesting, since they recount Neumann's visions detailing much of Christ Jesus' ministry.

Padre Pio, in many ways led a more instructive and approachable life. While Neumann was a simple peasant woman, Pio was a deeply sensitive soul whose interior life invites comparison with the great mystics of the church, such as John of the Cross and Teresa of Avila. Pio bore the stigmata in his hands for fifty years. He had numerous objective encounters with the devil, as attested to by his fellow friars witnessing loud noises, offensive smells, and disordered



Father Naber

Stigmatist Therese Neumann suffers a Passion ecstasy (approx. 1955), one of about seven hundred Passions in which she manifested the wounds and agony of Christ Jesus.

and damaged objects in Pio's room.

Pio's classic biography, *Padre Pio, the True Story* (Bernard Ruffin Our Sunday Visitor Publishing Div., 1991), details many supernormal phenomenon confirmed by the fact-gathering bodies appointed by the Holy See. Most notably were his ability to see the future, to "read hearts," to bilocate (his etheric presence experienced apart from his physical body), to levitate, and to heal "incurables." However, Pio did not believe that the relief of suffering was always God's will, or that all Christians should have health, material property, or even spiritual consolation.

Most of us have difficulty enough contending with the trials of rather routine living. The exemplary and Christ-infused lives of Padre Pio and Therese Neumann show us an extreme form of service that challenges our comprehension and commands our wonder. One cannot read of the lives of these two souls, however singular in some respects, without being fortified by the power of their faith and inspired by their heroic humility and absolute commitment to participate—body, mind and spirit—in the suffering of the Lord Jesus Christ. By so doing, they made believers out of the most recalcitrant atheists and rekindled the devotion of thousands of lapsed Christians. □

—Carl Swan

The True Cause of Contagion

THERE ARE MANY PEOPLE of a supercilious nature who are always ready to crack a joke at the expense of Christian Science and kindred methods of divine healing which teach its followers to cultivate a fearless attitude of mind under all conditions. But as a matter of actual fact, an enormous percentage of our sickness is actually due and traceable to feelings of fear upon the part of the patient.

Travelers who have visited uninhabited islands report that the birds and beasts found there, were unafraid of them at first, but they soon learned the predatory nature of man, and fled before him in fear of their lives. Thus the ruthless nature of man has in ages past, spread fear all over the earth. We have conquered, tamed and exploited both bird and beast, and what we could not conquer we have slain, until every breathing thing hides in fear of us. That is to say, among the larger animals none is so large that it does not fear and flee from him. But when we turn in the direction of the little things, then the case is different, and man who thinks he reigns supreme on earth because he has put all the larger creation in a state of fear, trembles in turn before the minute things in the world and the smaller they are, the more he fears them.

The microscope has told us that such a small creature as the house fly carries about on the fur of its legs thousands of parasites which we fancy are inimical to our health, and therefore fear prompts us to spend millions of dollars on fly paper, fly screens, fly traps and other devices to rid ourselves of this pest, but our efforts are largely in vain.



Oil on canvas, c. 1847, Edward Hicks (1770-1849), Private Collection

The Peaceable Kingdom

In Eden and the New City of Peace the sheep lies down with the wolf.

Though such vast sums are expended yearly to exterminate the fly, it is so prolific that it breeds quicker than we can slay it.

But we fear its cousin, the mosquito, even more. The microscope has told us that this little insect is one of the chief messengers of the Angel of Death, therefore we fight it in fear of our lives, but it thrives in spite of the vast sums yearly expended upon its extermination. Then there is the milk we drink. Under ordinary conditions it is said that there are one hundred thousand germs to the cubic centimeter, but under the best and most sanitary conditions this army of destroyers can be brought down to ten thousand. So in fear and trembling we pasteurize this fluid before we dare to give it to the children of tender age.

Every drop of water we drink swarms with germ life, says the microscope, and even the coin and currency wherewith we purchase the necessities of life are vehicles of death, for they are infected with germs to an almost unbelievable extent. Once we started to launder them, but it was found that the bankers could not so easily detect counterfeits

after they had been washed, so we abandoned the process. We either fear the counterfeiters more than the germs or we love money more than health.

Is not this whole attitude ridiculous and unworthy of our high and noble estate, as human beings, as children of God? It is well known to science that an attitude of fear breaks down the power of resistance of the body, and thereby lays it liable to diseases which would not otherwise be able to get a foothold. From the occult point of view it is perfectly plain why this is so. The dense body which we see with our eyes, is interpenetrated by a vehicle made of ether and the energy from the Sun which pervades all space is constantly pouring into our body through the spleen which is a specialized organ for the attraction and assimilation of this universal ether. In the solar plexus it is converted into a rose colored fluid which permeates the nervous system. This may be compared to electricity in the wires of an electric or telegraphic system. By means of this vital fluid the muscles are moved and the organs perform their vital functions so that the body may express itself in perfect health. The better the health the larger the quantity of this solar fluid which we are able to absorb. But we can only utilize a certain part of it, while the surplus is radiated from the body in straight lines.

You have seen the paper ribbons which are fastened to the front of electric fans in candy stores and fruit stands. When the fan is set going these streamers float outward from the fan. The streamers which flow from the whole periphery of the human body also radiate in straight lines when we are in perfect health. This condition is therefore aptly described as radiant health. We speak of such a person as radiating life and vigor. Under such conditions no disease germs can ever get a foothold in his body. They can not enter from without because of these invisible streamers of force any more than a fly can enter an opening in a building covered by an exhaust fan. And those microorganisms which enter the body with the food are also quickly expelled, for the vital processes in the body are selective, as shown by the kidneys, for instance, which excrete the waste matter while retaining vital substances necessary for the economy of the body.

But the moment we allow thoughts of fear, of worry, of anger, the body endeavors, as it were, to close the gates against an outside foe, fancied or real. Then also the spleen closes up and ceases to specialize the vital fluid in sufficient quantities for the necessities of the body, and we shall then see a phenomenon which is analogous to the effect of lowering the voltage or cutting in more resistance in the electric fan. In that case the paper streamers will begin to hang down. They will no longer wave over the candy or fruit to protect it and keep the flies away. Similarly in the human body, when the thought of fear forces the partial closure of the spleen, the solar fluid does not go through the body with the same speed as before. It does not then radiate from the periphery in straight lines, but these lines become crumpled and thus they allow easy access to the little deleterious organisms which may then feed unobstructed upon our tissues and cause disease.

Whether the consistent Christian Scientists, mental scientists, or others who believe in divine healing know this law or not, they act according to its dictates when they affirm that they are children of God and that they have no reason to fear, for God is their Father and will protect them so long as they do not deliberately disregard the ordinary laws of life. Medical science knows that the so-called disease germs are not dangerous unless there is soil predisposed to their culture, and it is noteworthy that the New York board of health has now abolished fumigation for all diseases except small-pox. Thus typhoid, pneumonia, diphtheria and other diseases which were formerly thought to be of so contagious a nature that they must be guarded against by fumigation, are now regarded as either less dangerous or else it has been discovered that the process of fumigation is not efficient.

The actual fact and the truth in the matter is that contagion comes from within. So long as we live a common sense life, feeding our bodies upon the pure foods which come from the vegetable kingdom, taking a sufficient amount of exercise, and keeping mentally active, we may rest secure in the promise that the Lord is our refuge. There shall no evil befall us so long as we thus show our faith by our works. On the other hand, if we belie our faith

in God by disregard of His laws, our expectations of health are vain.

Last year a doctor who was imbued with fear of contagion in an abnormal degree visited Mount Ecclesia. On the night of his arrival a mosquito lighted upon his nose, he brushed it away in great horror and asked anxiously: "Are they malarious?" He was always looking for pathological conditions and soon went away dissatisfied with our ideas, especially the idea that fear attracts and trust in God repels pathological germs. This was to him ridiculous in the extreme. We had with us at that time one of our student friends who was suffering from tuberculosis, but by means of a rational diet and the pure air of Mount Ecclesia he was gaining fast—had, in fact, gained ten pounds when this doctor took it upon himself to tell our poor friend that it was an outrage that he would stay on Mount Ecclesia, or come into the dining room, that he was a menace to everyone at headquarters, etc. The poor young man became so disturbed that in spite

of all we could say to him he had no rest, and he left shortly afterwards.

There is no doubt in our mind that had we been allowed to keep him we would have eventually cured the disease by the help of the Elder Brothers and our physical methods. As it was he died shortly after, and we feel he was killed by the inconsiderate fear of this doctor. And he is only one of thousands who are killed by others or who commit suicide by taking a dose of fear, for fear will kill just as surely as any mineral poison. It is perhaps even more deadly.

Shortly afterwards Mrs. Heindel and the writer moved into the cottage where the young man had lived with his mother, despite the protests of all concerned on Mount Ecclesia. We have lived here almost a year, and have as yet developed no symptoms of disease, for we trust in God and live accordingly, and so long as we maintain that attitude nothing can harm us. □

—Max Heindel

Occult Principles of Health and Healing

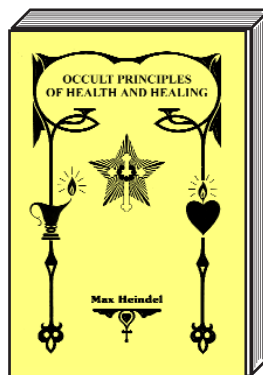
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HEALING

The Healing Christ

AS SUCH A LARGE PART of the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles is devoted to the healing of the sick, we may rightly ask, How is it that the Lord was so concerned with the infirm, and why should He perform healing miracles to prove His divine mission? Could it not have been that He was giving by example a pattern for His future followers to emulate? Surely, the procedure of Christ Jesus, if we have eyes to see, proves that all true healing comes essentially from a divine Source, and that every human individual, being a spark of the Divine Flame, has the capability of becoming a channel for the divine healing Power.

Imagine such a scene as related in Matthew 14:35: "And when the men of that place had knowledge of Him, they sent out into all the country round about, and brought unto Him all that were diseased; and besought that they might touch the hem of His garment: and as many as He touched were made perfectly whole."

They literally swamped Him with patients wherever He went, as in this scene: "And they come unto Him, bringing one sick with the palsy. And when they could not come nigh unto Him for the press, they uncovered the roof where He was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay." (Mark 2:3-4)

Who were the people whom Christ helped primarily? Lepers; the deaf, mute, blind, and paralyzed; lunatics; epileptics; gouty, dropsical patients; and those with atrophied limbs. Evidently all these cases were such definite karmic conditions that no physical means alone could bring results. Something more powerful was needed to break the iron Law of Consequence which held these people in its grip. No less a remedy was required than the healing Power from the source of



"In the Villages the Sick Were Brought to Him," Watercolor, James J. Tissot (1836-1902)

life as manifested through the Christ. □

Visible Helpers are just as necessary as Invisible 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:

- November.....5—12—19—25
- December.....2—9—17—23—29

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.

Fellowship—A Legend

THREE BEGGARS WENT DOWN to Samaria, the one deaf, another blind, the third a cripple. And as they went one said, “Surely I am a sinner—being deaf.”

And the second said, “I am blind, surely I am a sinner also.” And the third likewise owned his sins, saying, “Therefore I am a cripple.”

Then they were minded how they always went the three together and said each to the other:

“I can hear, for I have thee and thee for ears.”

And the next said, “I can see, for I have thee and thee for eyes.”

And the last said, “Surely you twain are my feet.”

Then all three praised God and rejoiced.

And as they drew near to Samaria they met one whose mouth was covered and in his hand was a clapper, for he was a leper. He stood far off and begged an alms of them, but they said, “We beggars, we have nought; we go down to Samaria seeking alms, for the Samaritans are ready givers.”

Then the leper cried aloud and said, “Though you have nought yet you are greatly blessed, being three. But I am a sinner and must dwell comradeless.”

When the three friends heard that they said one to another, “We are likewise sinners but we go in company.” Then their heart smote them with compassion for the lonely one and with one consent they called to him: “We be all sinners and afflicted of the Lord. Come now and be of our fellowship.”

The leper rejoiced exceedingly hearing this and said: “Then let us go to Bethlehem for this night in a dream one showed me that Messiah is born there.”

The road to Bethlehem was stony and steep and the night fell, but the blind man knew the way.

It was night when they reached the stable door at Bethlehem and they feared to knock. Now within, Joseph slept but Mary kept watch by the child; she heard the noise of feet and of men whispering, so she



Fresco, 78-5/8 x 72-3/4 in., Giotto (1266-1337), Scrovegni Chapel, Padua, Italy

The Nativity

arose and opened the wicket.

A dazzling ray of light streamed out into the darkness, and through the wicket Mary inquired who they were and why they had come, and they answered: “We be all sinners and justly afflicted by the Lord, but we hear that Messiah is born and therefore have we come.”

The Virgin asked, “What gift have you brought, for none can enter here except he bring an offering.” The beggars cast down their eyes and answered nothing for their hands were empty.

Mary asked them saying, “Who is the fourth man who standeth somewhat apart?”

Then the three feared greatly and fell upon their knees crying, “We are sinners indeed for we joined this one unto us and he is a leper; and moreover he is a Samaritan.

Then Mary threw the door open wide and they came in and beheld the Saviour: The blind received his sight, the deaf heard, the lame man leaped upon his feet. And they looked expecting that the leper should be cleansed. But he was gone. Then they perceived that it had been an angel of the Lord. □

—Blanche Cromartie

