

Rays from the Rose Cross



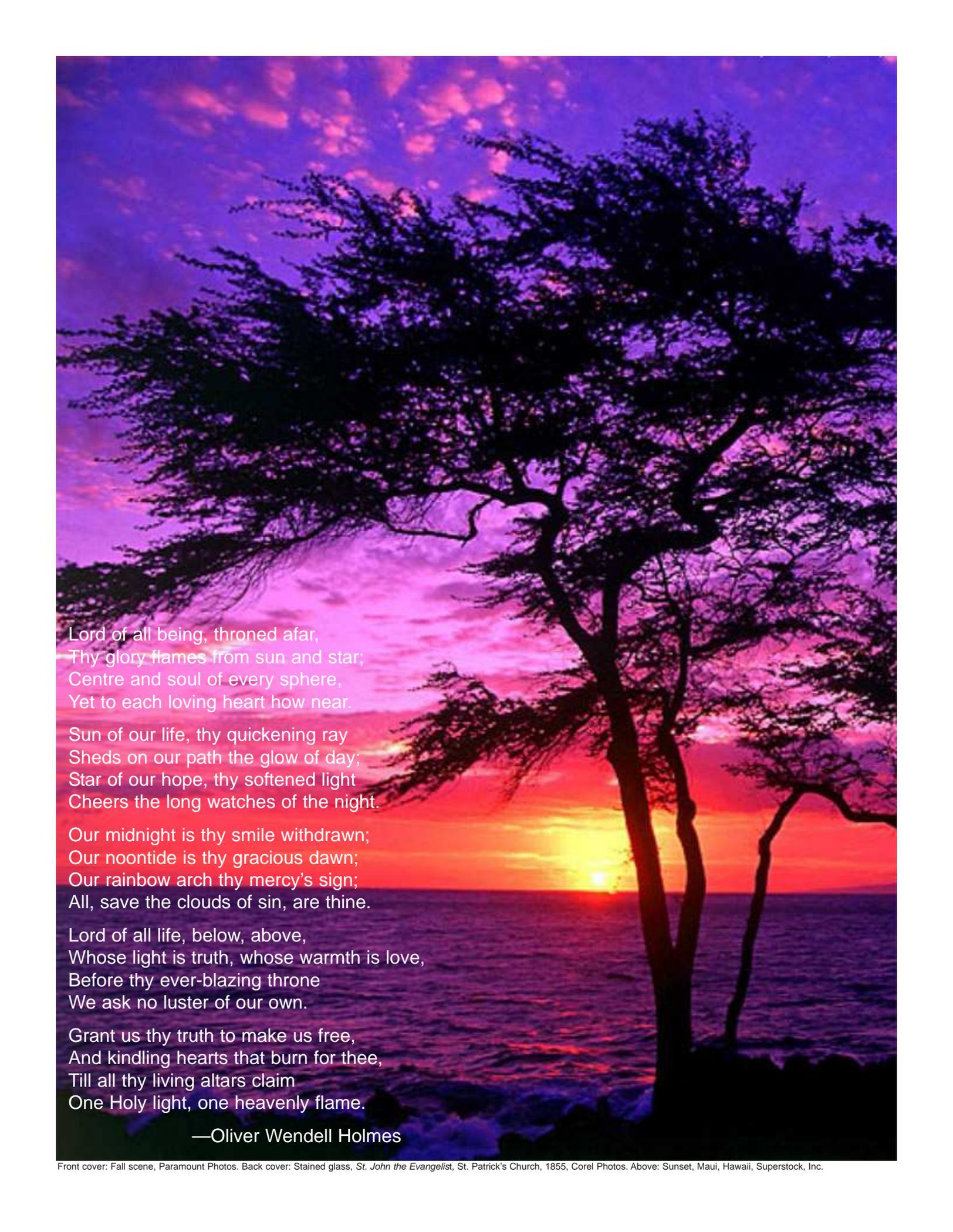
"A Sane Mind, A Soft Heart, A Sound Body"

September/October 1998—\$5.00

**VISION AND CHARACTER
THE TREE OF LIFE
LIBERTY, EQUALITY, FRATERNITY
THE LOST BOOKS OF THE BIBLE**

A CHRISTIAN ESOTERIC MAGAZINE



A photograph of a sunset over the ocean. The sun is a bright yellow-orange orb on the horizon, casting a glow across the sky. The sky transitions from a deep orange near the horizon to a vibrant purple and blue at the top. A large, dark silhouette of a tree with many branches dominates the right side of the frame, extending from the bottom to the top. The ocean is visible at the bottom, with gentle waves. The overall mood is serene and contemplative.

Lord of all being, throned afar,
Thy glory flames from sun and star;
Centre and soul of every sphere,
Yet to each loving heart how near.

Sun of our life, thy quickening ray
Sheds on our path the glow of day;
Star of our hope, thy softened light
Cheers the long watches of the night.

Our midnight is thy smile withdrawn;
Our noontide is thy gracious dawn;
Our rainbow arch thy mercy's sign;
All, save the clouds of sin, are thine.

Lord of all life, below, above,
Whose light is truth, whose warmth is love,
Before thy ever-blazing throne
We ask no luster of our own.

Grant us thy truth to make us free,
And kindling hearts that burn for thee,
Till all thy living altars claim
One Holy light, one heavenly flame.

—Oliver Wendell Holmes

Rays from the Rose Cross

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

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FEATURE



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

Bless the Burden

Bless the burden and the cross,
Bless the sorrow and the pain,
Know there is but victory,
God in you is power to gain.
Bless the day, the hour, the scene,
Bless your enemies that seek
Your destruction—bless them all—
Scorn the thought that this is weak.

Silently as does the plant
Break the rock that bars its way,

So your prayers, your faith, your praise,
Conquer force that would delay
Or restrain you from your good;
All unseen by mortal eyes
Love goes forward, it will win—
Victory within you lies.

Bless the burden, rise and say;
Christ is here, He leads the way.

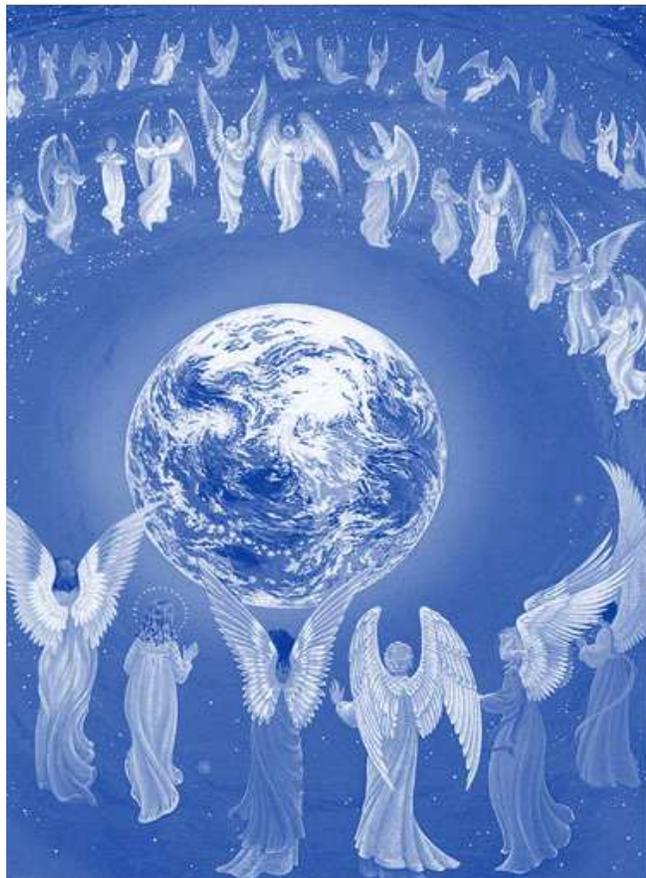
—Della Adams Leitner

Preparing for the Mystic Birth

WE ARE ENTERING the fourth quarter of the calendar year, that geocentric period during which the sun transits the celestial arc whose endpoints are the cardinal cusps of Libra, marking the fall equinox, and Capricorn, the time of the winter solstice. The sun has descended through the earth's intangible vehicles, its desire and vital envelopes, and is entering the body of the planet, to be interred below the equatorial horizon. It is a dying to outward seeing; light dims and nature is everywhere diminished.

But in the earth's interior there is a quickening, which marks the end of the first quarter of Christ's annual salvatory revivification of the entire planetary sphere, begun when He commenced to leave His Father's throne at the summer solstice. With each yearly re-entry of the Christ life into our mundane world, its three lower vehicles (dense, vital, and desire bodies) are purified, harmonized, and rarified. A person endowed with the requisite level of occult vision, gazing upon Earth from the cosmos, can clearly discern the irradiating effect on its auric envelopes.

Yet, fully here below, we too can experience something of the throwing off of summer's substantiality, not only as ripened essence of the autumnal harvest, but especially in the clearing and lighting up of interior spaces, heightening the sense of living inwardness, as the pull of the earth on the senses weakens. The upper half of the vital body, the soul body, composed of light and reflecting ethers, is most readily developed at this time of the year. So that while Christ enters into the body of the earth, His renewed presence facilitates our ability to draw away from the material perspective and to fortify etheric consciousness.



Judith Ann Griffith. Reproduced with permission of Sunrise Publications, Inc. Bloomington, IN
Viewed from the celestial worlds, earth is the center of the cosmos and humanity's progress benefits angelic hierarchies.

This process culminates on Christmas eve, literally the holiest night of the year, because the Christ is most with us. He Who heals the earth and makes spiritually whole its humanity is both "born" to all humanity and fosters the mystic midnight birth.

As increasingly conscious participants in the Christian year, we adapt our thoughts and actions to the season's holy rhythms and spirit-guided impulses. Now begins the optimum time for that inner sowing whose harvest will yield fruits of the spirit. For as material light wanes and weakens, inner light grows ever stronger.

Particularly at this time let us tend to the fields of our earthly endeavors with the whole-hearted commitment that will hallow our souls in preparation for the birth of the Christ. □

MYSTIC LIGHT

Vision and Character

Come up hither, and I will shew thee things.—Revelation 4:1

IT IS QUITE TRUE that God reveals Himself in many ways and in divers manners. It is equally true to say, with regard to those classic instances recorded in scripture, that such unveilings of the majesty and purpose of God were received from elevated points of vision, high states of mind. Let us consider three examples.

The prophet Ezekiel, in referring to the Angel of the Lord, writes, “In the visions of God brought he me into the land of Israel, and set me upon a very high mountain.” (Ezekiel 40:2)

“And the devil, taking him [Jesus Christ] up into a high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.” (Luke 4:5)

“And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.” (Revelation 21:10)

To accept the above in a literal sense creates confusion in the mind and fails to grasp the underlying spiritual truth. The difficulty arises because the ego is encased in a physical body and maintains contact with a material world through the senses. Accordingly, on the basis of the three cited descriptions, the reader naturally forms a geographical concept.



Oil on canvas (after Raphael). Sir James Thornhill, 1675 - 1734. Royal Academy of Arts, London

St. Paul on the Areopagus Preaching the “Unknown God” to the Athenians

Paul, “a man in Christ,” was caught up into the third heaven, where he heard “unspeakable words.” Nevertheless, from that high mind so illumined in spirit, come words of power and wisdom to enlighten a humanity blinded by matter.

The ego’s imprisonment in the dense body works counter to a belief in the reality of the spiritual realms. We can better appreciate this result when we study occult history and learn that man’s ego has not always functioned in the envelope we now call a dense or physical body.

What actually transpired in the above-quoted passages, and what is taking place today with increasing frequency, was the recovery of a lost gift termed clairvoyance, or “clear-seeing.” When man gained full sight of the material world in the last third of the Atlantean Epoch, he became correspondingly unseeing and unaware of the existence of the higher immaterial worlds.

Herein lies the relevance of the Apostle Paul’s words addressed to the Corinthian Church: “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can

he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”

St. Paul, an initiate in the divine mysteries, was able to compare both the natural and spiritual aspects. Of course, the words of the Apostle are just a bare statement of fact, the reason behind it being that the evolution of the people of his day was not appreciably advanced. They could only accept spiritual truth in pictorial form. Much that Christ imparted to others could only be conveyed in word pictures, or parables. So limited was the spiritual understanding of His own disciples that perforce He had to say to them, “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.”

We shall see the deeper implications if we carefully weigh a few significant words that are closely related with the three incidents we have introduced. Ezekiel the Prophet says, “The hand of the Lord was upon me,” which is a mystical figure indicating entire captivity to the Lord, being in the Lord. St. John is carried by the Spirit, and Christ is led by the Spirit, each to their respective points of vision. Neither passage describes an ordinary climbing of a mountain, as when Christ ascended Mount Olivet and sat with His disciples. The latter permitted a view from an earthly summit, the former from metaphysical heights.

The explanation is that developed souls are able to function on higher planes inaccessible to the less spiritually evolved. In the language of occult science, these advanced souls have experienced the mystic baptism and are united with the primal source of Love, the eternal fire which is ultimately destined to quench all the evils of the world.

How closely the Quaker mystic George Fox was identified with the Eternal Fount may be gathered from an experience recorded in his journal: “I saw that there was an ocean of darkness and death, but an infinite ocean of light and love which flowed over the ocean of darkness.” Those who have explored the life and entered the mind of this remarkable lover of the Lord know that in this divine light he lived and moved and had his being. Only one incident need be culled from many that attest to this fact. When Cromwell desired to enlist his services as an officer in the Parliamentary Army, Fox’s reply was, “I live by the virtue of that life and power that takes away the occasion for all wars.”

The problem raised by these considerations in the mind of Bible students, especially if they be limited by a static outlook, or have not studied the works of the modern seer, Max Heindel, will probably be the extraordinary progress shown by certain pioneers of the spirit. Why this gap? How can there be such a high degree of perfection registered in a single life of, say, sixty, seventy, or eighty years? How can it be accounted for? With the same gospel and equivalent opportunities for most, even making allowances for heredity, training, environment, etc., still the query persists. All these considerations appear insufficient to bridge the gulf dividing these exalted



Autotype Fine Art Co., Ltd.

Frederic Shields

The Prophet Ezekiel

Depicted with “hand of the Lord,” the trance of spiritual vision upon him, Ezekiel holds a shophar which he sounds to warn the Israelites of enemies.

souls, who stand like Himalayan peaks in the spiritual firmament, from the humble pilgrim who is beginning consciously to tread the more excellent way.

A personal testimony may not be out of place from one who

has been a local preacher for forty years. I used to hold the belief that God had not only decreed a certain number of souls to salvation, He had also created a sort of Christian aristocracy of elect souls, carefully trained in some mysterious way and destined from the cradle to become the saviors of the race.

I am deeply wondering now how I made such a theory square with a God of love, but I feel I am not far from the truth in stating that there are many today who still subscribe to all or part of this theory. I leave it to the reader to imagine my intense consternation, then chagrin, and finally conviction when I learned from *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*, Max Heindel's monumental work, that the Almighty does not operate in such an arbitrary fashion; that in the remote past there was breathed into man that eternal spark of the Spirit which should enable him through many lives to become the arbiter of his own destiny. So whatever progress he may have made to date includes the good brought over from previous lives to this present one; that is, after debts have been liquidated by the law of consequence. Only in such a way can a right balance be maintained between a loving but just God and the beings He has created.

Man is in possession of inward powers which enable him to work out his own salvation, But to form an adequate view of human evolution we must identify an innate power of the Spirit which, while it works quite independently of the law of cause and effect, has a determining influence upon the progress of the aspirant. Max Heindel calls this soul power "epigenesis" (birth from above), or to use a modern term, "creative ability," which enables the candidate to strike out along new and original lines in respect of every facet of character and life.

Perhaps this fact will be grasped more firmly if we take a simple illustration from nature, something that occurred many years ago, and which has left its mark upon a certain branch of horticulture to this day. We will try to reconstruct the situation in our own way. Imagine an enthusiastic rose grower strolling down a country lane. He sees a common dog rose growing in the hedge. What a poor specimen of a rose, he involuntarily says to himself. Just four or five petals which fall to the

ground at a touch of the finger. Yet what a virile stem! A happy thought seizes him. Why not unite one of my best blooms to such a stem? He then puts his idea into practice. What happens? The sap rising in the vigorous stem commingles with the nature of the engrafted flower and is transmuted into a finer essence, thus producing a finer bloom.

What I want to stress is that our rose grower, by following the intuitive gleam, reveals that innate quality of soul called "genius." He deliberately produced finer specimens by substituting purposive selection for the slower processes of natural selection. Let us, too, grow finer blooms of character by the same process of selecting the best among our potentialities and invigorating them with our husbanded creative life force.

There are some who try to banish from their minds the vision of what God intends for them, thus retarding their progress on the path. Our business, on the contrary, is deliberately to invoke the vision, to compare it with what we are, here and now, and to aim for what the vision embodies, assured that we may do so.

Further to the quest of life, it must be clearly understood that the candidate who aspires to the attainment of the vision must be prepared to meet with obstacles upon the path, from which none are exempt. The higher one rises in spiritual understanding, the more subtle and refined are the tests. Often temptation arises after a time of enlightenment and spiritual exaltation, as exemplified in the case before us, when Christ, the great Sun Spirit, entered into the dense body of Jesus of Nazareth by means of the mystical baptism on the banks of the Jordan. The highest initiate of the Sun Period, in thus taking up His abode in the pure body of Jesus, became the ideal type and gave the impulse for the saints, mystics, and seers who have also attained to the baptism of the Spirit while in the body. As one has truly said, "The Son of God became the Son of Man that the Sons of Men might become the Sons of God."

Hardly had the voice from the Majesty on high faded away in the infinite blue than was Christed Jesus led forth to be tempted of the devil. He was now to receive a test which would either set its seal upon John's great claim for Him as "the Lamb of

God which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29), or, if failed, would plunge Him into depths of spiritual chaos.

His great protagonist is Lucifer, the leader of a host of angelic stragglers, who had nevertheless progressed light years further than members of the human life wave. In order to further their own evolution these beings are compelled to gain experience that can only be obtained by participating in the life of human beings in their physical bodies. Thus was the stage set for an epic scene which was to have stupendous results for the all humanity.

Keeping in mind what has gone before, the discerning reader will have divested himself of the literal picture of Christ being visibly borne aloft in the arms of a dark and powerful being to the top of a high mountain and there shown the kingdoms of earth in a moment of time. An esoteric reading of the “Temptation Scene” will make no reference to a material mountain. Not only so, but a little reflection should convince most people that the range of vision described in the gospel passage (encompassing “all the kingdoms of the world”) is impossible to the physical organ of sight.

What must be clearly borne in mind is that previous to the Jordan event, Christ had never functioned in a vehicle lower than the desire body. Therefore, in taking to Himself the dense and vital bodies of Jesus, there was presented to Him a panoramic view of the whole of the evolutionary plan of this universe—the mineral, plant, animal, and human kingdoms. Or, expressed in occult language, Christ Jesus entered into a retrospective consciousness that recapitulated the origin and entire development of the human dense and vital bodies.

From the Baptism onwards He is identified with this planet and its life in the closest possible relationship. Yet out of this relationship there was to arise His first severe test. Excellent as His highly evolved body was, it was not immune to fundamental physical needs and urges. The pangs of hunger that had seized upon that healthy and well-balanced body during its protracted period of abstinence from physical nourishment were now asserting themselves with the utmost intensity.

Ye humble dwellers on earth, pause a moment, and bow down your hearts in reverence as you



Ink and watercolor 1816-18, William Blake, Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge University

Satan Tempts Christ with the Kingdom of the Earth

“There is no peace in the heart of a carnal man.”—Thomas à Kempis. Man is in the physical world but not of it.

meditate upon the fact that this sublime spirit, in order to fulfill His divine mission of love, here endures a strange law working itself out in an entirely new vehicle to which the occupant was totally unaccustomed.

Should He use the Godlike powers that lay to His hand to appease this life-supporting craving? Why not? What could be more natural? Yet strange as it may appear to the ordinary mind, to have yielded would have had a debasing effect upon Him. There is a law of the spirit, binding on the initiate, which forbids him to use his special powers to satisfy personal needs, for the powers themselves are created out of totally impersonal love.

How could this lofty Spirit, “Who inhabiteth eternity,” be one with those whose routine prospect in life is literally to starve day by day? Or how could He consistently be called the great High Priest, touched with the feeling of our infirmities

and tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin? Nay, it was absolutely essential that He drink the cup to the bitter dregs. “He saved others, Himself He cannot save” was as true of Christ in temptation, as of Christ on the cross; the moral obligation to refuse to make stones into bread was as binding upon Him as to refuse to come down from the cross. Both actions lay within His power, but not within His purpose.

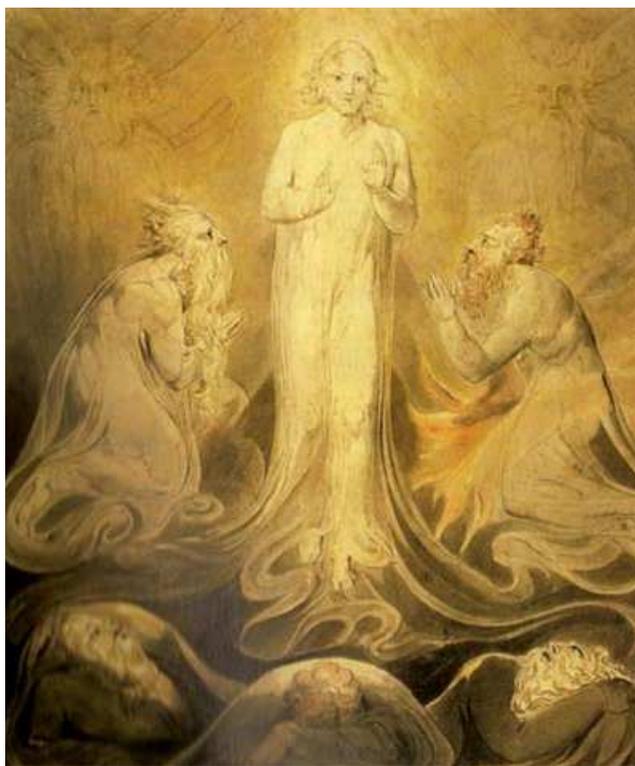
He was able to say in the Judean desert what He said in the Cenacle the night before Golgotha, “The Prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.” No alloy, no weak link upon which to fasten, for that immaculate life was all of a piece; a wedding garment of unspeakable beauty.

The humble wayfarer on this earthly plane, struggling up the rugged steps of life, yet with his face turned to the dawn, gazes with reverential awe upon these mighty figures that illumine the pages of history. Then, quite naturally, the personal aspect shapes itself in his mind. How and in what way do these profound truths affect me? Is there a message for me? Most solemnly, yes; for the true way of life is one and indivisible for all—whether we have just begun consciously to tread the path, or have journeyed far enough to join the spirits who can behold coming glories while yet in the body.

The more we excel in those things that are true, beautiful and lovely, the more the Lord will reveal to us His grand secrets and endue us with powers of the Spirit.

It is really a matter of high or low levels, of cramped or comprehensive vision. The revelations are commensurate with the spiritual altitude attained. God’s revelation of Himself to me is determined by my character, not by God’s character. “‘Tis because I am mean, Thy ways so oft look mean to me.” An elevated mood can only arise from an elevated habit of personal character. If, in the externals of our life, we live to the highest we know, that is the height from which higher glory will break upon our souls. “Come up hither and I will shew thee things.”

It is a good thing and tonic for the soul to seriously challenge ourselves and ask, What has been my spiritual history for the past twelve months?



Watercolor on paper, 14³/₄ x 12⁵/₈ in., William Blake, Victoria and Albert Museum, London

The Transfiguration

Peter, James and John were chosen by Christ Jesus to witness His transfiguration, between Moses and Elijah, because they could ascend to the spiritual heights where this etheric event was manifest. Celestial beings attend this theophany.

Have I been brought to see things from a higher standpoint? As truth has unfolded itself before me, have I made it a high and holy adventure to live up to it; to work it out, to live in the light of it? Have I assiduously performed the daily exercises put forth by The Rosicrucian Fellowship: the evening moral review of the day’s events in reverse order, and the morning exercise of concentration?

The moments spent on the Mount are not only meant to teach us something, but to *make* us something. If we would aspire to higher things we must faithfully follow Him who came down from the Mount of Transfiguration and worked out the vision in the valley below.

This troubled and chaotic world urgently needs those consecrated and sanctified souls who, by expressing purity, faith, and love in their daily lives, answer the call to ascend the Mount and then return with holy joy to tell the dwellers on the plain what they have seen. □

—Vernon C. Hill

Sleep, Memory, and the Substance of Life

LONGFELLOW CALLED sleep the counterfeit of death. “We are such stuff as dreams are made of,” says Shakespeare. Sleep, although so common, is but little understood. Walt Whitman, in “Leaves of Grass,” tells us that when we shall know what a blade of grass is we shall know what the universe is. When we shall know the simple things of life, we shall know the greater, for the greatest is always present in the least.

Understanding sleep erases the fear of death, for they are one and the same thing. Sleep is but the younger brother.

*I have been across Death's span,
And have tasted its victories,
They lay like bright and sparkling jewels,
In a hand that shook like trembling trees.*

*I have drunk deep of Death's cold wine,
From a glass full wide and deep.
All this I did in the land of dreams,
All this I did in my sleep.*

*In sleep I tasted of food
That shall be a banquet in death.
Death and sleep are the selfsame dream,
But death draws a longer breath.*

The waking and sleeping states are like ice, water, and vapor—all of the same substance. But the sleeping state is more real than the waking. Sleep is man's great liberator. It opens the door to untold glories for a taste that shall some day be a banquet.

Science has never yet explained sleep, neither



From *Illustrations for Dante's Divine Comedy*, Gustave Doré (1833-1883)

Submersion in Lethe

Dante is forced to drink water from Lethe, the river in Hades, which induces forgetfulness. Memory of the ego's experiences during sleep and between lives will be consciously retained when man develops the requisite higher spiritual faculties.

can it produce an imitation.

Man is a giant and a pygmy, and, for the most part, the little fellow parades and the big man slumbers. Every man has a mountain within himself. The lazy man claims that he is overworked and the sluggard whines about his limited possibilities. The truth is that every man is an Atlas and carries a world on his shoulders.

Greeks and Romans believed that they touched something vital, divine, in sleep and were healed by it. In Rome there was a College of Inspired Dreams, dedicated to Aesculapius, where the sick were taken for healing.

The normal waking consciousness is only one phase of the All-Consciousness. If a person owes a bill before he goes to sleep, the same is true after he wakes. Reincarnation, the cycle of life and death, is but sleep and waking on a larger scale.

Thus we come to Memory, the connection between the different phases of life expression. Sleep shows how the persistence of physical life is maintained, notwithstanding periodical, frequent, and continuous lapses of consciousness. Memory leaps the chasm of sleep, and so we learn not to be afraid when we lose waking consciousness. After a while, when we have trained our memory to last in the longer sleep that is death, we shall remember and not be afraid. For certain hours during the day we are dead to the physical world. Among other things, we daydream.

Memory may be lost for a considerable period of time. The break in memory at the completion of physical existence is physical phenomena only; the spiritual processes are unaffected by death and rebirth. Qualities, tendencies, and attainments belonging to the individual are carried across the gap by a spiritual process. What we did yesterday is present today in effects.

The spirit is the preserver of the memory, and experiences of the soul are enduring not only within the boundaries of birth and death, but beyond death, where the soul exists. Memory is therefore a matter of soul development. Memory is the soul's remembrance.

And memory may operate either forward or backward, even as the soul can live atemporally. Even science today acknowledges the static or relative quality of time. The now keeps exfoliating out of itself yet never escapes. Plotinus said, "For that which sees is itself the thing which is seen." One could kiss his own lips if only he knew the trick.

Dreams, a part of sleep, are like faith. Both have



Oil on canvas, Reginald Arthur, 1894

Joseph Interpreting Pharaoh's Dream

A skilled oneiromancer, Joseph is able to interpret desire world images (of mental archetypes) seen by the Pharaoh during sleep. Seven ears of grain and seven kine, in fat and thin forms, signify the years of plenty and paucity just ahead.

their substance in what is not seen. They may be intangible, but for all that they are no less real. Joseph interpreted a dream and saved millions from starving. God has always taught men through dreams, but because they are such a common experience man gives little or no thought to them. Concerning his experience on the road to Damascus, Paul said, "I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision." To gain through dreams one must interpret them rightly—not literally but rightly.

There are dreams and dreams. We may merely repeat in the sleeping hours the thoughts we have had during the day, and the more spiritual the waking hours, the more spiritual will be the dreams, for all dreams represent some phase of the mental state of the dreamer. In the dream landscape people, places, and things represent ideas; so the language of dreams is always symbolical.

Every overcomer in Truth will master inharmony by paying attention to the things which are shown in the mind, while the conscious mind is still in sleep. Certainly there is more in mind than one is consciously aware of, as dreams show. There is

much need of cleansing, lighting up the deep subconscious mind. Explore every facet of consciousness and discover that dreams have a hidden meaning of deep value.

Interpretation of dreams is almost a forgotten art. Centuries ago much prominence was given to the work of the interpreter, for dreams were held of vital importance. Books cannot be written on the interpretation of dreams, for a dream is a personal message from the God-consciousness, giving instruction and meeting special needs. No symbol could cover such general instruction. Anyone can dream dreams, but it takes a Joseph to interpret them.

Generally speaking, there are three kinds of dreams: (1) those connected with physical suffering or mental unrest, caused chiefly by imprudent eating; (2) subconscious wanderings, vague, hazy, little-remembered upon waking; the subconscious mind is always busy—give it something worthwhile to work on each night before going to sleep; (3) direct messages from the God-mind, usually clear, often with pungent details, long remembered and sometimes recurrent.

Joseph was told in a dream to take the Babe into Egypt, and the Wise Men were warned in a dream not to return to Herod. Jacob dreamed of a ladder connecting heaven and earth, and he came to the realization and illumination that God is always near man. "Surely Jehovah is in this place and I knew it not." His dream brought consciousness of the eternal nearness of God.

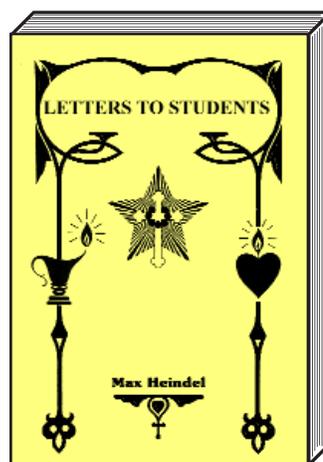
We dream things before they happen, and it could not be otherwise, for all things are created first in mind before they are made visible. If one dreams trivial things, it is because greater things have not been created in mind. Yet Caleb's soldier saw a simple barley loaf in a dream and was enabled by its correct interpretation to overcome the Philistine army.

The early Christian church owed much to a vision, the vision of St. Paul. Today, men who are as receptive and obedient to the heavenly vision as Paul was are likewise receiving that vision. Our dreams do come true. Dream only the kind that you want to be true. □

—Marie Harlowe

Letters To Students

By Max Heindel



This book contains the direct personal communications of Max Heindel with students of the Rosicrucian Fellowship from Christmas 1910 to January 1919. These ninety-seven letters, written in the intimate, earnest tone of a teacher and friend, make inspiring and instructive reading.

Contents include:

Christ and His Second Coming

Heart Development and Initiation

Spiritual Teachers—True and False

The Christ Spirit and the Spiritual Panacea

Increasing the Life of the Archetype

Unnatural Means of Attainment

“Lost Souls” and Stragglers

The Vital Body of Jesus

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MYSTIC LIGHT

Coordination

HOW MUCH do you want this thing, Coordination! It means to be born again, but where we are now birth means pain. The pain has to do not with the new, but with the death of the old that formed its matrix. The old case falls away. “The king is dead: long live the King.” If you want this thing enough you can have it, but courage and stamina are required. You are called to be a gamester; you must stake all and stand by, losing with grace all that the world holds to. You lose the old; you change all your outer ways, because they are not the ways of your Genius. By your Genius I mean the inimitable You, underneath and back of all, the Immortal.

You must want this thing more than you want ease, more than health, wealth, or any earthly establishment. You must want it more than you want earth-love. All that you are in the world must bow before it: place, power, and all things men see in you to idealize. At first you give up grudgingly, one by one, the things that detain you in the world and in the lesser self—your habits, appetites, manners, faults. Each time, at first, when you make a little renunciation, you think that the Master surely must come and take you in His arms at once. But thicker and faster are called forth your renunciations, as you approach the Foothills on the Road. Days of your quickening stride; gray days for the human heart.

You find obliquities in your thought and action



Oil on canvas, reproduced by courtesy of the artist, Annie Lauro

Le Chevalier

The quest theme and self-transformation are two facets of one spiritual journey.

you did not dream of; cruelties and lusts, subtleties and sophistries and softenings of character that require long steady patient work—above all *sincere* work. You find these outer horrors of the petty self in the light that is growing within. One in the world of self loves the self, is filled and satisfied with world ways, self ways.

The Lord Gautama, in his own Light, even as a youth, found everything wrong with the world and himself when first looking upon sickness, old age, and death. After many days you have the grim satisfaction, at least, that you can now change in a day more than you could formerly change in a month; change meaning transmutation, death of the old and birth of the new. You now realize that to change is the whole work; that consciously to change is transmutation, a mystic office; that development means change or death—the falling away of the old that the new may be released.

You realize that you need more vitality to endure the steady and rapid process of lesser deaths which are taking place in your body. Your health improves because you have put away many of the little things that keep up a steady drain on your vitality. In fact really on the Road, you will find that your health is being powerfully managed from within, the processes of regeneration giving you extraordinary endurance in certain ways; but daily for a time you use up all this surplus strength because the deaths of the old follow fast and follow faster.

There is not only the shock of battle, but there is the cleansing of the battlefield afterward. One by one your old thoughts and feelings are stricken with death—faster and more ruthlessly, until it seems that your fingers are being hammered from the last ledge. Then these old thoughts and feelings have to be disintegrated, broken up for the nurture of the new body, the poison eliminated, the system cleansed. All the little renunciations are said to form the Passion; then comes Crucifixion, different in each breast. This means giving up the one great thing—to some it is house, lands, and friends; to others, the craving for political or intellectual dominion over men; to others, caste or aristocracy of mind; to others the possessive love of children; to many it is the earth love of the mate. In any case it is the one thing you have kept, saying, “This surely belongs to me. It is I...It can’t mean that this too must go.”

The fact that you hold to it last and hardest is the measure of the importance of its passing. Do you not see that all the old is now clinging desperately to it, all your old thoughts and feelings, all the old life that prevents the new from growth? It is the one thing that keeps the balance of power in the mortal, preventing the deliverance of the Immortal from within.

You will even find many religious documents that do not urge the complete surrender of self; or which try to give you the first lessons in joy before you are half through the grades of pain; the result of which cannot be other than a still or untimely birth.

Coordination is yours if you want it enough. You must want it more than anything here. You must approach your Genius, palms up, full of faith, staking every substance of earth upon your faith that what He has is better for you than anything, of any nature whatsoever, that the world can offer—a better relation to the world even, a lovelier relation to friends and children, a fairer love than you have ever known as a mortal. You must hold to this against all the advisers of the world, even those who hint that your mind is failing; against the smash of material fortune and the degrading of your every living ideal: you may even be called to

watch the health of your body disrupted and the dearer part of your self put from you in shadows and monstrous illusions.

In the midst of this Passion and Crucifixion you must finally see that nothing in the world or the petty self is fit to stay; not even that which you have called love, even though you have thought yourself a great lover and have

given much to that. You come to your Soul with bowed head, empty, having failed, having found all life intolerable...

On the way to this point, possibly through many incarnations, you have taken half-measures. Look about you now in the world; even in the world of religion you will find myriads giving a little but holding much; even giving much and keeping perhaps only the last furious grip upon planetary life, building the cross upon which the lower self must die. You will even find many religious documents that do not urge the complete surrender of self; or which try to give you the first lessons in joy before you are half through the grades of pain; the result of which cannot be other than a still or untimely birth. You will find the very *moral* element of the world today, counting such measures as told in this letter, fanatical; you will find a system of placations vast as the solar system...but the inexorable

remains: If you want something for your body more than you want Enlightenment; if you prefer to give your mind right of way over certain departments of being instead of rendering all—utterly—to Basic Being, you are still divided, not ready to become One.

Yet the passage is not all one of misery. There is a sense of well-being on the Road. The time comes when you find it easier to go on and up than to stay; time when all voices here say *Stay*, but your Soul says *Stay Not*. You have tried to stay, and felt the breath of the inner life slacken, the pulse of the Soul diminish. That is the only pain there is to one who has felt the beneficence of *Awakening*; to one who has felt, at all, the presence of the Soul in the human mind and body!

In the last days of the death of the old the pain is constant, yet you know it is the pain that frees the new life. You do not want comfort for the old then; no life-giving solution to prolong the misery of the old body that holds so hard against death. Before this, many times, you have brought it back to life—taking earth-love in your arms once more, or turning to the temporal again to assuage the pain of days. Myriad times you have brought the old back to life through such a failure. This amounts to failure mystically; any placation of the old comes to mean a failure in ordeal. But even these lessons pass when you come into that spiritual strength which realizes pain and pleasure of the molecular body to be but opposites of the same thing. Neither suffices to one



Oil on canvas, c.1501, Ambrogio Bergognone, National Gallery, London

The Agony in the Garden

Christ emptied himself of divinity to become man. Man dies to (crucifies) his lower nature to become Christ-like—one with the Knower, Lover, and Doer within.

who has felt the Knower in his mind, the Lover in his heart of flesh, and the Doer, heroic and miraculous, in the human hand. Indeed, in these last days one becomes alarmed if the pain stops, lest the processes of birth are being impeded. One learns to stay in the upper room of Being, apart from the pleasure or pain of the body.

Yes, there is a sense of well-being, and there is invincible help. One who succeeds in turning over the mind-will—the little instrument of “I will” and “I won’t,”—to the Doer who “Does” or “Does not,” without intensity or protestation or advertisement; when one realizes that he can change in a night’s meditation a habit of the years with little or no inconvenience; or rise to any earthly occasion without flush or fury or a clenched muscle anywhere; when one learns that he may take any human problem or puzzle to the Knower, and if straight and sincere and

eager enough, the perfect answer is for him—a forever changeless answer, having nothing to do with separate concepts or opinions of the mind, operating in the realm of change but in no way affected by materials; above all, when one realizes that the glorious solvent of all misery and pain is his for his straight rendering of allegiance to the Lover within—such a man moves, not as one without hope, even in the midst of stresses and ordeals, the least of which is supposed to break the human heart. □

—Will Levington Comfort

The Lord's Prayer?

Amen

CHRISTIAN USAGE concludes the hallowed sentences of the Lord's Prayer with one last word: *Amen*. Let us consider the meaning of this.

We meet the word on the lips of the Lord. He pronounces it at particularly solemn moments: "Amen, amen—truly, truly—I say unto you." (John 1:51) It originates from the prayer language of the Old Testament and signifies a protestation, a confirmation that what is said is true, true before God, strictly and devoutly affirmed. It is in this sense that it stands also at the end of the Lord's Prayer. In what, now, does this affirmation and confirmation consist?

When Martha, "anxious and troubled about many things," busies herself as housewife, making everything ready for the Lord, Jesus says to her, "Only one thing is needful!" But meanwhile, Mary, intent only upon Him, and sitting quietly at His feet, has "chosen the best part." (Luke 10:41-42) This we are told, and it will always be the better part to remain turned to God with one's whole being. But Christ has also said something else: "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of Heaven; but he who does the will of my Father in Heaven shall enter the kingdom of Heaven." (Matt. 7:21) This points out to us the danger of sterility threatening a life devoted exclusively to prayer: the danger of contemplating and not acting; of indulging the feelings instead of



© athan Green b. 1961

Martha and Mary

While Martha turns her attention to the tug of innumerable daily chores, Mary has chosen the good (best) part, that one needful thing—turning to God with her whole being.

exerting the will; of passive contentment, irresolution, lack of deeds. The Amen reminds us that the right prayer is also an action, although not an exterior but an interior one—an interior consummation. Praying is not standing aside from reality, dreaming and longing; on the contrary, it demands the whole person: his contemplation, the tension of his will, and the movement of his heart. A genuine movement must take place, in which the heart opens and tends toward God; there must be stoutness of character, translating insight into responsibility; there must be resolution that ensures that all this is not a passing attitude, soon to be dissipated, but a solid frame of mind that finds expression in

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everyday action.

All this is implied in the Amen at the end. It seals the seriousness of the prayer.

The Lord has said, "The kingdom of Heaven has been enduring violent assault, and the violent have been seizing it by force." (Matt. 11:12) The kingdom of Heaven is not something that falls out of the blue, as things in fairy tales do. Nor is it something that by necessity evolves from the nature of man. It comes from God and is in a continual state of coming, but man must seize hold of it and draw it to himself. He must take the risk of commitment.

But there is much in his nature that resists it: desires he must renounce if he really wants the kingdom of God; passions that must be kept in check or resolved if the kingdom of God is to have scope within him. We are bound on all sides; our fetters hold us fast and resist being severed. Selfishness holds us tight and will not let us go.

This is where the "violence" that must be used to reach the kingdom of God comes in. We must break through ourselves; we must break the fetters that bind us and the trammels that encompass us: human respect, attachments, settled circumstances, relationships, habits, and alleged duties.

The Amen signifies this determination. It calls it forth and seals it. The whole of the Our Father revolves around the kingdom of God; it expresses the consciousness of its nearness and the hope of its coming. And the Amen says, "I want it to come." It reaches out toward it: "Be it so!" And it throws its force back into the petitions that have preceded it; they shall have been prayed in the fervor and holy resolve of that Amen.

The first proclamation of our Lord was "The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the gospel." (Mark 1:15)

The kingdom of God does not fall into our lap like a gift in a dream. It does not take possession of us like a spell. The gospel calls to us, announced by the words, spoken and written, of those who teach it; by events; by experience; and by personal contacts that move the heart. The joyful tidings of the gospel call to us, and we must believe them. But to be able to believe them, we must at least be ready to repent, or else we remain deaf, obtuse, fettered, and closed to them. We, who are always turning away from God, must turn back and go to Him. Our hearts, distracted and given to things and

people, must be surrendered to Him. We must bow our will, so full of rebellion, beneath His will.

All this is easy to say, but inexpressibly difficult to do. And it is difficult not only because there is so much in us that resists—the will shuts itself up, the passions sit tight, and our inner nature is fastened into our old ways with a thousand

roots—but also because our whole nature is in a continual state of flux. We notice how much this is so only when we occasionally try to probe it in depth. Is it an easy matter to say the yes of consent to an obligation so that it is truly binding? To put our whole being into the consent? To do so without any mental reservations and without leaving open some side issue? To do so in order that loyalty is preserved whole, with no seepage of any kind? Is it easy to reach a true conviction? Not just an insight or intimation or realization of what is right, but a genuine conviction, which engages the force of our character, our honor, the truth of our fate—for do not finding the truth and living by it decide our spiritual destiny? It is anything but easy; it is extremely difficult for us to grasp the truth with our whole being and faithfully incorporate it into our lives.

The Amen is our way of saying that the suppliant is breaking through mental sloth and sterility to vital spiritual action. It expresses his determination to see the kingdom of God realized; his will to put an end to his fickleness and change it into resolution and constancy.

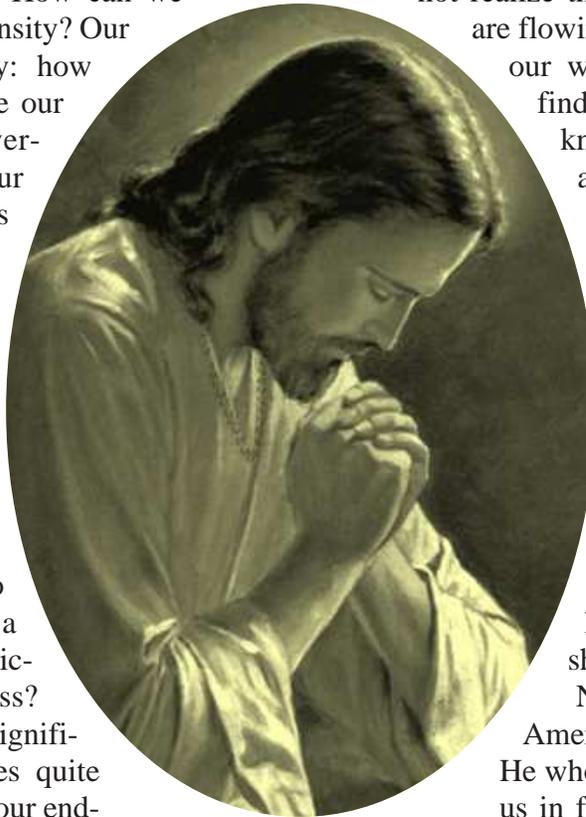
But when it is a question of God and His kingdom, of Him who is manifest and yet so hidden; who gives salvation and satisfies the heart; and from whom nevertheless our inmost being continually shrinks, to reach instead toward all the color and richness of the world around us—is it an easy matter to achieve a clear and firm state of commitment and loyalty to this? For God and His kingdom are eternal and infinite, while we feel ourselves transitory and small. How can we grasp that measureless immensity? Our limitations and His infinity: how can they ever converge? Are our capacities not always overtaxed? And in spite of our goodwill, is there not always an unbridgeable gap of incomprehension? Is there not some doubt that has no basis other than the limited strength of mind and heart, which cannot bear the might of the truth in question? Is there not an insecurity in our firmest grasp; a hesitation; an inability to make the total surrender; a clumsiness; a weight; a restriction in spite of our willingness?

As we consider this, the significance of the Amen becomes quite clear to us; it draws a line to our endless questioning and wavering; sets a boundary to our ceaseless state of flux; decides between yes and no, and holds to our decision

The Amen says, “Be it so.”

The Amen changes the instability of the creature into fidelity to God.

The Amen brings the creature’s flight from God to a standstill. This must be sincerely and bravely done, “with the whole heart, and with the whole mind, and with all one’s strength.” It must be continually renewed. After each fall, it must be raised up again; it must be confirmed in steadfastness after lapses into indifference and thoughtlessness; it must be taken up again and affirmed after being



Lord, do Thou say, ‘Amen!’

forgotten. Again and again, we must overcome doubt, strengthen the wavering mind, and conquer weariness.

But there is one doubt we have to let pass, for it comes from faith itself. Every Amen remains valueless unless God Himself pronounces it. We say “forever,” and already life is at work, nibbling at this “forever,” and after a time, it has gone to pieces. We say, “I stand by it absolutely,” and do not realize that already currents within us are flowing in other directions, eroding our words, until one fine day we find our position changed, not knowing how we got there. We are touched to the core, shaken, overwhelmed, and think the Absolute itself has taken possession of our spirit. But life goes on with the force of events, griefs, and vexations; the sigh of the wind and the song of a bird blot out what was once so powerful. One day, it is all gone, and we can no longer understand how we could once have thought that we had any share in what endures.

No, indeed! If it is to be really Amen, God Himself must speak it. He who is fidelity itself must ground us in fidelity. He who is truth itself must enlighten our minds. He must take hold of us and give us that

strength that endures in all the ups and downs of life and rises again and again when everything threatens to sink.

The Amen is our way of saying that the supplicant is breaking through mental sloth and sterility to vital spiritual action. It expresses his determination to see the kingdom of God realized; his will to put an end to his fickleness and change it into resolution and constancy. Having done all this, the Amen itself turns into a petition: “Lord, do Thou say, ‘Amen!’ Bring the Amen to life within me: as truth, deeply rooted; fidelity that does not waver; resolution that does not tire!” □

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The Narrow Way

OUTSIDE, A THRUSH'S song called incessantly; but the woman who bent over her work in the small, attic room only responded by lifting her head occasionally to watch the play of sunlight and shadow in the garden below. Weary with much service for others, she gazed a little longer as the shadows lengthened. It was then, for her comfort, God gave her a vision.

The garden faded and in its place came the entrance to a tunnel out of which stepped a girl, diffident, hesitating, as though treading an uncertain way. A narrow path stretched before her; on her left an abyss, on her right a mountain range. The woman who watched, unable to distinguish between reality and vision, shuddered, as the traveler began to tread that perilous path, for a bandage covered her eyes.

One false step and she will fall over that awful precipice! she thought. I cannot bear to look! She placed her hands over her eyes. But some power, stronger than her own will, forced her to drop her hands and watch. With a sudden rapture of relief she saw the narrow pathway lined by angel faces and tiny hands outstretched to guide the traveler's feet aright if she should take one erring step aside. The pathway stretched a long, long way, marked here and there by a shaft of sunlight which seemed to penetrate some gap in the mountain range. And where the light flickered and fell it shaped itself in the form of a cross. Following the woman's progress with eager, anxious eyes, the watcher suddenly caught her breath, for as she reached the first cross of light, hurtling down the mountain side came a boulder. It missed the blindfolded



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

traveler by the space of an inch and went echoing down the abyss. And a Voice said, "No weapon which is formed against thee shall prosper."

The wayfarer continued slowly along the Way, and the woman who watched her, tense and alert, knew she was witnessing an auspicious pilgrimage—the greatest journey ever trodden by the feet of man. It is traversed unconsciously, blindfolded as this little soul, by the majority who strive to follow in their daily lives the law of love laid down by our Saviour. The woman knew that the boulder which had been hurled at the patient traveler came from those forces of evil, which forever assail the soul of man—some powerful, physical temptation to drag her to perdition, but which, through the influence of Christ, had passed her by unharmed.

"Whither I go...and the Way ye know." The Way is called *Love* and upon Love's altar the lower self,

with all its petty claims, must be sacrificed. Whosoever followeth that Way may travel the Narrow Path in tranquillity and perfect trust.

The traveler slowly approached the second cross of light, and as she neared it, it became a rushing torrent of water pouring down from the mountain side, storming over the pathway and thence tumbling into the abyss.

“She will be swept away!” cried the watcher in an agony of apprehension. “If I could only warn her.” But the woman walked on, unaware of the terrible danger which threatened her. She reached the torrent and passed over it, serenely unconscious of danger, for a pair of Hands, nail-torn, palms upturned, made a bridge upon which her feet could step. And a Voice said “When thou passeth through the waters I will be with thee.”

The forces of evil strive to sweep away the soul who seeks the light, by torrents of emotion, great passionate crises, and only those who rely utterly on their Saviour may pass through in safety.

On and on the traveler walked with growing sureness, as though she knew the Everlasting Arms were around her and her Father’s angels guarding every step. There is no need to fall upon that Narrow Way.

The third cross of light was dawning and, to the woman who watched, it was a blazing cross of fire, the flames forming an impassable barrier to the traveler who could not see. “Something must prevent her passing through, or that wall of fire will consume her!” the onlooker gasped, stretching out her hands in an impotent endeavor to save. But no human aid could avail that traveler of the Way.

Evenly she pursued her path, quietly, trustfully. And thus she reached the flames which barred her further progress. Did she pause as she felt the fierce heat of that fire which dieth not? Did she shrink as the flames leaped up and licked her arms, her breast, her hair? To the woman who watched the traveler seemed unaware of her peril, for she passed on, unwaveringly, into the heart of the flames.

Then a Voice said: “When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.” And the traveler emerged, unharmed, on the other side.

The fiery temptations of the mind of man are the

most terrible of all the weapons in the armory of Evil. Intellect, unless used aright, may usurp the power of the still small Voice of God. But to the

The forces of evil strive to sweep away the soul who seeks the light, by torrents of emotion, great passionate crises, and only those who rely utterly on their Saviour may pass through in safety.

followers of Christ, the fires of purification can consume the dross. Well it is for those who, before they reach the fiery trial, have eliminated pride, ambition, and confidence in their own power and merits. Reliance upon the merits of Christ alone can bring them through unscathed.

The traveler continued, unconscious of the fact that she had passed the three dread trials on the Path—the physical, emotional, and mental Gateways to heavenly consciousness.

Now the watcher perceived, in the distance, great open Gates, transcendently beautiful, irradiant with a light which never was on sea or land. So lost was she in rapturous contemplation that she was hardly conscious that the traveler had reached her journey’s end, until she saw a Figure approaching through those pearl-like gates. With arms outstretched in welcome, His glorious face aglow with divine compassion, He laid His hands upon the small blindfolded traveler, who quivered as though thrilled with new life—as indeed she was. As He turned to lead her through the Gates, He gently disengaged the bandage from her eyes, so that she might see the King in all His beauty.

As the face of the traveler was revealed, the watcher stared in amazement—it was herself. Now, however much the thrushes call or the sunlight beckons, so long as there is work to be performed in Love’s great name, there is no sigh of regret in the heart of the woman who has seen the Way. □

—Dorothy W. Jennings

FROM MAX HEINDEL'S WRITINGS



A Glimpse of the Past

A NUMBER OF YEARS ago the writer visited Minneapolis to deliver a course of lectures, and there became acquainted with Miss Margaret S—, a commercial photographer, who made our lantern slides for “Parsifal,” “The Niebelungs’ Ring,” etc. We became well acquainted, and in the course of conversations about certain charts, also being made into slides, the subject of “rebirth” came under discussion. Miss S. had only a vague idea of the teaching; it seemed rather a new idea that life is a Great School, and that we come back to it life after life to learn new lessons, as a child goes back to an earthly school day after day for the same purpose.

But it seemed to throw light upon a problem that had puzzled her for years. She had a little sister “Anne,” who was such an odd child, and who “imagined” such queer things that it was almost distressing to the other members of the family. She insisted that she had lived before, and last time she was in Canada, where, she said, “I took the gates.” She was only a baby, she could not have heard it from anyone in the family, for none understood, or believed in rebirth. There is thus only one reasonable hypothesis, namely, that she carried the consciousness over from the past.

Miss S. did not at that time know what the expression “I took the gates” meant, but an article in the July *American Magazine* has the story of little Anne’s “imaginings,” which won first prize. We reprint the article as there published:

“Anne, my little half-sister, younger by fifteen years, was a queer little mite from the beginning.

She did not even look like any member of the family we ever heard of, for she was dark almost to swarthiness, while the rest of us all were fair, showing our Scotch-Irish ancestry unmistakably.

“As soon as she could talk in connected sentences, she would tell herself fairy stories, and just for the fun of the thing I would take down her murmurings with my pencil in my old diary. She was my especial charge—my mother being a very busy woman—and I was very proud of her. These weavings of fancy were never of the usual type that children’s fairy tales take; for, in addition to the childish imagination, there were bits of knowledge in them that a baby could not possibly have absorbed in any sort of way.

“Another remarkable thing about her was that everything she did she seemed to do through habit, and, in fact, such was her insistence, although she was never able to explain what she meant by it. If you could have seen the roistering air with which she would lift her mug of milk when she was only three and gulp it down at one quaffing, you would have shaken with laughter. This particularly embarrassed my mother and she reproved Anne repeatedly. The baby was a good little soul, and would seem to try to obey, and then in an absent-minded moment would bring on another occasion for mortification. ‘I can’t help it, Mother,’ she would say over and over again, tears in her baby voice, ‘I’ve always done it that way!’

“So many were the small incidents of her habits of speech and thought and her tricks of manner and memory that finally we ceased to think anything about them, and she herself was quite unconscious

that she was in any way different from other children.

“One day when she was four years old she became very indignant with Father about some matter and, as she sat curled up on the floor in front of us, announced her intention of going away forever.

“‘Back to heaven where you came from?’ inquired Father with mock seriousness. She shook her head.

“‘I didn’t come from heaven to you,’ she asserted with that calm conviction to which we were quite accustomed now. ‘I went to the moon first, but....You know about the moon, don’t you? It used to have people on it, but it got so hard that we had to go.’

“‘This promised to be a fairy tale, so I got my pencil and diary.

“‘So,’ my father led her on, ‘you came from the moon to us, did you?’

“‘Oh, no,’ she told him in casual fashion. ‘I have been here lots of times—sometimes I was a man and sometimes I was a woman!’

“‘She was so serene in her announcement that my father laughed heartily, which enraged the child, for she particularly disliked being ridiculed in any way.

“‘I was! I was!’ she maintained indignantly. ‘Once I went to Canada when I was a man! I ‘member my name, even.’

“‘Oh, pooh-pooh,’ he scoffed, ‘little United States girls can’t be men in Canada! What was your name that you ‘member so well?’

“‘She considered a minute. ‘It was Lishus Faber,’ she ventured, then repeated it with greater assurance, ‘that was it, Lishus Faber.’ She ran the sounds together so that this was all I could make out of it, and the name so stands in my diary today, ‘Lishus Faber.’

“‘And what did you do for a living, Lishus Faber, in those early days?’ My father then treated her with the mock solemnity befitting her assurance and quieting her nervous little body.

“‘I was a soldier’—she granted the information triumphantly—‘and I took the gates!’

“‘That was all that is recorded there. Over and over again, I remember, we tried to get her to explain what she meant by the odd phrase, but she only repeated her words and grew indignant with

Triune Treasure

Guard the treasure of the heart,
Lest in sorrow it depart.
How can love on coldness thrive?
Love unfed cannot survive.

Guard the treasure of the mind.
Watch the gates before, behind.
Past or future, sad or pleasant—
Shall they trespass on the present?

Guard the treasure of the hand
Wisely, lest it turn to sand.
All is Heaven’s overflow—
Yours, a jewel to bestow.

Guard your triune treasure well.
Not to buy and not to sell,
Wealth of heart and hand and mind,
Given you for all mankind.

—Irene Stanley

us for not understanding. Her imagination stopped at explanations. We were living in a cultured community, but although I repeated the story to inquire about the phrase—as one does tell stories of beloved children, you know—no one could do more than conjecture its meaning.

“Someone encouraged my really going further with the matter, and for a year I studied all the histories of Canada I could lay my hands on for a battle in which somebody ‘took the gates.’ All to no purpose. Finally I was directed by a librarian to a ‘documentary’ history, I suppose it is—a funny old volume with the *s*’s all like *f*’s, you know. This was over a year afterwards, when I had quite lost hope of running my phrase to earth. It was a quaint old book, interestingly picturesque in many of its tales, but I found one bit that put all the others out of my mind for a time. It was a brief account of the taking of a little walled city by a small company of soldiers, a distinguished feat of some sort, yet of no general importance. A young lieutenant with his small band—the phrase leaped to my eyes— ‘took the gates’...and the name of the young lieutenant was *Aloysius le Febre*.” □

READERS' QUESTIONS

Homosexuality and Esoteric Teachings



Oil on canvas, 1742, Agostino Masucci (1691-1758), Minneapolis Institute of Arts

The Annunciation

By depicting the Holy Spirit, ruler of the creative force, in the form of a dove descending toward the head of the Virgin Mary, traditional illustrations of the Annunciation point to the time when the higher or Christ Self will be immaculately conceived through conservation and transmutation of the sex force.

QUESTION: REGARDING homosexuality, I understand that we are reborn twice during each zodiac phase—of roughly 2,000 years—Once as a female and once in a male body, to give a wide range of experience in each body type. Occasionally we might be born twice as a female so the next time we might be a very effeminate man, and vice versa. Does this have anything to do with why people are attracted to someone of their same sex? What is the esoteric reason behind homosexual relationships and practices, and what are these people doing to their soul growth and evolution?

Answer: Max Heindel made no explicit reference to homosexuality. We may, however, reasonably surmise his views on the practice by citing his response to the question, “What is meant by sinning against the Holy Ghost?” We remember that the Holy Spirit is the creative power of God and “a ray from that attribute of God...is used by men for perpetuation of the race. When that is abused, that is to say, whether it is used for sense gratification, whether in solitary or associated vice, with or without the legal marriage, that is the sin against the Holy Spirit. Humanity as a whole is now suffering for that sin. The debilitated bodies, the sickness that we see around us, has been caused by centuries of abuse, and until we learn to subdue our passions there can be no true health among the human race.” (*Questions and Answers*, Vol. 1, pp. 221-22).

Since homosexual activity involves members of the same sex, it is by definition nonproductive, sterile; it exists, at most, to gratify the desires of the participants. The same, of course, may be said of

heterosexual activity that deliberately avoids fertilization and is engaged in solely for selfish desires.

The questioner’s assumption that several consecutive lives of the same gender (male or female) occasions the predominance of that gender’s traits when the ego is subsequently embodied as the opposite sex does not necessarily follow. The lessons and aptitudes learned during one or several recent lives are integrated into the totality of the ego’s experience gained while inhabiting all its earthly bodies, producing an overall balanced

effect.

The writer also suggests that an effeminate man or a masculine woman identifies the homosexual person. This is clearly not the case since, proportionally, at least as many heterosexual persons display these variant gender qualities as do homosexuals. It may be remarked in passing that as humanity approaches the Aquarian Age, individual genders will increasingly show a wider range of personal expression and behaviors traditionally associated with the opposite sex.

“Attraction” between persons of the same sex is universal and natural, being based on the innumerable features and qualities that make a person attractive, be they physical, moral, intellectual, or spiritual. If that attraction devolves to the sensual sphere and specifically seeks or responds to the gratification of aroused desire, then that attraction becomes what early Church fathers called *concupiscence*, and what Anglo-Saxons bluntly call *lust*.

Same gender relationships are by no means synonymous with homosexuality, since, in the vast majority of instances, sexual expression plays no part in them. In even intimate friendships, mutual appreciation and shared interests, rather than physicality per se, are the primary focus of attention or attraction.

The erosion of moral discipline, occasioned by the increased secularization of society and the weakening of traditional religious authority, manifests generally in greatly increased sexual liberty and licentiousness, including homosexuality.

As for the karma generated by untrammelled sexual activity, of whatever kind, Max Heindel makes clear that “Each person owns his or her body, and is responsible to the law of Consequence for any misuse resulting from the weak willed abandonment of that body to another.” (*Cosmo* p. 471)

The additional factor bearing upon homosexual relationships is that they obviate the essential function of and reason for cohabitation and marriage—procreation. Again, quoting from the *Cosmo*, “it is both a duty and a privilege (to be exercised with thanks for the opportunity) for all persons who are healthy and of sound mind to provide vehicles for as many entities as is consistent with their health and ability to care for the same.” (*Ibid*)

While adoption of a child by a homosexual couple

(in those states where it is permissible) is laudable if the motive is the selfless intention of providing the optimum milieu for its development, both the child and society are given a poor model to imitate because it is biologically barren, opposed to the perpetuation of the human race.

Ours is an era in which the quest for spiritual freedom is confused with the liberty to do whatever one likes, while simultaneously demanding exemption from accountability for one’s actions. Ironically, many professing homosexuals are, by virtue of intelligence and material prosperity, especially qualified to care for advanced souls, who have a more difficult time finding the appropriate environment in which to be reborn.

What at present appears to be a surge in the prevalence of homosexual activity may be seen as a transitional phase in a larger process. The dissolution of societal (family) and institutional (religious) structures and guidelines is creating cultural upheavals that manifest as identity crises, troubled experimentation, joyless pleasure-seeking, and insecurity masked as defiance. These symptoms of cultural and creedal change shall in time give way to reformation and reformulation of more inclusive relational structures founded on more altruistic, regenerate practices.

With the exception of service, there is no theme to which Max Heindel recurs with such frequency and earnestness as the cardinal precondition for esoteric development. In *Ancient and Modern Initiation* (p. 52) his message is succinct and unambiguous: “*Purity is the key* by which alone he [the aspirant] can hope to unlock the gate to God.” In *Letters to Students* (No. 13) the writer is more sweeping and just as emphatic: The gist of the “symbolism of the Rose Cross [and] the crux of the Western Wisdom Teaching” are one and the same—“*Generative Purity*.” The “Western spirit is allowed to test its strength by living in conjugal relations and perchance in accomplishing an immaculate conception such as symbolized by the chaste beautiful rose, which scatters its seed without passion, without shame.”

Those individuals who have awakened to the call of holy Being soon encounter what may at first seem a daunting, if not arbitrary, disclosure: “Occult science teaches that the sex-function should *never*

be used for sense-gratification, but for propagation only.” (*Cosmo*, p. 471) Use of the creative energies for personal gratification retards one’s soul growth because those energies are no longer available to build the luminous soul body.

“As the Holy Spirit is the creative energy in nature, the sex energy is its reflection in man, and misuse or abuse of that power must be expiated in impaired efficiency of the vehicles, in order to teach us the sanctity of the creative force.” What exactly constitutes misuse or abuse of this creative energy? Again Heindel does not mince his words or worry about repeating himself: “The sex function is designed solely for the perpetuation of the species and under no circumstances for the gratification of sensual desire.” (*Cosmo*, p. 288)

What are the consequences of ignoring this warning? Heindel informs us in *Letters to Students* (pp. 86-87): “The condition of one who has the light of the greater knowledge given to humanity today, and who transgresses the law by abusing the creative force, may become far more serious than that of the class now embodied in the anthropoid forms [resulting from the abuse of the creative force]....At this present stage, the vital force (save the insignificant quantity required to propagate the race) should be transmuted to soul power.”

In view of the foregoing, the writer’s question and this response enter into a broader consideration of the creative energy as it manifests in human sexuality. In this context, the term *homosexuality* is used to designate sexual activity between consenting

members of the same gender. Absent that activity, or its intention, the term, strictly, does not apply. Since ignorant indulgence in the creative act has brought about eons of human suffering and estrangement from the worlds of spirit, to the point of necessitating the salvific sacrifice of Christ Jesus,

that the soul of mankind not be made an eternal prisoner of the material world, it is abundantly clear that *any* expression of human sexuality—be it homo, hetero, auto, or poly perverse—for purposes other than procreation, is not only a “sin against the Holy Spirit” but “a spiritual evil, [and] the greatest danger to society.” (*Rosicrucian Christianity Lectures*, p. 61)

No less categorically does Heindel write elsewhere that the passion that gives rise to this sexual activity is “poison.” “Through passion the spirit has been crystalized into a body and only by chastity can the fetters be loosed, for heaven is the home of the virgin and only insofar as we elevate love from that of sex for sex to the standard of soul for soul can we shatter the shackles that bind us.” (*Mysteries of the Great Operas*, pp. 153-4)

How significant is the continent and dispassionate life? Once again, we may heed the words written by an Initiate in *The Web of Destiny* (pp. 143-4): The spiritual force generated from the time of puberty, whether used for generation, degeneration, or regeneration, “overshadows every single moment of our existence, and determines our attitude in each and every single phase of life among our fellow men,” for it is the very wellspring of our existence, the elixir of life. □



The Sacraments

THE SACRAMENTS have to do with the transmission of the seed atoms, which form the nuclei of our various bodies. The germ for our earthly body must be properly placed in fruitful soil to grow a suitable dense vehicle, and for this reason as stated in Genesis 1:27, "Elohim created man male and female." The Hebrew words are *Sacr Va N'Cabah*. These are the names of the sex organs. Literally translated, *Sacr* means bearer of the germ; and thus *marriage* is a sacrament, for it opens the way for the transmission of the physical seed atom from the father to the mother and tends to preserve the race against the ravages of death.

Baptism as a sacrament signifies the germinal urge of the soul for the higher life, the planting of a spiritual seed.

Communion is the sacrament in which we partake of bread made from the seed of chaste plants, and in which the cup symbolizing the passionless seed pod points to the age to come, an age when marriage will be unnecessary to transmit the seed through a father and mother, but when we may feed directly upon cosmic life and thus conquer death.

Finally, *Extreme Unction* is the sacrament which marks the loosing of the silver cord and the extraction of the sacred germ, until it shall again be planted in another N'Cabah, or mother.

To obtain a thorough understanding of the deep and far-reaching significance of the manner in which the sacrament of Communion was instituted, it is necessary to consider the evolution of our planet and of composite man, also the chemistry of foods and their influence on humanity. For the



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*The Christ life and Christ light are offered to those who eat and drink worthily and who conserve their creative energies. The communion cup, or **chalice**, signifies the seed pod of the flower, surrounded by a series of floral leaves, or **calyx**. By His sacrifice Christ became the Earth's indwelling Spirit. Through His planetary body and blood He is in truth "the bread of [our] life" and the living water which in us shall be "a well of water springing up into everlasting life."— John 4:14*

sake of lucidity we will briefly recapitulate the various points involved.

The Virgin Spirits, which are now mankind, commenced their pilgrimage through matter in the dawn of time, that by the friction of concrete existence their latent powers might be transmuted to kinetic energy as usable soul power. Three successive veils of increasingly dense matter were acquired by the involving Spirits during the Saturn, Sun, and Moon Periods. Thus each Spirit was separated from all other Spirits, and the con-

sciousness which could not penetrate the prison wall of matter and communicate with others was forced to turn inward, and in so doing it discovered—itsself. Thus self-consciousness was attained.

A further crystallization of the before-mentioned veils took place in the Earth Period during the Polarian, Hyperborean, and Lemurian Epochs. In the Atlantean Epoch, mind was added as a focusing point between Spirit and body, completing the constitution of composite man, who was then equipped to conquer the world and generate soul power by endeavor and experience, each having free will and choice, except as limited by the laws of nature and his own previous acts.

During the time man-in-the-making was thus evolving, great creative Hierarchies guided his every step. Absolutely nothing was left to chance. Even the food he ate was chosen for him so that he might obtain the appropriate material wherewith to build the various vehicles of consciousness necessary to accomplish the process of soul growth. The Bible mentions the various stages, though it misplaces Nimrod, making him to symbolize the Atlantean kings who lived *before the flood*.

In the Polarian Epoch pure mineral matter became a constituent part of man; thus Adam was made of earth, that is, so far as his dense body was concerned. In the Hyperborean Epoch the vital body was added, and thus his constitution became plantlike, and Cain, the man of that time, lived on the fruits of the soil. The Lemurian Epoch saw the evolution of a desire body, which made man like the present animals. Then milk, the product of living animals, was added to the human diet. Abel was a shepherd, but it is nowhere stated that he killed an animal.

At that time mankind lived innocently and peacefully in the misty atmosphere which enveloped the Earth during the latter part of the Lemurian Epoch. Men were then like children under the care of a common father, until the mind was given to all in the beginning of Atlantis. Thought activity breaks down tissue which must be replaced; the lower and more material the thought, the greater the havoc and the more pressing the need for albumen wherewith to make quick repairs. Hence necessity, the mother of invention,

inaugurated the loathsome practice of flesh eating, and so long as we continue to think along purely business or material lines we shall have to go on using our stomachs as receptacles for the decaying corpses of our murdered animal victims. Yet we shall see later that flesh food has enabled us to make the wonderful material progress achieved in the Western World.

The more spiritual we grow, the more our thoughts will harmonize with the rhythm of our body, and the less albumen will be needed to build tissue. Consequently a vegetable diet will suffice for our needs.

In due time the dense mist which enveloped the Earth cooled, condensed, and flooded the various basins. The atmosphere cleared, and concurrently with this atmospheric change a physiological adaptation in man took place. The gill clefts which had enabled him to breathe in the dense water-laden air (and which are seen in the human foetus to this day) gradually atrophied, and their function was taken over by the lungs, the pure air passing to and from them through the larynx. This allowed the Spirit, hitherto penned up within the veil of flesh, to express itself in word and act.

There, in the middle of Atlantis, the Sun first shone upon man as we know him; there he was first born into the world. Until then he had been under the absolute control of great spiritual Hierarchies, mute, without voice or choice in matters pertaining to his education, as a child is now under the control of its parents.

But on the day when he finally emerged from the dense atmosphere of Atlantis; when he first beheld the mountains silhouetted in clear, sharp contours against the azure vault of heaven; when he first saw the beauties of moor and meadow, the moving creatures, birds in the air, and his fellow man; when his vision was undimmed by the partial obscuration of the mist which had previously hampered perception; above all, when he perceived *himself* as separate and apart from all others, there burst from his lips the glorious, triumphant cry, "I AM!"

At that point he had acquired faculties which equipped him to enter the school of experience, the phenomenal world, as a free agent to learn the

lessons of life, untrammelled save by the laws of nature, which are his safeguards, and the reaction of his own previous acts, which becomes destiny.

The diet containing an excess of albumen from the flesh wherewith he gorged himself, taxed his liver beyond capacity and clogged the system, making him morose, sullen, and brutish. He was fast losing the spiritual sight, which revealed to him the Guardian Angels whom he trusted, and he saw only the *forms* of animals and men. The Spirits, with whom he had lived in love and brotherhood during early Atlantis, were obscured by the veil of flesh. It was all so strange, and he feared them.

Therefore, it became necessary to give him a new food that could aid his Spirit to overpower the highly individualized molecules of flesh, brace it for battle with the world, and spur it on to self-assertion.

As our visible bodies, composed of chemical compounds, can thrive only on chemical aliment, so it requires spirit to act upon spirit to aid in breaking up the heavy protein and in stimulating the drooping human spirit.

The emergence from flooded Atlantis, the liberation of humanity from the absolute rulership of visible superhuman guardians, their placement under the Law of Consequence and the laws of nature, and the gift of WINE are described in the stories of Noah and Moses, which are different accounts of the same event. Both Noah and Moses led their followers through the water. Moses calls Heaven and Earth to witness that he has placed before them the blessing and the curse, exhorts them to choose the good or take the consequence of their actions; then he leaves them.

The phenomenon of the rainbow requires that the Sun be near the horizon, the nearer the better; a clear atmosphere; and a dark rain cloud in the opposite quarter of the heavens. When under such conditions an observer stands with his back to the Sun, he may see the Sun's rays refracted through



Oil on canvas, Ivan Stepanovitch Ksenofontov (1817-1875)

Noah Damning Ham

Noah was the first to tend the vine and, not unexpectedly, the first to get drunk. While Adam covered his shameful nakedness, wine caused Noah to be shamelessly exposed. As a bogus spirit, wine actually further enmeshes the human spirit in the physical world by arousing the desire nature and abetting selfish will. Noah and his descendants were the first humans fully descended into self-conscious physical being. The true vine, Christ, through the winepress of His sacrificed pure blood, gives humanity the true spirit by which it may reascend to the Father.

the rain drops as a rainbow. In early Atlantean times when there had been no rain as yet and the atmosphere was a warm, moist fog through which the Sun appeared as one of our arc lamps on a foggy day, the phenomenon of the rainbow was an impossibility. It could not have made its appearance until the mist had condensed to rain, flooded the basins of our Earth, and left the atmosphere clear as described in the story of Noah, which thus points to the law of alternating cycles that brings day and night, summer and winter, in unvarying sequence, and to which man is subject in the present age.

Noah cultivated the vine and provided a spirit to stimulate man. Thus, equipped with a composite constitution, a composite diet appropriate thereto, and divine laws to guide them, mankind was left to his own devices in the battle of life. □

—Max Heindel

Amenability to Planetary Vibrations Part 1

WHEN JUDGING a horoscope it is of prime importance that we take into consideration the social and racial standing of the individual, for configurations which are of great significance in the horoscope of an educated sensibility may mean little or nothing in the figure of a brutish nature, and vice versa. Neglect of this factor would inevitably lead to false conclusions, as we shall now explain.

It is a mystic maxim that the lower in the scale of evolution a being is placed, the more certainly he responds to the planetary rays, and conversely, the higher we ascend in the scale of attainment the more man conquers and rules his stars, freeing himself from the leading strings of the Divine Hierarchies. This yoke, however, was not placed upon man in order to restrain him needlessly, but just as we in our ordinary life restrain a child from doing things in its ignorance which would hurt it and perhaps cripple it for life, so also are we restrained by the Divine Hierarchies through the planetary aspects in such a manner that we do not hurt ourselves beyond recovery in the experiences of life.

But coupled with this guidance, there is, of course, a measure of free will, which grows as we evolve. The child in our midst has really very little free will; it is subject not only to its parents but to the domestics, if such there be in the household, and to everybody with whom it is associated; all



J. J. Tissot (1836-1902), Brooklyn Museum of Art

The Blind Leading the Blind

The unevolved ego responds predictably to planetary energies. The developed soul will be less prone to automatic behavior, or to blindly following others, having gained a degree of mental independence and moral integrity.

exercise control over it for its own good. As the child grows, this measure of restraint is by degrees relaxed. In the course of years the child will learn to exercise its free will. This method has been followed by the Divine Hierarchies in the case of man. Infant humanity was absolutely guided by divine rules without having any will at all. "Thus shalt thou do, or not do," were injunctions laid upon them which must be implicitly obeyed, otherwise the divine displeasure was at once shown by such strenuous manifestations as appealed to infant humanity's mind, namely, lightning, thunder, earthquakes, and visitation of great plagues. This was for their collective guidance. For individual restraint there were strict laws, commandments, and ordinances. Tribute must be paid continually to the Divine Leader and offered upon the altar as sacrifices; for every offense against the law a certain sacrifice of material goods must

be made. Fear was the dominant keynote of that dispensation, for "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom."

This regime was carried on under the planetary influences of Mars and the Moon. Mars, being the home of the dominant Lucifer Spirits, gave to mankind the energy necessary that evolution might be accomplished. This Martian energy was of the very greatest importance, particularly, of course, in the earlier stages. The Moon, which is the home of the Angels under their divine leader, Jehovah, gave to infant humanity the childlike brain mind which is amenable to rulership, and bends itself readily before authority.

These rays with those of Saturn were the only planetary rays which affected mankind as a whole during the Lemurian Epoch. If a horoscope were erected for any of the people who lived then, it would be unnecessary to enter the other planets, because the people of that day could not have responded to their rays. Even today a great part of mankind has not evolved very far beyond that point. A large class, particularly among those we speak of as the lower races and even the lower classes of the western world, are dominated principally by these planetary rays.

Under their impulses these people act with automatic certainty in a specific manner, and it is possible to predict exactly what they will do under the certain aspect of these planets, because they live entirely in their emotions and are scarcely, if at all, responsive to the intellectual vibrations of Mercury. Neither can they appreciate such emotions as are signified by Venus or its higher octave, Uranus; they respond solely to the lower nature, the animal passions. They move under the impulses of Mars and the Moon respecting sex and sustenance. Their pleasures are of the lowest and most sensual nature; they live like animals, altogether in the physical. Their creed is, "Eat, drink, and be merry." Their desires run chiefly to "wine and woman," for they have not yet awakened to the charm of song. Neither has beauty had a chance to enchant the savage heart at this stage of development, for that comes from the Venus rays which are beyond such people. Woman is to the man of this stage only a beast of burden and a convenience.

Meanwhile "Father Time," represented by the planet Saturn, keeps the score and wields over them the whiplash of necessity to drive them forward on the evolutionary path, meting out to each the fruits of his labor at the harvest time between

In a mystery school an ideal is not taught today simply to be forgotten tomorrow or the next generation, but ideals are inculcated so that in time they may become part of the very life, soul, and body of the race

lives. When the man has cultivated the savage virtues of bravery, physical endurance, and the like, he dreams in the postmortem existence of new fields to conquer; he sees where he was lacking and why his desires were frustrated because of lack of implements.

Gradually the constructive Martian ray and the Saturn cunning fertilize the lunar brain which he is building, so that in time he learns to make the crude implements necessary for the attainment of his primitive ambitions. Even today we see the same cunning traits of character, the same crude crafts displayed by the lower races for the purpose of irrigating land, mining ores, or milling grain as in the case of primitive man. All those earliest implements were the result of the planetary rays of Saturn, Moon, and Mars, impinging on the undeveloped brain of infant humanity.

A little further along the path of evolution, in the Atlantean Epoch, the Lords of Venus and the Lords of Mercury came to the Earth for the purpose of giving a further impulse to man's mental and emotional development. It was the task of Venus to combat the lower emotions and raise the brutish animal passion of Mars to the softer and more beautiful Venus love. She was to add beauty to strength, and to attain that ideal the Lords of Venus fostered the plastic arts, painting and sculpture. These were not taught to the general public at that

time. The ideals which are to be developed in a race are always first taught to the most advanced ones in a mystery temple.

At that time Initiation included no spiritual instruction, but consisted of an education in the liberal arts. Sculpture taught how the beautiful might be incorporated in physical form; it called attention to the body, and idealized the softly curved lines. The result is now incorporated in our own race body, for it should be thoroughly understood that in a mystery school an ideal is not taught today simply to be forgotten tomorrow or the next generation, but ideals are inculcated so that in time they may become part of the very life, soul, and body of the race. Compare the race body of the Australian aborigine with that of the modern cultured person and you will find that there is indeed beauty added to strength in the latter.

It may be objected that our art is degenerating compared with what is shown in Hellenic arts, but this is positively not so. It is rather that we have not yet attained to the highest ideal. In ancient Greece the mystery temples occupied a much more prominent position than today; the beautiful form was then idolized to the detriment of the mind, notwithstanding the fact that Greece had a Plato and a Socrates.

The Lords of Mercury, who had charge of the development of mind at the time when the Lords of Venus exercised their great influence on the emotions, had not then been able to make a universally strong impression on early humanity. We are well aware even today that it is wearisome to think, but it is easy to follow the emotions. At the present time the middle class of the West is much further advanced than were the ancient Greeks, because of the influence of these two planetary rays in our lives. Woman naturally excels in the highly imaginative Venus faculty, because of her part in the creative function, which faculty aids in molding the body of the race. On that account her figure has the

CONTINUITY

Upon the threshold stands a figure, beckoning.
My memory stirs—have you and I not met before?
Yes; now the vision of a long-forgotten thing
Is clear, as once again you urge: "Pass through the door."

For now I know that on the threshold of this world
My newly entering soul had once stood hesitant
As in revealing light my life on earth unfurled,
While yet my heart held echoes of a heavenly chant.

The echoes faded; and the prophecy thus shown
Became a beacon set to guide me on my way.
If now the time has come to reap the harvest sown,
I lay these tools aside until another day.

Again, my Friend, I am most willingly beguiled
To meet you at that door where then you gave me breath;
That day they called you Life, and me a little child—
To me you are the same, though now they call you Death.

—Felicia B. Clem

graceful curves which naturally express beauty, while man has the worldly wise intellect fostered by the Lords of Mercury, and is the exponent of reason, the creative agency of physical progress in the world's work.

We always long for, admire, and aspire to what we lack. In days of savagery when kicks and cuffs were her daily fare, woman longed for a caress from her lord. The Venus ray gave her beauty and made her an adept in the feminine arts, which have conquered the masculine heart, so that now man plays the role of protector on the plea that woman is not mentally competent. Meanwhile he is becoming that which he admires in her: he is more gentle and kind; Venus is conquering Mars. But the Mercury delusion of intellectual superiority needs another influence to conquer it, and this, woman is now attracting by her aspiration for it. As she mastered Martian brutality by Venus beauty, so also will she free herself from Mercurial bondage by Uranian intuition. □

—Max Heindel

ASTROLOGY

Toward a Christian Astrology

THIS BRIEF ARTICLE draws its impetus from a distinction advanced by Dane Rudhyar (in his book *The Astrology of Personality*) between two terrestrial motions, axial and orbital, as they correlate with two forms and phases of human consciousness.

The turning of Earth on its axis is a diurnal occurrence. Its focus is its own center. The annual movement of the Earth traces an ellipse whose focus is the Sun.

Astrology as a science correlates astronomical motions and measurements with human behavior, seeing in the latter an expression of stellar energies. In this context, a “young soul” is characterized by its clear and candid demonstration of the direct influence of heavenly bodies; whereas, an “old soul” more fully “rules his stars” and is less subject to behavior predicated solely on planetary configurations. Stated differently, whereas an inexperienced Ego openly expresses the various and variable influences of individual planets, the mature Ego responds more synthetically and with greater constancy to planetary impulsions, just as they are unified by and indeed originate in the Sun.

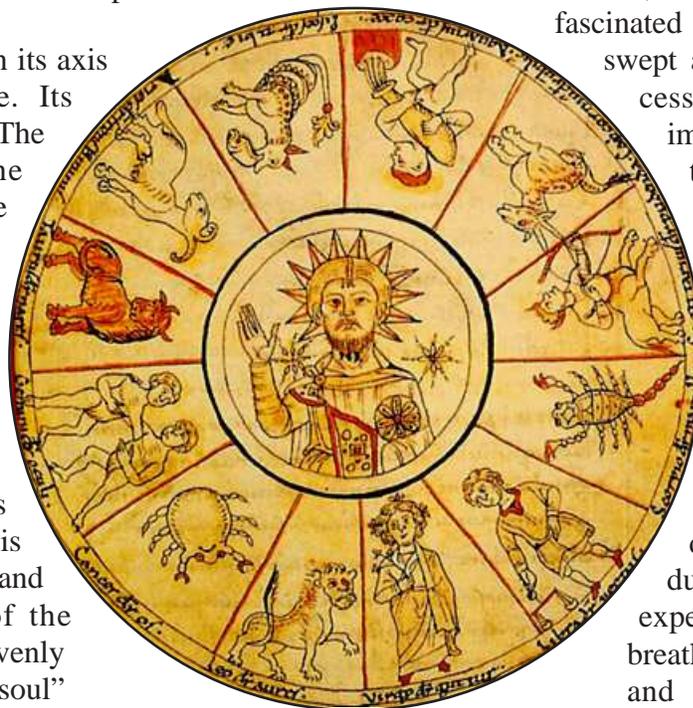
The evolution of a soul in self-understanding traces a course of consciousness whose center is, firstly, its own being. A condition of self-involvement, self-

infatuation, prevails. Gradually this field of awareness expands, the center of autistic consciousness displaces, and there dawns in man the awareness of a larger motion governing his existence, a more absolute frame for his life’s reference.

Axial man, diurnal man, is man naive, fascinated with his personal being, swept along by the giddy succession of momentary images, motions and emotions. Esoterically, Earth turning on its axis is man egotistical, whose life-center is his personal desire nature and its gratification. This personal orientation generates the light and shadow of joy and sorrow, for it is the dimension of inescapable duality. This dualism is experienced, firstly, as the breath (inspiration-expiration) and beauty of life, for it affords contrast and variety. But in time, the alternation of opposites becomes a source of

frustration because stability and permanence seem unattainable. One discovers, in fact, that the daily merry-go-round is what is meant by the “wheel of fortune.” One experiences the plight of the not so mythical Ixion, feeling bound to (crucified on) the wheel of ineluctable change. For diurnal man, happiness on Earth is ephemeral, if not illusory.

As man stands on Earth and casts his eyes skyward, he perceives the Sun, Moon and stars



11th century manuscript, Northern Italy, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris

Christ in the Zodiac

Figure of the Christ-potentiated Zodiacal year.

moving from horizon to horizon. The Earth, it seems, is the center stage whereupon all celestial luminaries shine, as if they exist only to serve man's needs and delight his fancy; which ingenuous notion prompts Milton's Eve in Paradise to ask of Adam upon retiring to their bower, What happens to the stars when they go to sleep?

Interestingly, when man's rational and abstractive faculties enable him to actually conceive an Earth turning upon itself, he simultaneously shows an ability to overcome the gravity of personal, self-oriented consciousness, which renders each person as a planet spinning without purpose, and makes of daily existence a civilized chaos, ordered somewhat by a tangled woof and warp of laws, sanctions and penalties.

Still, even upon arriving at the conclusion that terrestrial motion (rather than celestial mechanics) accounts for day and night, a keen observer will not readily deduce that a second earthly motion accounts for the changing elevation of the Sun in the heavens and the seasons that result from that movement. The conversion from a geocentric to a heliocentric conception of reality favors belief in a theistic order over a merely humanistic (anthropocentric) view of life. For existence is more analogical than logical, poetic rather than prosaic—all appearances to the contrary notwithstanding. Thus, when we come to know directly of *geophysical* motions, we possess an illuminating metaphor for dynamisms of the human *Ego*, or Spirit Being.

In time, each soul discovers that in self-seeking lies death, that Earth-man, turning upon himself, is a dark planet, a cold isolate sphere. When axial man ascends to the dimensions of orbital man, the true center of his being and consciousness becomes apparent. As this displacement of his center comes about, man, we may say, becomes solarized. When he ceases to identify with his earthly body, when the centrifugal pull of material concerns is transcended, man functions in his essential nature as a spiritual entity. He identifies with light and the Spirit of Light, whose example and influence makes his conversion possible.

Man attuned to the heart of his universe knows that his life on Earth describes a pilgrimage and that his earthly vessel is the means by which he can

learn to partake of, to incorporate, and, like a cup, become full of the Sun. As a solar satellite, Earth actually grounds light, whose quantum is Life. As a disciple receives the bread of life from the words of his Master, so is light for Earth celestial manna, cosmic eucharist.

The vibrations of the Great Ones do not allow for an intimacy exceeding a commensurate wisdom. So Earth is distant from Sun. Venus is closer, Mercury closer still. These planets indicate the figurative foci for man's evolving consciousness as he seeks union with the Sun Spirit, Christ. Likewise shall he master the meaning and motions of outer planets.

The miracle and mystery of Sun (Christ) consciousness for man is that the great Solar Spirit has fused two spiritual motions or dimensions through His incarnation and the event on Golgotha. Christ has descended to the realm of mortal man. The Sun is in the Earth. Christ has solarized axial man, redeemed self-centered man. Man turning on his center may discover that center as the Christ-I: But only as that I encompasses all humanity as a composite, single being, only as it is the transfiguration of other- or Thou-consciousness .

Astrologically, the axial perspective embraces billions of discrete personality variations. Each instant, the revolving Earth presents a new face, a nascent life to be baptized by the formative influences of fixed stars and circling planets. Each point on Earth, each longitude-latitude, space-time crux delineates an earthly garment to be worn by a spark of Spirit.

However, the orbiting motion of our planet is one in which all Earth beings share. It is a unitary experience binding humanity together as one soul. As mankind comes to live out of the perspective of its "orbital consciousness," the light which is the true focus of its motion and devotion becomes increasingly an interior reality. This is the Christian incarnation: when the Spirit of the external Sun becomes an interior self-perpetuating light; when Earth becomes a star; when the historical Christ becomes a living, personal Christ; when Bethlehem, Gethsemane, Golgotha and the empty tomb are enacted in the cosmos of each and every soul. □

—Carl Swan

The Better Way

MY FRIENDS, who have not much faith in astrology, often suggest that I read their horoscopes for them so they may judge of the value of such work. This does not trouble me at all, for I know they only want to have their fortunes told, and I have no wish to gratify this longing. It is more difficult to resist the appeal of those who do believe in astrology and who would like me to cast their horoscopes or those of their children for a more serious purpose, or who want information on some particular point, aware that the chart can give it, and are surprised and perhaps hurt at my reluctance to satisfy them.

Sometimes, too, people who see the Rosicrucian magazine, *Rays from the Rose Cross*, express wonder at the briefness of the astrological readings, and the stringency of the rules which govern them. "If the horoscope has wisdom and knowledge in it," they say, "why deny readings to all but a handful? There must be thousands who are ready to turn to astrology and who would thankfully make good use of the advice given them if they could get their charts read."

There was a time when I held this opinion myself and wondered at the Rosicrucian hardness of heart that withheld precious information, instead of giving it out in a more liberal manner to aid and strengthen seekers for truth. It took me several years of the happiest labor of my life to reach the conviction I now hold that astrology is a tool of which scant use should be made except as the individual draws upon it for self-knowledge or improvement, or as a skilled and sincere teacher

may help another person equally sincere in his belief, but who, for some reason, is debarred from a personal use of the science.

It was never necessary to convince me of astrology's truth and power. In childhood it was a reality to me; any reference to it in the books that I read, that was not mocking, doubting, or discrediting, struck a familiar chord, awoke a submerged ancient memory, and seemed always right and plausible; while anything that derided it annoyed me, giving me the disturbed feeling that an intuitive sense of falseness creates. Yet I do not remember ever asking or getting any information or opinions from my elders as to astrology's worth or lack of it, and I doubt if I ever asked questions about it. My belief was too instinctive and deep-rooted for me to care what other people thought. I needed no proof of its value; the conviction of its being there was heavily marked in some inner part of my system.

But the opportunity to actually study the great science did not come for many years—fortunately perhaps, as I might have made poor use of it as a younger person. On the other hand, it might have aided me to a better comprehension of myself and the problems of my life, and brought me through the difficult times with less strain, and helped me to a more sympathetic understanding of other people.

But the young are not always wise, even with the light of astrology. As it was, my first reaction as a student was the foolish one—the merely curious interest in the supposed revelations of the lives and characters of prominent people and friends which my slight and superficial knowledge seemed to furnish. I think I may acquit myself of any desire

or intention of spreading this supposed information, or of making any inappropriate use of it. Indeed, from the start the sacredness of the astrologer's trust, and the stern obligation upon him for silence, impressed me so strongly that I doubt if I could have broken this unwritten law for any reason whatsoever.

Yet it was a matter of pleasurable excitement, and complacency, to believe that the keys which would unlock the doors to hidden and intimate knowledge of my fellow humans were becoming mine. I felt I was gaining an advantage over people in general who knew nothing of the message of the stars, and I wonder if it is not this primitive and silly satisfaction in believing oneself wiser and more powerful than other people that is the obstacle in the path of many a student of astrology to that humility that must be the foundation of insight.

Fortunately, in my case, this phase was soon ended by the discovery, in my own horoscope and in those of persons whom I knew to be as guileless and harmless as doves, of harsh aspects that indicated, according to the textbooks, a most thorough-going villainy or an appalling blackness of soul. There was something wrong somewhere. Common sense told me it lay in my lack of anything but surface understanding; that the measure of a soul was not to be drawn from the profound depths of a horoscope with ease or slight learning, and that nothing less than the ability to take the true measure was worth the paper my findings were figured on.

I began to see that the few symbols and divisions within the horoscope, and their permutations, must represent every known condition and eventuality. Each, therefore, must carry such an infinite number of meanings, in itself and in its interconnections, that with all things so accounted for, it would be stupid indeed to ascribe to any aspect, or any position within the circle, only the general meanings the textbooks give, for these are merely intended to serve as a base for more subtle interpretations.

So, jolted out of my assumption that astrology would provide me with an easy code to laying bare the souls of others, I began a careful scrutiny of every chart that came my way in an effort to mea-



Woodcut, 1504, Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528)

Astronomer

This illustration was created when astronomy and astrology were still regarded as two phases of one integrated science.

sure and weigh the good and the less good, to strike a balance between them, and to adjust the values in each so that I might sift out the important ones from the mass of the chart's evidence. And as my small store of knowledge grew, feeling for the real meaning of signs and aspects began to develop in a way that first supplemented the textbooks, and in time made me more or less independent of them, except for reference.

From then on, the labor of casting and reading a horoscope became a matter of enthusiastic devotion and passionate interest. It was my work and never would I find any other so rewarding in itself, though it never brought me any gain but in mind and spirit.

As a matter of fact, I don't think it even brought me the thanks of those whose charts I read—usually at their importunate request. I suppose I was trying too hard to be accurate and faithful to the chart's message to paint my pictures in the rosy colors they were looking for, though I always tried

to emphasize the finer things I saw, and to soft-peddle the adverse elements.

I don't know how much good these early readings did anybody. But they released in me an energy that had never before found expression and opened before me a realization of the vast, intricate, stupendous design of astrology: the range, the scope, the over-powering magnitude of it; its driving spiritual force and its perfect spiritual harmony. I would gladly have given my life to the study of it, knowing that at the end I would be no more than a beginner.

But I commenced to realize that it was a mistake to read charts for people who were moved mostly by idle curiosity. As my skill increased and the work became less experimental, I began to discriminate and be more selective of the people who wanted readings. Finally, I got to the point where I would not cast or read for any except those who were in sorrow or a greatly troubled state of mind and who genuinely thought astrology might help them.

The work I did for these had a different quality about it. I was no more earnest than I had been before, but my clients were, and the fact that they were asking my help and looking to me to provide an explanation for their maladjustments and a viable remedy, sharpened my inner vision, spurred me to the most exacting care of which I was capable, and brought a solemnity to the task that was not there before.

To my recollection, I never sat down to work on one of these charts without first praying that my labor might truly help those who had asked for it, and that my reading would be one that would best serve their spiritual needs, or at least touch the spring of some truth that would give an answer to the soul's plea for enlightenment. The natives of these charts seemed as my own children and my interest in their lives was peculiar and acute, entirely unaffected by their being, for the most part, almost strangers to me.

Though this work brought me the deepest satisfaction, it marked the end of my usefulness as an interpreter of charts. I wanted so much to help the inquirers, but realized I could do little compared with what they might do for themselves by learn-

ing to read their own horoscopes. I might be able to aid them once, but I would not always be at liberty to do so, and needs would repeatedly arise. Because a chart should only be read under the seal of the purest of motives and because there are few unpaid astrologers able to give their time and their efforts, I became more and more convinced that the the individual best benefits from his horoscope when he is able to read it himself, drawing his own

I never sat down to work on one of these charts without first praying that my labor might truly help those who had asked for it, and that my reading would be one that would best serve their spiritual needs

conclusions and providing his own counsel from it.

It is not that another person reading for us cannot tell us much or direct us wisely. But by the very nature of things, he or she is restricted by time and other factors, their analysis may altogether miss the point most vital for the native's understanding. At best he can render but a pitifully slim accounting of the wealth the horoscope holds.

Because of the complexity of life, character, and astrological variables, unless he makes it his life's exclusive business, the astrologer can give but a meager indication of the wealth to which the native of each chart is heir. Here is a mine of priceless information, obtainable nowhere else. No priest, no physician, no psychologist has sufficient insight to match the blazing clarity of the horoscope. Yet the student who searches in his own chart for the causes of obstruction can usually find the clue that will enable him to meet and overcome them. Needless to say, human nature being what it is, this clue is not always followed, but that is neither here nor there; it exists, and the devout seeker intent on self-transformation can find it and make use of it.

The time has gone when even the extremely rich

can engage the services of an astrologer for their exclusive use, to consult with at will. Undoubtedly there are many who do keep in constant touch with a commercial astrologer, but aside from the possibility of both seeking material ends, the fact remains that it is the personal knowledge and close study of one's own horoscope that yields the only truly satisfactory results. All else is doubtful and fragmentary.

Of course, this also applies to parents who wish to have their children's horoscopes read to better understand and more intelligently guide them. Suggestions can be made by astrologers, but the ability to read the charts themselves will repay the parents more than most of them realize. A truer comprehension will be brought about than by good intentions and close association. It pays to have your own horoscope and be able to read it; it pays to have your children's horoscopes and be able to read them.

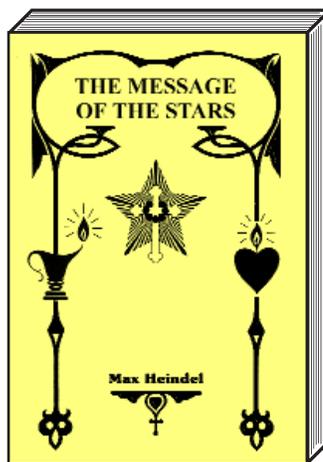
The truth of astrology is borne in upon us far more positively if we read our own chart than if it is read for us. The evidence of our own eyes carries weight and makes a deeper impression on our consciousness. We may think the astrologer we have consulted is wrong and his advice can be disregarded. However, brought face to face with our signified destiny there is something we cannot escape—the symbols have a power. They force a reluctant and rueful admission of their integrity.

Of course, it may be argued that all people are not in a position to study astrology: they lack the time, they lack the means; there are no teachers or classes within their reach; they are unable to cope with the ridicule and opposition of families and friends to learning this science. But most of these difficulties are not insurmountable—a way will always open when one is determined. The questions of how and where to begin can be settled by each individual who wishes to draw upon the wisdom of the horoscope. If the task of learning to cast charts seems hard, the results will abundantly reward the effort. As we strive to understand the weavings of the heavens in our lives, a glory and a wonder comes upon us that seems to emanate from the starry ones themselves. □

—E.S.G.

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The Tree of Life

FEW IF ANY OBJECTS in visible creation are rooted so deeply and soar so majestically in human consciousness as the tree. As the most evolved members of the plant kingdom, trees are perhaps the purest and most potent embodiment of nature's life force. They evoke for humans a wide range of feelings. They mediate intuition and aid the mind in objectifying thought. They seem to speak an organically entire language, be it through their lexicon of leaves, the articulate sculpturing of space, the gracious gesturing of branches, or the dazzling dissemination of light.

The very sight of a tree can calm the mind, stabilize breathing and give comfort as a strong, companionable presence. Whether growing alone or in large numbers, trees speak to our sense of singleness; they project for us an idea of individuality. Their columnar thrust provides a visual metaphor for the backbone of human effort and individual will. Trees remind us that a degree of solitariness is part of God's plan for us, that we grow in the Mind of God as a tree lofts into the atmosphere's vast embrace.

Trees may be the one representative of the natural world most suggestive, or inspiring the vision, of eternal life. An individual olive or pine tree may live several thousand years. Trees are the Methusalehs of the plant kingdom.

Trees teach us patience, sacrifice, aspiration, groundedness, jubilant anonymity, endurance of adversity, and unconditional generosity. In the world of nature, the tree most closely represents the human physical figure, not only in its vertical



Henry Cowell Redwood State Park

Towering California Redwoods

and horizontal dimensions, but in the corresponding movement of forces indicated by those two directions—vital energies emanating like radii from the earth's center to the periphery and the lateral desire currents circling the earth, moving at right angles to, and thus intersecting, the vital forces. This crossing or crucifying of etheric and desire energies is the cause of human consciousness.

In particular, fruit-bearing trees are pioneers in the desire world, pressing for entry, but in a noble, patient, transcendent way that will make the group spirit directing their physical and vital being far more advanced when their human stage has been reached than were humanity at the onset of the Earth Period. Trees in their human stage, manifesting

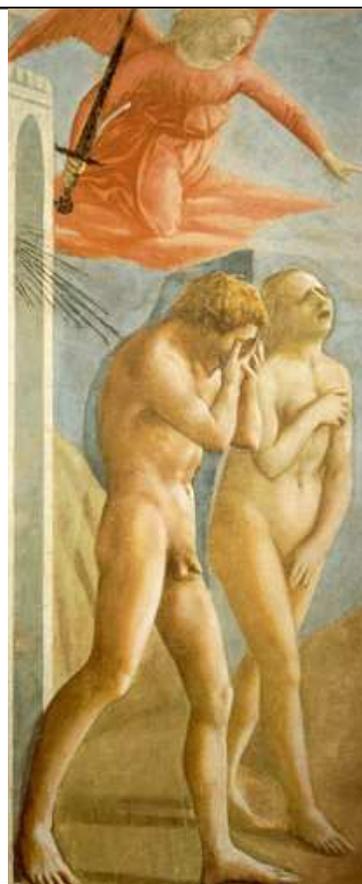
during the Venus Period, will have the desire body as their lowest vehicle.

Given the discharge of millions of tons of toxic substances into our planet's atmosphere each year, oxides of nitrogen, sulfur, and carbon which combine with water vapor to form corrosive acids; given also rapacious clear-cutting and the indiscriminate burning of forests, we are warranted in describing the tree as being crucified on the cross of itself, or on the cross of a thoughtless humanity. The angelic spirit governing each genus could well be saying of this environmental despoliation, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they are doing."

If animal flesh supports part of the world's population, even more so does the plant world, which is the ultimate food source for animals, including carnivores. Living trees provide shade, shelter, wind control, soil and temperature stabilization, animal habitat, compost, fruit, and nuts. From the flesh of trees we build houses, boats, furniture, libraries and derive linoleum, varnish, turpentine, waxes and soap. Various parts of trees' anatomy (roots, bark, leaves, flowers) provide condiments (cloves, cinnamon, pepper) and medicines, including: quinine from chinchona bark, the original cure for malaria; taxol (paclitaxel), from the yew tree; lapacho, from the same-named tree; and laetrile, from the apricot kernel—all used to treat cancer; salicylic acid, the main ingredient in aspirin, obtained from the white willow and used to treat rheumatism and pain. Many ointments, lineaments, plasters, and inhalants also derive from tree sources.

Trees teach us fortitude, long-suffering, piety, symmetry, joy in service. Totally self-given, magnificent in silence, the tree is the plant world's type for Christ, as given in the eucharistic prayer: "This is my body which is given for you."

The powerful life force which trees embody is given generic recognition in Genesis in the Tree of Life. Here it refers to the life force in Adam and Eve and was not dissimilar from the vital impulse



Two frescoes: Left, Mausolino da Panicale (1383-1435); right, Masaccio (1401-1428), Brancacci Chapel, Santa Maria del Carmine, Florence

Fall of Man

Mausolino depicts the Tempter with a face like Eve's, showing Lucifer's effect on heightening personal subjectivity and appealing to vanity. The distraught primal pair are evicted (fall) from etheric consciousness as a result of ignorant and willful indulgence in the procreative act.

Expulsion from Paradise

associated with the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. The fruit of the latter tree designated the power of procreation which early humanity arrogated to itself, bringing about the fall from etheric to physical consciousness.

The reason for prohibiting eating of the fruit of the Tree of Life is explained by Max Heindel in the following passage:

When we learn that we have a vital body made of ether, and that it is the tree of life to every one of us; and furnishes us the vitality whereby we are enabled to make the movements of the body, we may understand why the power to recreate and regenerate ourselves was taken away from us, lest we learn how to vitalize the imperfect dense body." (*Teachings of an Initiate*, p. 195)

Easy access to the spinal spirit fire in the tree of the spine has been interdicted for man's welfare. Cherubim first guarded the gate to Eden with a flaming sword. Now, as depicted on the door to the mystic temple of initiation, the Cherubim hold a flower, to indicate how the etheric paradise may be regained—by the conservation and transmutation of the life force. In the New Jerusalem, the Tree of Life, symbolizing the power to regenerate ourselves, will enable us to “regain that health and beauty that we at present lack” (TI, p. 196).

Psalm 1 speaks of him who is blessed because, among other things, he delights in and meditates day and night on the law of the Lord: “And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither.” His leaf, his vesture, will be like that of the evergreen, perduring, intact, for it will be the purified etheric or life body. In his March, 1915 Letter to Students, Max Heindel urges students to memorize and concentrate on the first three verses of this first Psalm.

The prospect promised in Psalms 1 is elaborated in the the last chapter (22) of Revelation, where the dweller in the New City of Peace will again have access to “the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits and yielded her fruit every month, and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of nations.” What bridges the gulf between Eden's Tree of Life and the Tree of Life in New Jerusalem? The tree on Golgotha, the Cross of Christ. Due to increasing selfishness, resulting from the inoculation of the Lucifer spirit into his nature, man became increasingly captive to the physical world. The regenerating impulse Christ brought and brings to Earth evolution is wonderfully condensed in the figure of the cross that becomes a living tree. Its mineral substance is imbued with life, as in eucharistic transubstantiation.

Robert Fludd writes in *Summum Bonum*:

We may not worship the outer, satanic, worldly part of the cross, nor are we to surround it with diverse testimonies and venerations. For it is the cross of death, not of life...we must venerate only that true, genuine, living cross of Christ, that is, the mystical Wisdom which is called by the Holy



Oil on canvas, 1610, Hendrick Goltzius (1558-1616), Private Collection

Christ on the Tree of Life

While Christ hangs on the living cross, an apple tree, He is also, as Jesus, the fruit in Mary's lap. The textual source is the Song of Songs: "As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste." Christ's sacrifice regenerates man and nature.

Scriptures the wood of the Tree of Life, the fountain or root of which is the enlightened Word...No man can be a true disciple of Christ who does not...find and recognize within himself that secret cross...carrying Christ Jesus within himself consciously...all true Christians must be engaged with greatest effort to discover and recognize that mystical cross, and to be it within themselves...It has the color of blood and is similar to the reddest red of the rose, surrounded by lilies.

The mineral wood of the cross represents the dense physical body, the body of death. Whether a rose vine entwines it, or a serpent, or it branches into life by virtue of bearing the Life Principle,

Christ, in each instance the contrast represents the withering of the lower self and the blossoming of the regenerative principle, the resurrection of the spirit.

Trees as emblems for the vital body have many scriptural and mythological referents. To cite but one biblical instance, when Christ Jesus first applied a salve to the blind man's eyes and asked him what he saw, he said, "I see men as trees, walking." (Mark 8:24) That is, upon the restoration of sight, etheric vision causatively precedes physical perception, even as it did in the involutory phase of human development. "Trees" here mean the vital body, and in particular the life ether, possession of which distinguishes the plant from the mineral.

Depictions of the original temptation scene in Eden, commonly representing Lucifer as a human-headed serpent entwined in the Tree of Knowledge, derive from a Desire World image, one that appeared to Eve as a translation of the sympathetic (lunar)

nervous system as it sinuously climbs the axis of the tree-spine, which carries the self-consciousness-bearing central (mercurial) nervous system.

Luciferan spirits live in the nerve branches which end in the sense organs. They have poured the capacity for higher enthusiasm into the blood and desire body of man. Human physical con-

sciousness is the gift of Lucifer. His activity comes to expression at the point where the nerves give rise to feeling and perception. That is why the serpent in Genesis says, "Your eyes shall be opened." Actually, all the senses shall be opened. The individualization of consciousness is due to the leafing of the tree of sensory perception.

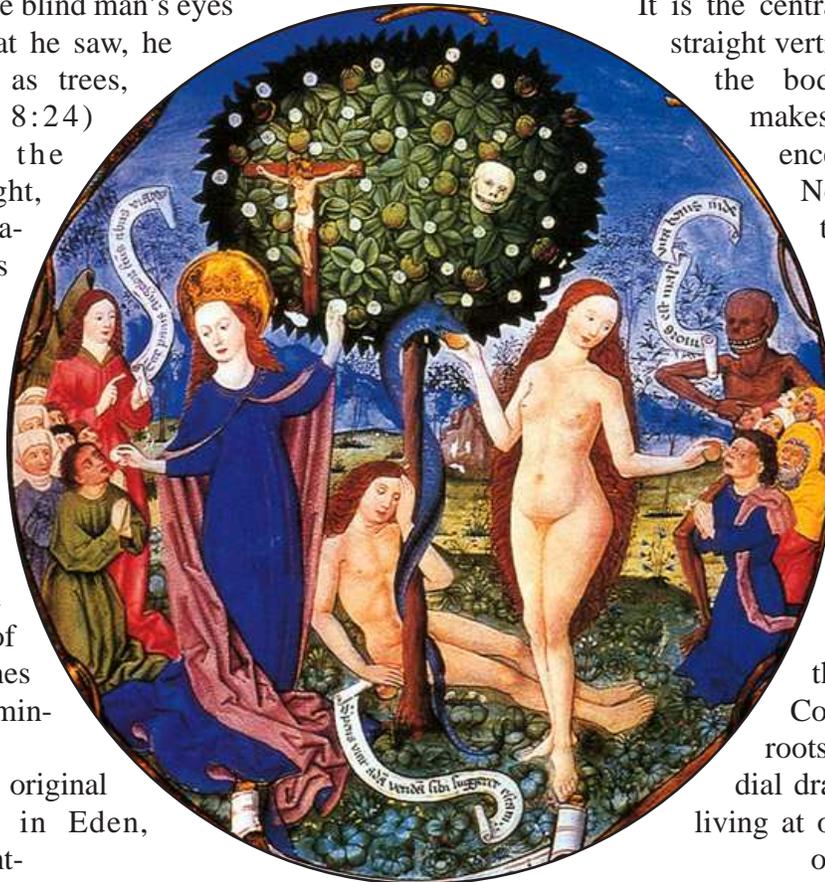
It is the central nervous system's straight vertical shaft, this ark in the body temple, which makes possible the experience of individual self.

Not surprisingly, in the Nordic *Voluspa*, the tree which spans nine worlds is called Yggdrasill, which roughly translates as "the I-carrier." Earliest cosmologies, whose echo yet survives in shamanistic tribes in Siberia, picture the universe as a Cosmic tree at whose roots dwells the primordial dragon, and all beings living at one or another level of its branches, with the eagle perched imperially on its crown.

Some Renaissance painters used the tree to chronicle the ages of man, episodes in the life of Christ Jesus, or the descent

of mankind from the primal pair. A popular theme was the Tree of Jesse, the father of David and direct forbear of Jesus. In some depictions of the World Tree, the lower branches show the ages of man, while the upper limbs picture the hierarchy of heavenly hosts crowned by the Godhead.

The tree's pronounced linearity invites its use as



From the Missal of Berthold Furtmeyr, c. 1440-45, Cod. lat. 15710, Bd. 3, messe 1, fol. 4r, Staatsbibliothek, Munich

Tree of Life and Death

As a pictorial allegory of the fall and redemption of man, "the fruit of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste/ Brought death into the world" (Milton), is distributed by Eve to her descendents until the new Eve, Mary, from the fruit of her womb conceived the world's savior, the New Adam, who brought propitiation for sin and victory over its effect—death. Mary plucks the consecrated host, the bread of Life, fruit of Christ Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, from the Tree of Life.

an emblem for the polarity of the physical world. From the seed of life comes a dual impulse—one seeks to root in the substance of earthly affairs, the other aspires towards the ethereal heavens. The tree also illustrates a monistic or holistic vision of creation in any cross section of its vertical axis, revealing concentric circles that resemble the planetary orbits of our cosmos, surrounded by the spheres of the stars. In this view, the heartwood or center of the tree is the place of the sun.

In the Tree of the Sepiroth, the Kabalistic figure showing the ten names of God as emanations from the uncaused First Cause (En Soph), and twenty-two secondary attributes (representing the Hebrew alphabet), the accent is on the involutory phase of Creation, where the “roots” of being are from above and the tree grows downward from the heavenly to the increasingly dense worlds.

That part of the tree known as lignin, the essential woody part which is deposited in the cell wall and gives the tree its strength and rigidity, degrades to lignite, a soft brownish-black coal in which the texture of the original wood can still be seen. In time, man shall acquire the life-saving, regenerating function now possessed by trees (and all aerobic plants). At present, carbon dioxide, an unusable biproduct of respiration, must be expelled from the body and replaced by fresh oxygen. In the future this gas shall be separated into its component elements of carbon and oxygen, thereby enabling man to generate his own air.

The Holy Spirit, the breath of Life, Who breathed into the Adamic (“red earth”) body, causing it to become a living soul, shall inspire the initiate, who will breathe into his own person self-generated oxygen. Life shall be wrest from death with each breath. Resurrection will be one’s normal biology.



Illustration from *Speculum humanae salvationis*, c. 1340-50, Region of Lake Constance, Monastery Library, Kremsmünster

Tree of Jesse and Tree of the Cross

The Lamb of God connects the genealogical Tree of Jesse with the tree-Cross in the form of the arbor vitae. The exalted Christ, appearing in the tree’s crown with Peter and Paul, holds the keys of heaven and death in one hand and the Gospel, as four books, in the other. The seven doves (at top), symbolizing the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, are flanked by Matthew (right) and John the Evangelist (left). At the foot of the Cross stand (left) Ecclesia and Melchizedec with chalices and (right) Mary, John, Moses with the brazen serpent, and Synagogue (old dispensation). The stylized leaves of the tree of Jesse, known as roundels, contain Old Testament figures.

The Philosopher’s Stone is the tree of life. It can dissociate carbonic acid to its constituent parts. In one sense, aerobic plants are higher than humans because they can build their bodies from mineral carbon, as well as dissociating carbon from oxygen, which pure gas they then liberate for human use. In this regard, they are the salvation of our

physical bodies, the breath of our life. At present, carbon must be in organic form to be assimilable by humans. In time, from their own poisonous gases and waste materials, humans will process carbon and from it will build that white stone, the diamond body. The human body is at once the crucible or retort, the raw materials, and the transformed product, which Revelation describes as the pure river of water of life, clear as crystal. The nineteenth century Jesuit priest and poet Gerard Manley Hopkins has intuited this transmutation in lines from *That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire*:

*Flesh fade, and mortal trash
 Fall to the residuary worm; world's wildfire,
 leave but ash:
 In a flash, at a trumpet crash,
 I am all at once what Christ is, since he was
 what I am, and
 This jack, joke, poor potsherd, patch,
 matchwood, immortal diamond,
 Is immortal diamond.*

When man's body and soul have been purified by living the Christ life, he shall be reintroduced to the Tree of Life, the *arbor vitae*. It starts with the hard discipline of the inanimate cross; it ends in the prodigal life of the undying tree. So the poet Yeats divined, that lover of the "great-rooted blossomer":

*Beloved, gaze in thine own heart,
 The holy tree is growing there;
 From joy the holy branches start,
 And all the trembling flowers they bear.*

Max Heindel assures us that in the Aquarian age there will be no night and "the Tree of Life" shall bloom unceasingly by the transparent etheric 'sea of glass' which permeates all things" (*Teachings of an Initiate*, p. 60). Each person will be in possession of this *elixir vitae*, this tree of life, in the form of his individual vital body, and it will last for millenniums as a vehicle for the spirit. □

—C.W.

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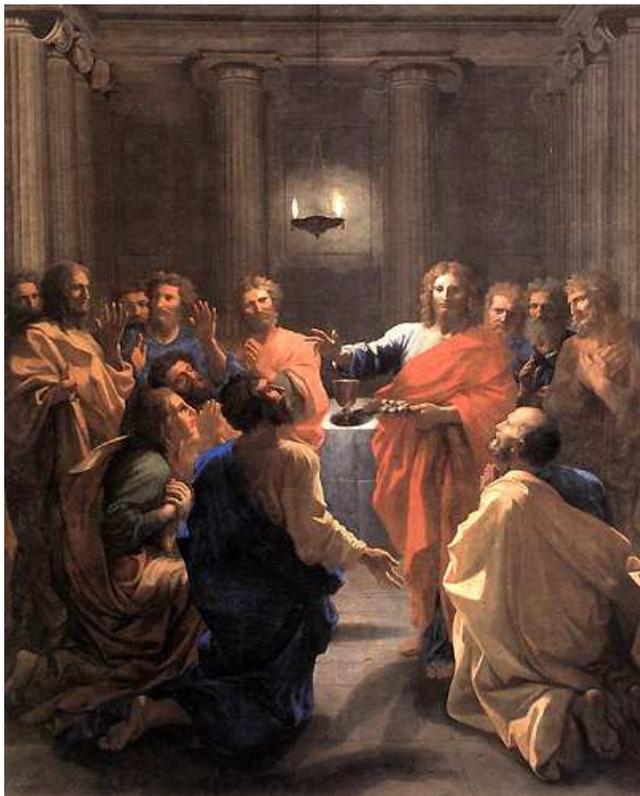
Part 1

THE WRITERS AND filmmakers of science fiction have been bold in depicting what life will be like far into the third millennium. Their efforts frequently result in brilliant, and very profitable, popular entertainments. Millions of people are eager to pay to see their fantasies played out in a make-believe world. Most of this may be relatively innocent entertainment, but it is just that: entertainment.

The fantasies and fatuities of popular entertainment, however, should not deter us from asking very seriously, What will be the shape of the human condition in the twenty-first century and the next millennium? The future is imaginable. As with a space rocket, culture and civilization have a trajectory; their course can be predicted, provided that the trajectory is not altered by external forces. Of course, history is marked by surprises, both positive and negative, but we can also discern the impetus, the direction, of cultural motion, and we can anticipate, at least in part, what the future may hold. Permit me to indulge in such an exercise of anticipation, with specific reference to the difference that Christian faith—by no means an external force!—may make in our common future.

The culture of which we are part is defined by the word “modernity.” For our purposes, modernity

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Oil on canvas, 1640. Nicolas Poussin. Musée du Louvre, Paris

The Institution of the Eucharist

Liberty, equality and fraternity are the gifts of God to humanity in and through the incarnate Logos, Christ Jesus. Thus can the Declaration of Independence assert that certain self-evident truths—including human equality under the Creator God and the inalienable right of liberty—are irrefragable and no political regime can rightfully annul them.

includes what today is called “postmodernity,” which may more accurately be viewed as hypermodernity. The origins of modernity are commonly traced to the founding of the United States of America and, especially for us in France, to our Revolution of 1789. I hope I will not be accused of chauvinism in suggesting that modernity might be characterized by the three words of the motto of the French Republic: Liberty, Equality, Fraternity. In our Revolution, that triad represented the rejection of the old regime and, for some of the protagonists, the rejection of the substantially Christian culture of the preceding centuries.

In the course of the two centuries since the Revolution, however, it has been more and more widely recognized that liberty, equality, and fraternity are, in fact, among the fruits borne by the biblical and Christian tradition. This is an argument vigorously and repeatedly pressed by Pope John Paul II. In his homily at Le Bourget in June 1980 the Holy Father declared to the French people:

What wonders the sons and daughters of your nation have done to understand man better, and to express who man really is by proclaiming his inalienable rights. Everyone knows how important

and responsibility. By our intelligence we construct a representation of the world, and that representation determines the horizon toward which a civilization moves, or by which it is brought to a halt. Thus it is culture that sets the direction for the political, social, and economic future of human societies. Culture is rightly viewed as the motor force of history. Culture is not the uncontrollable consequence of technological or economic developments. We human beings are responsible for the future of civilization, and all theories of a deterministic nature—whether economic, technologi-

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the ideas of liberty, equality, and fraternity are in your culture and history. At bottom, these are Christian ideas. I am well aware that those who first put them forward did not have in mind man's covenant with the Eternal Wisdom. Yet they wanted to do something for man.

Contrary to Marxist doctrine, culture—like history itself—is not simply the by-product of productive social forces in their complex interaction. Nor is culture simply an ideological framework, man's projecting from his experience in order to create some cosmic scheme or system of meaning. Remembering man's covenant with Eternal Wisdom is especially urgent at the end of this century in which allegedly scientific and rational ideologies have generated the most hideous atrocities. Of course, those who promoted these ideologies claimed to be serving human needs, and toward that professed end they designed and carried out crimes of unspeakable magnitude, crimes of unprecedented scale in human history. It is not enough to say that these ideologies were carried to unfortunate extremes, or that they contained dangerous errors. The massive experimental evidence demonstrates that these ideologies were rooted in falsehood.

Culture necessarily has to do with human liberty

cal, or biological—are but efforts to escape that responsibility. Against all such theories, we must insist that we are answerable for our use of the gift of reason.

This brings us back to liberty, equality, and fraternity. While these three words express the aspirations that characterize modernity, the abuse of these words by those responsible for the unspeakable horrors of this century may lead us to disown the ideals themselves. There is a very real risk that people in the next century may repudiate the generosity that inspired these aspirations, and may draw back from the road they opened to a more promising human future. This would be a great sadness. We can help avoid such an unhappy development by discerning anew, and embracing anew, the Christian origins of the aspirations to liberty, equality, and fraternity. Christians can contribute, indeed can take the lead, in envisioning a more hopeful human future by recognizing that each of these aspirations is a way of formulating the questions asked by man in the face of God's revelation.

Each of our three words has in the course of history suffered grave misadventures. The misadventures of liberty compel us to ask again the question of Psalm 8, "What is man?" The misadventures of



Fresco (detail), 8 ft. 4-1/8 in x 19 ft. 7-1/2 in., Masaccio (1401-1428), Brancacci Chapel, Santa Maria del Carmine, Florence

The Tribute Money

Incidents relating to two forms of tribute are narrated in the Gospels: tribute as tax or census, kensos (Mark 12:14); and tribute as a burden, phoros (Luke 20:22). In both instances (Matthew relates both, 22:17, 17:24) Christ Jesus makes the distinction between secular and religious obligations. Only Luke describes Peter finding the tribute money in the mouth of a fish.

equality raise afresh the question that the disciples put to Jesus, “Who is the greatest?” The misadventures of fraternity pose once more the question addressed in the parable of the Good Samaritan, “Who is my neighbor?” As we shall see, pursuing these questions in the context of contemporary culture leads us to the great mysteries of creation, redemption, and glorification.

First, the misadventures of liberty. In the modern context liberty has been understood as the ability of the individual to fulfill his own desires, declaring, “I want to do what I want, if I want, when I want, and how I want.” This is liberty construed as license. In this view, the very existence of others may be seen as an intolerable constraint on the freedom of the individual. Liberty expresses itself, indeed liberty exists in, the “transgressive” assertion of will against all limits, all prohibitions, all laws. Such is a dominant understanding of liberty in our time.

In the political sphere, the enemy of liberty is tyranny, and tyranny is as old as human history. The threat of tyranny, in the form of totalitarianism, is today greater than ever. It is a great mistake to think that the threat of totalitarianism has ended with the defeat of the overtly totalitarian regimes of our century. Technological power has gained unheard-of domination over human societies, brutally disrupting and often displacing traditional ways of life. The religions of secularism have

taken the place of older beliefs, redefining social relations and giving political leaders the power to mobilize the energies and liberties of citizens who have become units of all-pervasive consumption. These dynamics we can see at work today, and it is more than possible that they will become ever more dominant in the century ahead. Against these forces are posited the words of Jesus, “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” (Matt. 22:17)

In establishing this sharp differentiation between what is religious and what is political, Christianity does not throw up a wall of separation between different dimensions of human life. On the contrary, it establishes, in the form of a hierarchy, a connection between them and thus suggests their necessary and organic unity. The key truth is that man receives his liberty from God, and is able to live in liberty only through his continuing relationship with God. In this way, the person has within him something that is radically inalienable, something that no other man can control. That something is his dignity as a free person created in the image of God. This liberty can be maintained and exercised only in dependence upon the creative source of human liberty, which is God. Permit me to suggest that, rightly understood, the 1776 American Declaration of Independence from political tyranny, with its reference to “Nature and Nature’s God,” presup-

poses this radical dependence on the source of liberty.

This is the understanding of liberty that undermines all tyrannical and totalitarian pretensions. Submission to God does not alienate human liberty, for the source of liberty cannot be the enemy of liberty. On the other hand, and as history bears abundant testimony, liberty as license, liberty as self-will, consumes and destroys itself. In a free and democratic political order, no political leader or party can take God's place. Politicians and parties must humbly serve what man is called to become. Their first duty is to assure that every one is able to decide freely, that every citizen, including the poorest and weakest, has a say in deciding both the ends and means of the common life.

Politics becomes totalitarian when it is declared that politics is the source of human liberty. The spiritual struggle of the Church is not to attack totalitarianism in a way that involves the Church in politics as simply one party among others. The Church's task, rather, is to discern and denounce the alienations and seductions that destroy human liberty by severing it from its divine source. In this way, the Church not only defends human liberty and dignity, but she also protects the integrity of politics itself. There can be no authentic politics under totalitarianism, for politics is by its very nature the exercise of deliberation and decision by free persons.

This argument requires the asking of very basic questions: What is man? What is the meaning of liberty? How can we choose what is good, for ourselves and our neighbors? Here we enter the field of ethics. The course of our culture has rekindled the most fundamental question about good and evil. Today it is widely thought that the very notion of law is in a state of crisis. If we ask why this is the case, one crucially important answer is that law is almost unanimously perceived as prohibitive. Man's obscured and listless conscience seems unable to comprehend the true meaning of law. The result is that law is viewed as the enemy of liberty. Some of the pioneers of modernity understood themselves to be resisting the conformism of an ossified social order, but they ended up by confusing liberation with systematic transgression of all order. Thus the Jesus who said, "Keep the commandments" (Matt. 19:17), came to be viewed by

many as the enemy of liberty.

In our cultural context, an alternative understanding of liberty meets with resistance. Many fail to understand that God's commandments impose themselves on the human conscience not

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as arbitrary constraints but in the name of the distinction between good and evil. In history's various declarations of human rights we can readily recognize a secular translation of God's commandments. The law of God is the only sure guarantee of the rights of man, the only absolute warrant for the belief that every person is born free and must remain free. Liberty as license, on the other hand, ends up by destroying itself. My argument, then, is that the divine law is the guarantor of human freedom, the most firm foundation of all laws aimed at protecting liberty.

The importance of pressing this argument is evident today in widespread confusion about human rights. Who can deny that the political, moral, and conceptual foundation of human rights has become very shaky? Cynical power games and raw violence run roughshod over the most solemn agreements. It should come as no surprise that human dignity is violated when it is not understood that the claim that every person is endowed with inalienable rights is an appeal to universal conscience. That claim requires an acknowledgment, at least implicitly, that good and evil must not be confused. The distinction between good and evil is valid everywhere, at all times, across the diversity of cultures and civilizations, notwithstanding whatever other misunderstandings there may be between people of good will. And so it is that in the field of ethics we cannot answer the question of the meaning of liberty without addressing the ques-

tion, What is man? The question of liberty is the question of how to bear witness to his dignity as a person created in the image and likeness of God.

That task is never easy, and it is in many ways made more difficult in our cultural context. When we look at our culture today, we see a world caught up in a whirlwind of communications, of electronic memories and conflicting construals of reality, of a confusing profusion of images. Many people are fascinated by this new circumstance, and that is understandable. At the same time, however, it pro-

They subject people to what they wish for. Our senses are provided with an abundance of materials, more than we had ever dreamed of, with the result that our liberty is not enhanced but paralyzed. To use the current phrase, individuals and our culture itself suffer from "overload." This is a form of captivity that must be overcome if we are to be truly free. This does not mean that we simply renounce whatever we find attractive. Rather, the overcoming of this captivity requires that we engage the question of truth. What truth can fulfill the aspira-

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duces new forms of conformism, of unfreedom. This is not what was expected from modernity. The apostles of modernity had convinced nearly everyone that advances in knowledge would bring with it advances in liberty. Such hope was not ungrounded, but it had a condition attached to it. The condition was that knowledge would liberate man's intelligence and teach him to critically distance himself from his senses, his impulses, his instincts. Although critical rationality can itself be perverted, it was and can still be viewed as an agent of human liberation. But we must ask whether today's most striking advances in knowledge are not in the service of the very senses, impulses, and instincts from which knowledge was supposed to free us.

Please do not misunderstand. The way of human liberty is certainly not to disbelieve our senses, since it is through our senses that we acquire knowledge. Nor are we to distrust appearances, since appearances are to be read as the language of reality. My point is that the way of liberty requires that we be critical of our own free choices. Put differently, freedom can only be sustained by free persons who keep their exercise of freedom under critical judgment.

The technological profusion of images, far from liberating, may enslave the human imagination.

tions of human intelligence and make man free?

Jesus said, "The truth will make you free." (John 8:32) At another point he said, "And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. But he who does what is true comes to the light, that it may be clearly seen that his deeds have been wrought in God." (John 3:19-21)

In the world of high-tech communications, lies are increasingly concealed under the cloak of virtual images that reflect no reality. The question of reality is the question of truth. Jesus said, "I am the truth." (John 14:6) The misadventures of liberty at the end of this millennium call us to listen again to the inquiring words of Psalm 8: "What is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou dost care for him? Yet thou hast made him little less than God, and dost crown him with glory and honor."

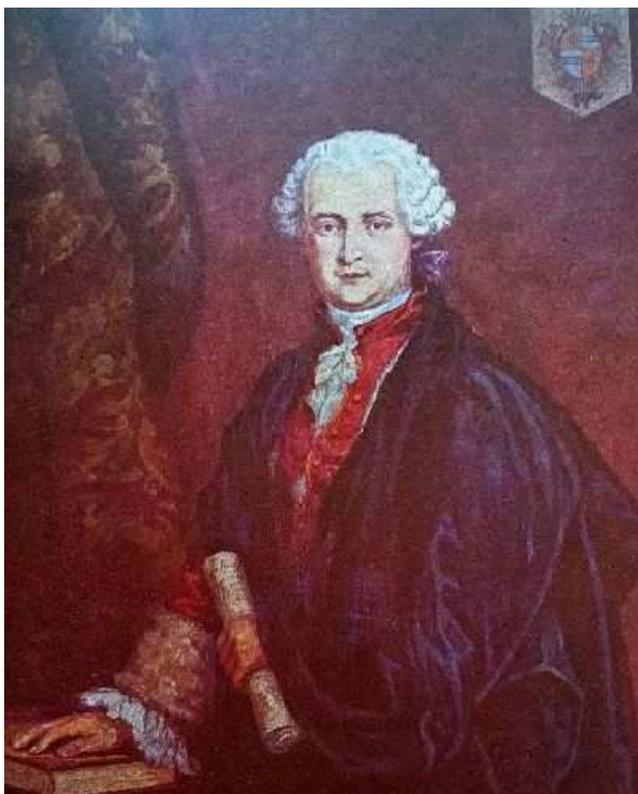
God's word is resounding at the crossroads as man ponders a way to the future. His word probes our contradictions and illumines our misadventures, sending us back to creation, back to that first and perfect act of creative liberty by which history

began. Liberty cannot be sustained by theories about a primordial big bang. We will not recover our dignity unless we rediscover that sovereign liberty by which our liberty was given and is ceaselessly sustained.

Liberty, equality, fraternity. Political and social equality is one of the most adamant demands of our time. The demand for equality, however, encounters opposition in the notion of liberty. Alexis de Tocqueville viewed the progress toward equality as an irresistible historical trend, and he went so far as to deem this “providential.” He proposed an explanation of how this trend would unfold. Each person, he said, had first gained an equal juridical status with the passing of the feudal order. Every individual became legally capable of signing contracts, buying and selling property, and getting married. Closely associated with this, equal political rights were to be granted all. It followed, however belatedly, that women were to be given the right to vote and have a say in common decisions. Finally, in this scenario, the nations of the world would become more productive and wealthy. Gradually, the gap between rich and poor, affluence and poverty, would be closed. Moreover, in this optimistic view, everyone would eventually have access to education, health, and their goods, enabling them to share equally in the cultural treasures of society.

Such a philosophy of history, so prevalent in the nineteenth century, was premised on a kind of religious faith that progress would be forever. However battered by hard experience, that faith is still at the heart of our civilization. This has not been an easy century for uncritical faith in historical progress and the dream of ever-increasing equality. Especially in the economic sphere, the attempt was made to achieve equality by the state’s imposition of constraints, as we saw in the regimes of socialist inspiration. History has not dealt kindly with such experiments.

There is another approach to economic equality that is voluntary, humane, and, some would say, impossibly idealistic. St. Paul writes to the Corinthians: “I do not mean that others should be eased and you burdened, but that as a matter of equality your abundance at the present time should supply their



From Manly Hall's *The Secret Teachings of all All Ages*, ©The Philosophical Research Society

Prince Ragoczy of Transylvania—Comte de St. Germain
Cited as the same Individuality who bore the name Christian Rosenkreutz, St. Germain warned of the violent events of the French Revolution, cautioning patience. He repeated Hosea's (8:7) prophecy—"For they have sown the wind [Ruach, spirit] and they shall reap the whirlwind"—signifying that because the Christ Spirit was sown in mortal flesh, humanity shall attain freedom and equality in the sight of God; but first comes the "whirlwind," the War of All Against All—Armageddon—occurring between the Fifth and Sixth Post-Atlantean Epochs.

want, so that their abundance may supply your want, that there may be equality. As it is written, 'He who gathered much had nothing over, and he who gathered little had no lack.'" (2 Cor. 8:13-15)

Various communities have, at the microeconomic level, achieved this vision of equality. One thinks, for instance, of monastic communities founded on voluntary poverty, or of the egalitarian socialism practiced by the kibbutzim in the early years of Zionism. Such achievements are as impressive as any utopia come true. But in the larger course of history, economic liberalism—whether called democratic capitalism or the market economy—has decisively won. If there were ever doubts about this, they have been removed by the massive and dramatic failure of the socialist economies. (Continued) □

Making Babies: Improving on Nature?

AS WE NEAR the first anniversary of the mid-November birth of septuplets to an Iowa couple (*Time* cover story, Dec. 1, 1997), many questions arise concerning the new modes of engendering children and the resulting relationship between designated parents and incoming egos.

Bobbi McCaughey, had already given birth to a daughter, but apparently with great difficulty—meaning that she tried for a year before conception resulted. A year? How long did Sarah have to wait? She was ninety before she conceived Isaac. Or for that matter, how long did Anna, the mother of the Virgin Mary, have to wait? Like Sarah, she too was thought infertile. So jubilant was the maternal grandmother of Jesus after her visit by the angel Gabriel that she consecrated her God-given future offspring to “minister to God all the days of its life.” (*Protoevangelium of James* 4:1)

But these days we have no time for waiting. Can modern woman outwit her biological karma? Or have her novel recourses already been figured into the picture? Little thought is given to other forces and influences that may bear upon the (in)ability to conceive—including the possibility that an ego has chosen its prospective parents but must wait a period of time (1, 5, 10 years) before the stars are rightly configured. Because new medical strategies can alter of the natural course of affairs through which a higher wisdom works, the Recording Angels must now devise contingency plans. In the case of Bobbi McCaughey, a fertility drug brought her an easy seven children in one fell swoop—surely a wonder in itself. Pressed up against each other in their mother’s womb, were all seven so closely attached in an earlier time, just waiting for the pill?



The technological foray into reproductive biology has yielded astonishing results, including fertilization by injecting an egg with a single sperm too weak to penetrate unassisted, and ectopic (in vitro) fertilization followed by reintroduction of the fertilized egg into the uterus. Equally remarkable is the conception of twin boys from a donor egg that had been frozen for two years. Such marvels raise the question whether these developments have been previsioned from spiritual heights. Evidently so, because the fetuses have come to term and the children are thriving. The sword severing traditional family ties has certainly been wielded here! From endogamy to an exogamy raised to a higher power.

Of the many ethical and occult concerns raised by medicalizing procreation, particularly intriguing is the revisioning of the mysteries of virgin birth and immaculate conception. If fertilization is a purely clinical matter, achieved without the natural passion attending this process (male sperm can be surgically removed), what effect does this have on the ego that hovers over the fetus until the 21st day? Infertile parents long praying for a child might be more caring for their laboratory-assisted miracle than many natural-process parents.

But when humans dare to enter what has been regarded as a holy, if not inviolable, precinct, are we on the threshold of a second Fall, or making some compensation for the first? One saying does seem particularly applicable to this intrusion into (trespassing of?) life’s inner sanctum: “Fools rush in where angels fear to tread.” □

The Lost Books of the Bible

IF YOU WERE RAISED in an orthodox Christian denomination, you learned, sooner or later, that the New Testament consists of four gospels and a specific number of epistles or letters, mostly written by Paul. You probably thought that these writings, and only these, were given to the Christian church from its inception. Such assumptions do not stand up to historical scrutiny.

Notwithstanding the incineration of over 400,000 manuscripts in the fire that destroyed the capacious Alexandria library, the seat of classical Greek and Hebrew higher learning, and the systematic destruction of Christian esoteric and gnostic writings by imperial Rome, a sufficient number of what are now called New Testament apocrypha yet survive. Reference to them and many nonsurviving works by Church Fathers of the first Christian centuries makes abundantly clear that arriving at a New Testament canon was a protracted and often highly polemical affair.

To preserve the unity of the faith and maintain consistency of doctrine, a codification of essential Christian beliefs had to be articulated and ratified at the outset by the college of apostles, and this took the form of the Apostle's Creed. This assertion, however, is contested by many theologians, as to both date and provenance, who hold for the Creed's later and nonapostolic origin.

While all the text comprising what we now know as the New Testament was written in the first century, indeed during its middle decades, with the exception of John's gospel, few apostles did not write gospels, epistles, acts, or revelations—if the multiple references to them by famous Church



Oil on panel, 1521, Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528). Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga, Lisbon

By the time of St. Jerome (340-420), the Bible canon was basically in place. He is shown contemplating human mortality, but also the power over death through the crucified Christ. The first known crucifix did not appear until 200 years later.

Fathers is to be given credence. A sampling of such writings includes: the *Acts of Andrew*, referred to by the fourth century church historian Eusebius (died 340); the *Gospel According to the Twelve Apostles*, cited by Origen (died 254) and Ambrose (died 397); the *Gospel of Matthias* (the apostle succeeding Judas Iscariot), mentioned by Origen, Eusebius, and Ambrose; and the *Gospel of Thomas*, referred to by Eusebius, Cyril (died 386), Ambrose, and Athanasius (died 373).

What were the criteria by which the Church Fathers, representing the five Christian patriarchates of Jerusalem, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch

and Rome, made their determination of canon texts? There were heated differences of opinion on this issue, learned and pious men continuing to press for certain texts well into the fourth century until the canon was established. Therefore, we would be mistaken to conclude that what are now noncanonical early Christian writings are necessarily spurious.

We are able to see why some of the writings were rejected, containing as they do liberal infusions of the fantastic, or others because they describe a youthful Jesus who was mean to his neighbors.

The Lost Books of the Bible (Gramercy Books, Random House, 1979), a collection of sixteen documents, all of which were in existence by the time of St. Jerome (331-420), the author of the Latin Vulgate Bible, is essentially a reprinting of *The Apocryphal New Testament*, first published in 1820. Little mention is made of these texts in modern times, but has entered and been divined by the public imagination, serving as the basis for themes in literature, art, and legend, and being of value for historical, theological, and esoteric inquiry.

For example, *The Gospel of the Birth of Mary*, known to exist, at least in title, in earliest Christian times, was attributed to St. Matthew and found in the works of St. Jerome. Paintings by Giotto and other Renaissance artists are based on incidents described in both this gospel and the *Protevangelion* (literally “the first good news”), an account of the birth of Mary and Jesus by James the Lesser, one of the original apostles and the first bishop of Jerusalem. This latter work enjoyed general credit in the Christian world, though controversies, arising over the alleged age of Joseph at the birth of Christ and the fact that he was a widower before his marriage to the Virgin, did not deter Epiphanius, Chrysostom (337-407), Cyril, and in fact all the Latin fathers until Ambrose, from quoting these details about Joseph, basing them on the accepted authority of the *Protevangelion*. We do know that history, particularly religious history, is often writ-



Fresco, 1304-06, Giotto (1266-1336), Scrovegni Chapel, Padua

Dream of Joachim

In the Protevangelion, an angel of the Lord speaks to Joachim in a dream in the desert where he was fasting and praying that his wife Anna, long barren, might be fruitful and bear a child. In the Gospel of the Birth of Mary the angel “stood by him with a prodigious light” and said, “Be not afraid.”

ten backward to conform past events to evolving doctrinal needs and the spirit of present times.

In the aforementioned two works, the annunciation of Mary’s birth is first delivered to Joachim, then the long childless Anna, foretelling of the maiden who was to be raised in the temple from age three (immediately after weaning), in preparation for carrying the Son of the Most High. These two texts are also the source for the description of how Mary’s mate was to be chosen: Among the rods of many proposed suitors, only Joseph’s will flower and the Spirit in the form of a dove shall alight on its tip. The virgin birth will take place “without any of the heat of lust,” and will thus be “holy, because it only is conceived without sin.”

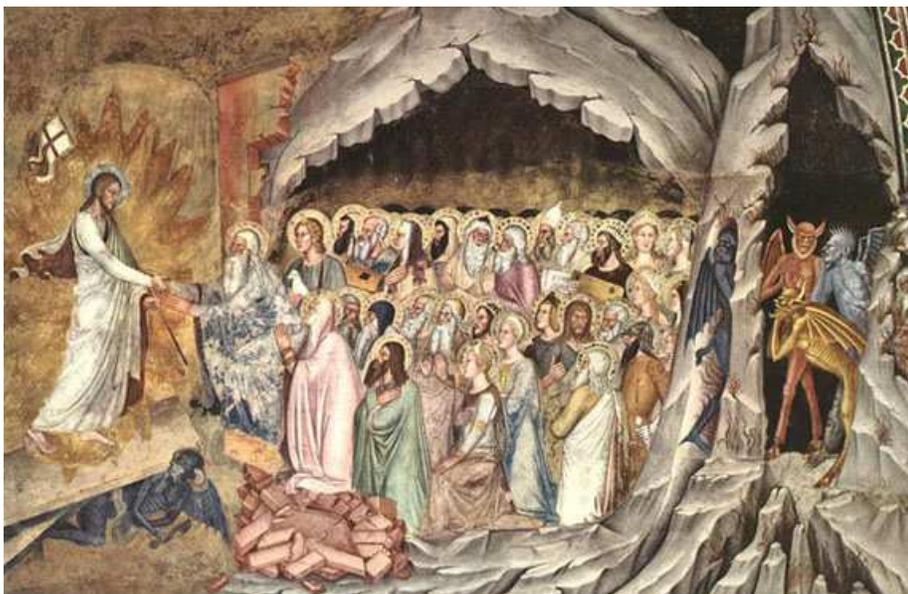
In these texts are found the details that Mary delivers her son in a shepherd’s cave and that a midwife is brought in by Joseph to assist at the delivery, as well as Salome. Earliest iconography of the Nativity depicts two women washing the newborn infant. Here too is the source for depictions of the ox in Nativity scenes, together with the ass that bore Mary to Bethlehem, it being this animal’s manger or eating trough in which the Christ Child is placed.

The first and second *Gospels of the Infancy of Jesus Christ* were esteemed by second century Gnostics and credited by Eusebius, Athanasius, Chrysostom, and others. Several stories found in these two gospels were once widely known believed, including the mysterious falling of idols upon the entry of the holy family into Egypt. Numerous miracles were performed by Mary and the Child during this time. Two robbers, Titus, a humane thief, and Dumachus, who demand money of Joseph in order to pass, were thirty years later to become the two thieves crucified with Jesus.

A startling passage records Jesus' response to a question on astronomy, given when he visited the temple at age twelve. He refers to "the number of the spheres and heavenly bodies, as also their triangular, square, and sextile aspect; their progressive and retrograde motion..." The Magi were astrologers. So too, it appears, was the youthful Jesus! Another intriguing passage relates that from the age of twelve "Jesus began to conceal his miracles and secret works...till he arrived to the end of his thirtieth year."

The *Gospel of Nicodemus*, formerly called the *Acts of Pontius Pilate*, though of great antiquity, is deemed by some to be a pious fraud of the third century. Nevertheless, it was used in churches at that time and was appealed to by several ancient authorities. This is the source for the story of Pilate's wife, Procla, urging him to have "nothing to do with that just man, for I have suffered much concerning him in a vision this night." To Pilate's question, "What is Truth?" Jesus answers, "Truth is from heaven." Pilate said, "Therefore truth is not on earth." Jesus said to Pilate, "Believe that truth is on earth among those, who, when they have the power of judgment, are governed by truth and form right judgment."

This gospel narrates Nicodemus' defense of



Fresco, Andrea da Firenze (1343-1377), S. Maria Novella, Florence

Descent into Limbo

The Gospel of Nicodemus provides the details that are illustrated in this painting. Christ, as the King of Glory, bearing the ensign symbolizing His victory on the cross, breaks down the ramparts of hell, tramples on death, releases "the captives that were held in chains by original sin, and bringest them into their former liberty." "Taking hold of Adam by his right hand he ascended from hell, and all the saints of God followed him."

Christ before Pilate in the presence of scribes and Pharisees. Here also is the origin of the names of the two thieves, Demas and Gestas, and the bribing of the guard who saw an angel of God roll away the stone from the sepulcher.

Most significantly, in this gospel we find the account of Christ's descent into hell, a point of doctrine not entered into the Apostle's Creed until after 600 A.D. Christ delivered Adam, Seth, and all the saints by breaking hell's gates of brass and cutting the bars of iron asunder. Then "the King of Glory, trampling upon death, seized the prince of hell, deprived him of all his power, and took our earthly father Adam with him to his glory....And taking hold of Adam by his right hand, he ascended from hell, and all the saints of God followed him."

This last passage has served as the basis for one of the most popular icons in the Eastern Orthodox Church. Its theme gave greater cause for celebration than Christ's resurrection *per se*, because before he ascended, he descended, interceding directly and immediately for captive man, delivering his soul from the dominion of death.

An *Epistle of Paul to the Laodiceans* and several

to the Roman philosopher Seneca, are included in this collection, having been highly regarded by several early churchmen.

The *Acts of Paul and Thecla* purports to have been written in the Apostolic age, and though possibly a forgery, it is still credited with authentic history. Thecla was a virgin who, though espoused, refused to marry after she heard and was converted by Paul's preaching. Her faith was severely tried on many occasions and rewarded by miraculous deliverances. The "first [female] martyr and apostle of God" lived a reclusive, monastic life until she was translated at the age of ninety.

These *Acts* also contain the earliest and most detailed description of Paul—a man "of a low stature, bald (or shaved) on the head, crooked thighs, handsome legs, hollow-eye, a crooked nose, full of grace; for sometimes he appeared as a man, sometimes he had the countenance of an angel."

Two *Epistles of Clement to the Corinthians* were, according to Eusebius, read in the assemblies of the primitive Church and were actually included in one of the ancient collections of the canonical Scriptures. Clement (died 100 A.D.) was a disciple of Peter and afterward Bishop of Rome.

The *General Epistle of Barnabas* lays a greater claim to canonical authority than most other texts and was cited by many early Church Fathers as authentic. Barnabas was a companion of and fellow-preacher with Paul. He speaks Paul's distinctive language. Several examples: "He therefore that desires to be saved looketh not unto the man, but unto Him that dwelleth in him." "God has abolished [the old law] that the new law of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is without the yoke of any necessity, might have the spiritual offering of men themselves."

Seven *Epistles of Ignatius* to various Christian centers are included in *Lost Books of the Bible*.

Bishop of Antioch and disciple of John, Ignatius was martyred in 107. His last words were, "I am Christ's grain of wheat which must first be crushed by the teeth of wild beasts before it can become pure bread."

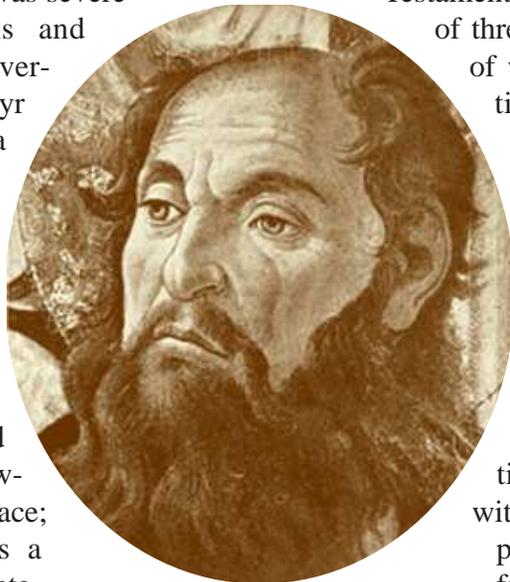
The *Shepherd of Hermas*, written by the brother of Rome's bishop Pius, is found attached to some of the most ancient manuscripts of the New Testament. Widely read and cited, it consists of three books: the first, called *Visions*, of which there are four; the second, titled *Commands*, numbering twelve; and the third, *Similitudes*, of which there are ten. Upon issuing the twelfth command, the Angel of Repentance, who is disguised as the shepherd Hermas, charges, "Thou hast now these commands, walk in them." The ten elaborate similitudes, actually didactic illustrations or similes, are introduced with the advice, "Live here as in a pilgrimage; for your city is far off from this city...in another country."

Finally, the lost *Gospel According to Peter*, witnessed to from the second century onward, is

said to have once held a place of honor comparable to that assigned to the four canonical gospels, from which it differs on twenty-nine details of fact, including: 1) It was Herod who gave the order for the execution. 2) Joseph of Arimathea was a friend of Pilate. 3) The disciples had to hide because it was feared they were set on burning the temple. 4) The centurion Petronius was given command to guard the tomb with a group of soldiers.

In the Preface to *The Lost Books of the Bible*, Frank Crane writes that "History may be true, but in a sense tradition is even truer." An intuition of higher truth may inform the soul of folk memories to which strict reportage is blind. While absolute proof of the genuineness of these writings may be objectively impossible, the reader will no doubt find that much of what is presented in these works has the ring of truth. □

—Carl Swan



Detail from the altar-piece of St. Barnaby, Sandro Botticelli (1444-1510), Uffizi, Florence

St. Barnabas

Evangelist and companion of St. Paul

Wholesome Proteins

NUTS AND NUT BUTTERS. Next to fruits, nuts are one of the most essential foods in a well-balanced and wholesome diet. Nuts are highly nutritious, one of nature's most nutritionally concentrated foods. In their dry state they contain an average of 5 percent water, 20 percent protein, 50 percent fat, and 2 percent mineral matter. With the exception of the chestnut, nuts contain but a small percentage of starch. As in all seeds, the mineral matter of nuts contains a large amount of phosphoric acid, potash (potassium salt), and magnesia, while they are deficient in sodium, lime, and chlorine. They should therefore always be eaten with fruits or green leaf vegetables or fruit juices to make up for this deficiency.

Nuts are often used as a dessert after a heavy meal. In this case they are harmful, as they require the full action of the digestive juices. Combined with fruits or vegetable salads, nuts make a complete meal in themselves and their indigestibility in most cases must be attributed to lack of wisdom in the choice of food eaten with them. If nuts are thoroughly masticated and used in small quantities and well combined, they are easily digested and readily utilized by the human body.

Scientific investigations prove that all nuts, especially in the form of unroasted nut butter, furnish a relatively high amount of basic amino acids, and that nut proteins are of a high biological value. Nuts and nut butters made from the unroasted whole nut furnish the necessary proteins and fats combined with organic salts in the purest form, and they are therefore superior to the extracted or



Rachael Stein

Nuts provide an excellent source of high quality protein. Care should be taken to chew them thoroughly. Common nuts include the following (some of which are pictured above): walnuts, Brazil nuts, coconuts, filberts (hazelnuts), pecans, butternuts, chestnuts, almonds, pistachios, pine nuts (pignolias), macadamias, cashews, and hickory nuts.

isolated fats.

Emulsification of nuts by machines obtains a fine consistency reached only by the most careful mastication. As most people have more or less defective teeth, it is seldom that the entire edible nut is reduced solely by mastication to such a state as to contain no hard particles when it enters the stomach. Even small particles of such concentrated foods as nuts are not easily penetrated by the digestive juices, often resulting in their passing undigested through the alimentary canal. Experiments have proved that the coefficient of digestibility is from 5 percent to 10 percent higher in nut butter than in whole nuts, even if well masticated.

While people who have defective teeth should use nuts in the form of nut butter, in which the fats are brought into a state of emulsion, attention should be paid to the fact that nut butters are frequently made from highly roasted nuts, which

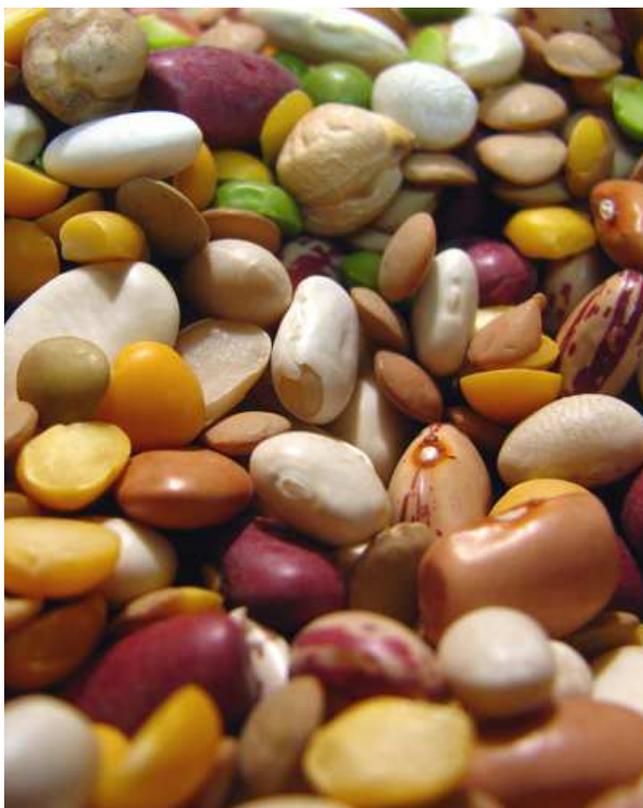
contain free fatty acids and are often heavily salted. Such preparations are not wholesome, as they overtax the liver and kidneys. Nuts that enter into the preparation of nut butters should be dried or evaporated at a temperature of not more than 160 degrees F. to preserve the vitamins and to remove sufficient moisture to make the nuts crisp. In this condition the nuts can, by means of a nut mill, be converted into a smooth butter which is easily assimilated and is superior in nutritive value to flesh foods.

Legumes. Legumes in their dry state have a very high percentage (over 20 percent) of proteins, resembling nuts in this respect, from 1.5 to 16 percent fat, and from 50 to 60 percent carbohydrates, mostly starch. The soya bean ranks highest in protein, many varieties ranging as high as 35 percent in this constituent. In fat content the soya bean ranges from 16 to 18 percent. The composition of mineral matter of legumes resembles that of cereals, showing a large amount of phosphorous and magnesium. They are, however, deficient in calcium and iron. Only lentils have an appreciable amount of iron. Legumes are therefore decidedly acid-forming; in fact, in their ripened seeds are stored small amounts of purine bodies, substances similar to urea. Their high protein and carbohydrate content, with a corresponding deficiency of alkaline-reacting organic salts, renders them acid-forming. They should therefore be eaten in moderation and with discrimination.

Beans and *peas* are especially valuable. They may be used at different stages of their growth, namely, as tender pods (string beans and sugar peas) which can be gathered when the seeds are less than half-grown. In this form, if eaten with the pods, they produce an alkaline reaction, as they contain more calcium and less phosphoric acid.

The "mess of pottage" that Jacob sold to Esau for his birthright is supposed to have been made of lentils. A Hindu proverb says, "Rice is good, but lentils are my life." Historically, the Arabs would feed their horses ground beans to prepare them for extraordinary exertion.

In Eastern Asia, the *soya bean* ("Asia's cow") is one of the chief providers of protein and fat, and is second only to rice in importance as a food crop. It



Roger Smith

Legumes, also known as pulses, come in all shapes, sizes, and colors. They include (some shown above): beans—mung, aduki, garbanzo, cranberry, green, pinto, navy, red, white, black, anazazi, kidney, soy, lima, fava; peas—common, black-eyed, chick-pea, cow-pea; and lentils—green, pink.

contains more than four times as much protein as rice, and also has 16 percent fat content. It is processed into a great variety of products, all having a high percentage of protein. Soya beans, when about three-quarters grown, make a most palatable and nutritious green vegetable, like the green pea or the lima bean.

A vegetable milk is made from the dried beans. The milky emulsion thus obtained is similar in appearance to cow's milk, but naturally of a different chemical composition, especially in mineral elements, owing to its deficiency of calcium, sodium, and chlorine. This soya bean milk is frequently used in making bread, cake, and in creaming vegetables. If left in a warm place, it will turn sour like animal milk; the curdling of the milk may be produced by the addition of some lemon juice. The fat or oil of the soya bean is of excellent flavor and is used for culinary purposes throughout the orient. It is more easily digested than animal fats and is equal in nutritive value to peanut oil.

Lentils flavored with green-leaf vegetables make excellent soups and stews. The preparation of legumes, especially in their dry state, is one of great importance. In order to insure their digestion and assimilation, they should be cooked in soft, or better yet in distilled, water if available. If the water used for cooking is hard, due to the presence of calcium carbonate, 1 teaspoonful of baking soda per gallon may be added, and then boiled and cooled before using, in order that the calcium carbonate or lime may precipitate. It is advisable to soak lentils and beans over night in water to soften them.

Experiments have shown that the digestibility of legumes is facilitated by using distilled water in cooking; they can be made still more palatable if served in the form of puree by pressing the boiled seeds through a sieve. Steam cookers or double boilers are very suitable for preparing legumes; two or three hours will generally be necessary before the legumes are done. A fireless cooker may be used to advantage for this purpose. The addition of a little lemon juice, some vegetables and savory herbs will also promote their digestion.

Flours made from dried peas, beans, and lentils are excellent for making soups and purees, but a double boiler should always be employed for this purpose to prevent scorching. They should always be simmered very slowly.

Legumes, if properly prepared and not eaten in excessive quantities, well combined and balanced with green-leaf vegetables, are not hard to digest. No starchy food should accompany this meal. With these necessary precautions, legumes will not occasion the usual disagreeable symptoms occurring during the process of digestion. If eaten often and to excess, however, they produce acidity of the blood due to their large amount of nitrogenous matter and acid-forming elements. Outdoor workers can digest legumes better than sedentary workers; the latter group should not eat them more often than once or twice a week.



Barley



Rice, Brown Bismati

Peas may be eaten with or without the pods. Green peas form a nourishing and also a very palatable food. They contain 9.5 percent sugar and other carbohydrates, and 5.5 percent protein, with a small amount of fat. The mineral matter contains an abundance of magnesia (MgO) and iron.

Dairy Products. The statement that milk is a great builder of sturdy children is altogether at variance with facts. There is found perhaps a greater discrepancy in quality and chemical composition of milk than in any other food. Cow's milk produced under ideal conditions is preferable to the many artificial and demineralized foods of commerce, *if* it is used judiciously and supplemented by green-leaf vegetables, or fortified by fresh fruit and vegetable juices. We are not justified, however, in recommending its indiscriminate use. Milk and milk products are far from being absolute necessities for the maintenance of the health and vigor of the race. The milking of cows is an unnatural process. It was only after much breeding that a continuous supply was secured from cows and goats.

Pasteurizing (heating up to 158° F) or boiling milk destroys the soluble ferments and some B vitamins and alters the taste and organic composition. Raw milk, therefore, is preferable for infants and children, provided it comes from properly fed, sanitized, and cared for animals and is available in one's area. Cow's milk contains more than twice as much protein as mother's milk, and children taking a quart of milk daily, in addition to other foods, are being overfed. The judicious use of other clean, pure sources of protein will supply most, if not all, of the nutrient factors required for normal and healthy growth.

Milk, being a complete food, should be treated as such and should never be consumed with other proteins. It should be taken preferably by itself and sipped slowly. The addition of perhaps a small amount of whole grains is tolerable. The giving of strained juices of such fruits as oranges, prunes,

and figs is not only very beneficial, but actually essential to the baby when deprived of mother's milk.

All *cheeses* are concentrated foods, rich in casein, fat, lime (CaO), phosphoric and sulfuric acids, also containing from 3 to 4 percent table salt. They are therefore highly acid-forming foods, and if used at all, they should be eaten in small quantities combined with vegetables. So-called cottage cheese, if made from whole milk and unsalted, is the most wholesome form of cheese.

Eggs, containing as they do an excess of nitrogen and phosphoric acid, are highly acid-forming. For this reason they should be consumed in moderation, and always combined with vegetables or citrus fruit juices, which are strongly alkaline. Salads comprising green leafy vegetables are preferable. Beaten eggs for omelette may be vegetized by the addition of a teaspoonful of dried powdered vegetables such as celery, spinach, or beet leaves. This contributes to the alkalinity of an otherwise acid-reacting food. Eggs are also desirable poached, coddled, or soft boiled.

Fruits rich in protein. The *avocado* is richer in protein than most fruits, while the best varieties have more than 20 percent fat in a very palatable and digestible form, superior to butter fat. It is an excellent addition to combination raw vegetable salads.

Sun-dried olives contain as much as 5 percent protein and 50 percent fat, and are equal to some nuts in nutritive value. Eaten with sweet fruits, they make a palatable wholesome combination. Only in the fully ripened sun-dried olives are all the nutritive principles of the olive preserved, and although they still retain some of the bitter taste, which is very pronounced in the matured olives while on the tree, they are undoubtedly more wholesome than the pickled olives. In the pickled product, the bitterness is neutralized by the application of a lye solution.

Carob or St. John's Bread is rich in sugar, fairly so in protein and readily assimilable. Both the

ground carob in the form of meal or flour and the molasses-like syrup that the pod yields are pleasing additions to the human dietary. The whole pod, if thoroughly masticated, seeds ejected, will admirably serve as a sort of confection. Chewing the whole pod, as is, encourages thorough mastication, yielding needed exercise to the teeth and generating enough saliva and pepsin for good digestion.

As a breakfast food carob is richer and carries more protein than wheat. Well balanced in its constituents, it compares favorably with cow's milk. The carob pod, meal, or flour require no cooking to be palatable. They are very nourishing and easily digested. All vitamins and organic salts are thus retained in their natural state.

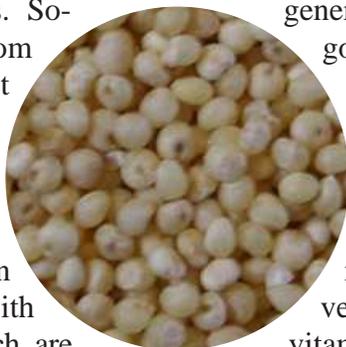
Grains. In his book *Rational Diet* (now out of print) Otto Carque lists the average percentage of protein in water-free grains thus: rice 9.0 percent; corn 11.2 percent; oats 11.9 percent; green corn 12.6 percent; barley 12.7 percent; rye 13.5 percent; whole wheat 15.7 percent.

Oily Seeds. All natural seeds rank high in protein, viz.: caraway seed—19.8 percent; poppy seed—19.4 percent; flax seed—22.6 percent; mustard seed—27.6 percent; sunflower seed—14.2; sesame seed—36.0 percent.

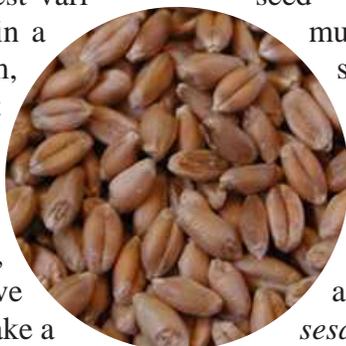
Flax seed is frequently used for medical purposes as an emollient and demulcent in irritations of the mucous membranes, also as an ingredient in many cereal preparations to give them a slightly laxative effect. In Asia Minor *sesame seed* is mixed with honey and preserved with citron and sold as a luxury. Elsewhere it is used in confections and bakery goods. The oil obtained from the seeds resembles olive oil. The nut butter is called *tahini*, which has many uses as a sauce and spread.

Sunflower seeds are derived from the sunflower which is grown in the United States, Austria, southern Russia, India, and China for the purpose of making sunflower oil. The seeds of the *poppy* are also frequently used to produce table oil. □

—Lillian R. Carque



Millet



Wheat berries

HEALING

Joy—the Health Giver

Health and cheerfulness mutually beget each other—Addison.

THE JOYFUL LIFE is the abundant life, which includes physical and mental health. True joy comes from within, being based upon faith—complete faith in the wisdom and justice of God, our Creator. Such faith is possible even to the reasoning mind, for an understanding of the twin laws of rebirth and consequence gives the basis necessary for intelligent faith—faith based upon knowledge.

The joy that springs from inner peace and contentment aids the proper functioning of the processes of the body, keeping one youthful and useful in Christ’s Vineyard. The mind of the joyful person retains the elasticity of youth, the readiness to deal with the problems of life. Truth appears in more shining clarity and purity to those who live in the joy of faith and trust toward Divinity. Joy is the priceless lubricant which keeps the wheels of life oiled and running smoothly.

Occult philosophy teaches us an important truth when it explains that “thoughts of worry, fear, and anger interfere with the process of evaporation (of the solar force) in the spleen; a speck of plasm is the result, and this is at once seized upon by a thought elemental which forms a nucleus and embodies itself therein. Then it commences to live a life of destruction, coalescing with other waste products and decaying elements wherever formed, making the body a charnel house instead of the temple of the indwelling living Spirit

“Given the same amount and kind of food, the person of serene and jovial disposition will live



Beth Broshan

longer, enjoy better health, and be more active than the person who worries, or loses his temper. Were a scientist to analyze the bodies of these two men, he would find that there was considerably less earthy matter in the body of the kindly disposed man than in that of the scold.” □

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 and in the Pro-Ecclesia at 4:15 P.M. when the Moon is in a cardinal sign on the following dates:

- September.....1—8—14—21—29
- October.....10—18—24—30

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.

Keys to Heaven

ONCE UPON A TIME there was a great and mighty king, ruling over many lands. All the treasures of the earth were his and all day he played with the precious stones of Ophir and the roses of Damascus as though they were trifles. However, with all his riches he lacked one thing—*The Keys to the Gates of Heaven*.

Thousands of messengers he had sent out into the world to find the keys to heaven, but not one of them was able to fetch them. Many a wise man coming to his court he had asked where the keys to heaven were to be found, but none had known the answer. But one, a man from India with strange eyes, smilingly brushed aside the precious stones of Ophir and the roses of Damascus with which the king was wont to play and told him that all the treasures of the earth could be had as a present, but the keys to heaven each one had to find for himself.

Then the king decided to find the keys to heaven, whatever the cost. Now this was at a time when mankind was still able to see where heaven extended down unto the earth and everybody was familiar with the high mountain on the summit of which the gates of heaven had been built. The king ordered his courtiers to remain at home and started to climb the steep mountain until he reached the gates to heaven. Before the gates, whose battlements were flooded with the brightest sunlight, stood the Angel Gabriel, the guardian of God's eternal garden.

"Glorious One," said the king, "all the treasures on earth are mine. Many are the lands that must pay me tribute and I amuse myself playing with the precious stones of Ophir and the roses of



Damascus. Yet I will not be at ease until I also have the keys to heaven in my possession. For how else will its portal open to me some day?"

"That is verily the truth," said the Angel Gabriel, "without the keys to heaven you will never open its portals, even if you were in possession of all the arts and treasures of earth. But how easy it is to find the keys to heaven! They bloom in ever so many little flowers when it is spring on earth, and they bloom in the souls of every creature.

"What!" exclaimed the king, very much surprised, "Is that all I have to do, just gather a little flower? The meadows and woods are full of them and everywhere you go you step on them."

"It is true that people tread the many pretty keys to heaven under foot," said the Angel. "However,

as easy as *you* think, it was not meant. There are just three keys that will unlock the gates to heaven, and all three of them are only truly yours if they spring up at your feet—and for you. All the many other thousands of primroses that bloom on earth, which in fairyland are known as the keys to heaven, simply act as reminders for you to make the real keys to heaven bloom, for *those* are the flowers that everybody is stepping on.”

Just then a little child appeared before the gates of heaven. In its hand were three flower-keys which were like blossoms of light. Now, as the child touched the gates of heaven with the three flower-keys, the portals opened wide and the Angel Gabriel led it into heaven. But the gates closed again and the king stood alone before the closed gates. Then he walked thoughtfully down the mountain back to earth. Everywhere fields and meadows were full of the most beautiful, golden keys to heaven. The king was very cautious not to step on any, but not one of the flowers sprang up at his feet.

“Should I not be able to find the true keys to heaven,” the king asked himself, “when a little child succeeded in finding them?” But he did not find them and many years passed.

Now it happened one day as he was leaving his castle in the company of his courtiers, who were arrayed in great splendor, that a dirty, neglected child, having neither father nor mother, sat begging by the wayside.

“Ah, let her beg elsewhere,” said the servants, pushing her aside as she approached the king with outstretched hand.

During all the years since the king had come down from the mountain he had given the flower-keys to heaven much thought and had been very careful never to step on any. He lifted the dirty beggar-child up and set her before him on his horse and took her home to his castle. When they arrived he ordered the child to be nourished and prettily dressed and he himself fostered and adorned it and placed a small crown upon its head.

Then there sprang up at his feet a little golden key to heaven. Whereupon the king proclaimed that throughout his realm all the poor and all the children were to be his brothers.

After many years had passed the king one day

rode out into the woods with his nobles. Seeing a sick and injured wolf he dismounted and found that the beast was helpless and unable to move. “Oh, let him die,” said the courtiers, stepping between the king and the miserable creature. But the king placed the poor animal in one of the carts and when he had arrived home he took the wolf in his arms and carried it into the palace. There he nursed him daily until he had restored him to health again.

From that day the wolf followed him wherever he went. Then the second golden key to heaven bloomed at the king’s feet. He thereupon declared that all the creatures in his kingdom were his younger brothers.

Again the years rolled by—but not as many as before when the key to heaven bloomed for him—and it happened that as he wandered one day in his great garden, he rejoiced to behold the many rare and beautiful plants and flowers so artistically and thoughtfully cared for, making his garden the most splendid in all the lands of the kingdom. Glancing down the king beheld at the border of the path an ugly looking plant that was almost wilted in the burning sun, its dusty leaves drooping with thirst.

“I am going to fetch some water,” said the king. But the gardener restrained him. “It is as ugly as a weed,” he said. “Let me pull it out and burn it. There is no room for such as this in your royal garden with all its flowery loveliness.”

But the king doffed his golden helmet, filled it with fresh water at the spring and took it to the plant. The plant drank it up and began to breathe and live and thrive anew.

Then the third key to heaven bloomed at the feet of the king while the little beggar maiden and the wolf were looking on. On an impulse the king looked up the steep mountain and saw the gates of heaven opening wide. In the radiant light of the Sun which flooded its battlements stood the Angel Gabriel and the little child that had already found the way to heaven that time long, long ago.

The three keys to heaven are still blooming today and they shine even brighter and more beautiful than all the precious stones of Ophir and all the roses of Damascus. □

—Manfred Kyber

