

**Reflections
of a
Rosicrucian
Aspirant**

Richard Koepsel

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Microcosm Publications

Published by Microcosm Publications
306 West Lakeside
Madison, Wisconsin 53716

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Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: XXXX-XXXXXX

ISBN-13: 978-0-9785129-2-0

Printed in the United States of America

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Change

In the faddish world of fashion, a garment which is chic today may be passé next week and remains that way until it becomes retro in its due time. Change.

In nature life progresses day after day, season follows season, epoch succeeds epoch and so on, in incessant change, as far as human consciousness can currently comprehend. Change of a less shallow sort.

An almost endless stream of metaphors and examples could be given to call attention to the reality of change but probably none is better than that of the great, Greek philosopher Heraclitus, who also gave us the term “logos,” as in “...in the beginning was the logos.”:

“Everything changes but change itself. Everything flows and nothing remains the same ... You cannot step twice into the same river, for other waters and yet others go flowing ever on.”

Since nature is the stamp of divinity and the creation is an expression of the Creator, one pauses to ponder why so many religions seek a changeless God, unless that deity is change itself.

It is not so with Christian mysticism where the Human Spirit is focused in the principle of action; the Life Spirit, or Logos, is the essence of life itself, and Divine Spirit is known in Life Spirit. Truth may be eternal but it is expressed in incessant life. Change.

The Rosicrucian philosophy teaches an evolutionary creation. It is, indeed, a creation with a Creator—the Universal Spirit—a creation with divine intent and living organization within it.

That living organization is called evolution. The prefix “e” in evolution means “out” as in eject or evict, both of which mean to throw out - but in different senses. Volution means to turn. So, evolution means to turn out from within the Creator.

The great seers who founded the Rosicrucian Order study the evolutionary creation in great detail. They do this to help all participating in the creation to do so more efficiently, more in tune with divine intent. They find almost

innumerable foci, sparks of God, at various states of spiritual unfoldment participating in the grand, creative opus. We are not alone nor are we, or any of the creatures we see around us, anywhere near the most highly evolved. All creations great and small pass from potential in unconsciousness to divine, waking, creative consciousness in emulation of the Creator—from clod to God, as some have said. All pass through various states of being or worlds of spirit and matter, which are poles of the same ineffable reality.

This is done through revolutions of consciousness, revolutions of experience. These revolutions of consciousness pass through states of form in space called globes and states of life in time expressed in periods of evolution—time and space meaning something more than we currently consider them to be.

In this creative activity, very few qualitative principles are employed, principles which are applied to the periods, the globes and revolutions of consciousness. These principles have planetary names, but they are not much about either astronomy or astrology. They are about basic qualities of spiritual character and contain simple principles which are woven together again and again using the all-important principle of analogy, sometimes called the Hermetic Axiom: “...as above, so below, what has gone before in heaven will follow after on earth, know this and rejoice.” Through the principle of analogy, the unity of divinity is carried through the diversity of creation. Thus, in the spiral revolutions of consciousness there are sub-revolutions and sub-sub-revolutions and so on to such an extent that only the creative consciousness of God can sustain such a complex creation. From a few principles an enormous complexity is created.

This essay is intended to convey useful concepts to improve our lives of spiritual aspiration. The germane fact in all of the complexity is change. The number of stars one beholds on a clear night is as nothing compared to the numbers of changes we pass through in spiritual becoming.

Max Heindel wisely averred that adaption is the chief quality of evolution. Those who adapt evolve and those who don't, don't. This is all very fine for those who intuitively accept this philosophy and apply it to their lives but there are others for whom it does not come so easily. These are the ones who want to know not only how things are, but also why they are that way. The Rosicrucian philosophy is for those individuals and it has an answer to those

questions also.

Change is not the only attribute of the Universal Spirit. In the Universal Spirit there are endless possibilities. Each change brings out a new glory. The evolutionary creation is methodical but it is not some kind of clockwork grinding out new beings of various flavors. It is a creation in which the Universal Spirit is inspired within itself to offer something more wonderful than has ever been before, just like any other artist or creator. The Bible tells us we are made in the image of God. It also tells us God is a spirit and must be worshiped in spirit and in truth, while St. Paul tells us we will be like him, meaning Christ. This implies that we should live lives with the same attitude toward change as the Divine, i.e., to celebrate change.

There are those who wish this to be their final rebirth as if to be done with it all. When asked what happens then, their reply is at best some kind of unchanging bliss with no responsibilities and no challenges - which means no spiritual growth. What's wrong with finding joy in an ever-changing life where the changes are sometimes unexpected? Each change in our little lives and in the evolutionary creation brings out a new facet in the spirit. The clairvoyant poet William Blake said "To be a star, you must shine where you are."

The evolutionary creation as it relates to our humanity is in two major phases, involution and evolution. The work of involution is the materialization of spirit and the work of evolution is the spiritualization of matter. During involution the becoming beings are creatures. They are worked on by divine hierarchies serving their creative apprenticeship in giving us exactly what we need for our development. We were brought progressively deeper into matter to awaken us. The primary virtue during involution is responsiveness to the creative hierarchies and to the ever new and more demanding conditions. Adaption.

As new states are experienced repeatedly, the becoming beings appropriate matter from the worlds and develop bodies corresponding to those states. This work is done in states of awareness from deep unconsciousness to modest external awareness. Simultaneously with these material experiences and accomplishments, but with a slight delay, a threefold spirit is differentiated and united in reflection to the material conditions. This threefold spirit is analogous to, or in the image of, the threefold godhead of the Universal

Spirit. When completed it is a Self, a Spiritual Ego. As this self draws into its vehicles during the human stage, it awakens and it is no longer a creature. It is a creator, a divine being. This commences the evolutionary phase of the evolutionary creation.

The work of evolution is to awaken and use the divine capabilities built into us during involution and to make them our own. This is done by spiritualizing the stuff of the various material worlds using the vehicles corresponding to those worlds in a process of soul growth. We are helpers and participants in the work of bringing clod to God. This is creation in reality. This is our work in the present and in the future. In this work we awaken the divinity within in what is called epigenesis. Though this sounds glorious and glamorous, it is done in the little things by creative living.

This chemical subdivision of the physical world is most ripe for change and spiritualization and it is here that we are most capable of making changes. Thus, our evolutionary challenge at present is to transform the world around us. We are doing that. When we look on our work, we can see that we have brought change to the world but we cannot, like the Elohim in the book of Genesis, look back and say, "...it is good." There is a spiritual reason for our often-ugly devastation of nature, and understanding that reason can help us to improve in our creative efforts.

We have had the potential of divinity within us since the very beginning of our participation in the evolutionary creation. Divinity is not an add-on or an after-thought. It is something essential in our becoming being and it can be expressed more or less effectively every step along the way. Some have expressed it long before becoming waking, self-conscious beings. Some expressed it by not adapting to change. This brought them to be out of sync with creative intent and timing. And it is only because of divine generosity and flexibility of the creative hierarchies that they could continue to struggle forward with even the hope of coming back into pace with evolutionary flow.

Some transgressions of asserting divinity are more serious than others. The most serious with regard to our human, creative wave involve using the creative force in ignorance of the necessity to use it in harmony with the whole. Selfishness. The same selfishness that separates the whole from its internal harmony.

One of the consequences of this transgression was to inject discord into divine harmony, the very discord we see in our human activities in the world around us. A more serious consequence is that we have plunged ourselves more deeply into matter than intended, perhaps too deeply. In fact, we are told in the Rosicrucian philosophy we have, in this, hardened matter itself. As a result, we have closed ourselves off from divine guidance and most of our divine nature. St. Paul tells us we used to be able to see the godhead itself before our fall into darkness and blindness. Thus we find ourselves thrashing about in relative ignorance. We create, but our creations are often out of harmony with the whole. Some creations are even destructive to divine intent expressed in nature, viz. nuclear weapons. Despite our sometimes-catastrophic failures we cannot cease seeking progress, this would defy the flow of the divine plan. To do so would be a denial of our own divine nature. We have to proceed forward because there is no standing still in evolution, either we progress or we fall back. When we do seek to progress, we do so with the caution born of humility, the humility of realizing that we may be wrong, the humility that opens us to intuition.

Most innovation, especially during involution and the transition to evolution, is top down. It begins with intuition or an inspiration from the hierarchies. The intuition is wrapped in thought stuff to form an archetype in the concrete subdivision in the world of thought. The thought provokes motivation and feeling in the desire world, vital life and action in the ethers, and finally change in chemical matter. Top down.

This usually takes place in the human life cycle of rebirth. Studies have found that most significant discoveries and creative ideas are complete by age 24 or 25. There is an occult reason for this age but it is much of a departure for this essay. Everything after that age is usually elaboration on the initial ideas. This kind of top down creation is slow because the life cycle takes so long. Eventually, creation should be in the moment and continuous. Fortunately, top down creation is not the only kind of creation.

As the spirit draws increasingly more into its vehicles, more of our creative work will be in the moment, right here in chemical matter where there is evolutionary ripeness. Hence, bottom up creation will be added to top down creation. Intuition will still come from the spirit but the impetus to creation

will be found in the conditions of matter. Bottom up creation is the means for the spiritualization of matter, the work of the evolutionary phase of our work in the creation. It is also something we can apply in our day to day living; which is what this essay has intended to explore.

One of the most important parts of the principle of analogy is beautifully stated by Max Heindel when he says, "...anything that happens in any world effects every other world." It is in this principle that bottom up creativity is founded. It is the principle we want to examine for applying bottom up creativity in our lives, for better or worse. We want, especially, to be aware of our errors made in selfish ignorance, lest we wreak further havoc in the creation. Eventually even egregious errors will be recovered and transformed into blessings, but it is so much better if we can be what Max Heindel called spiritually efficient servants.

Max Heindel gives many examples of what is being discussed here. For instance, he describes how war being waged here in the chemical subdivision produces even more horrible conditions in the desire world. That may be enough to start us on a better way of living, or at least thinking about the consequences of how we do things now. He also provided positive examples of the effects of bottom up actions on higher worlds. For example, he said finding and eating personally harmonious food strengthens the archetype which, in turn, strengthens the dense physical body. Inversely, consuming drugs or other intoxicants stimulates the desire body in its destructive ways and weakens the archetype. Another example of bottom up causation is using extreme emotional fervor and excitement in the desire body to reverberate activity in the Human Spirit, (its transcendent reflective source), as occurs in some revival meetings. It is a real but not necessarily a positive spiritual experience. Rhythmic living and repetitive prayer strengthen the vital body and tends to quell the onslaughts of the desire body.

Those are obvious examples; but the things we encounter and initiate in life are not always so obvious and simple. In our ignorance we don't always know the right course in life. For example, organ donation and acceptance of such donations, while they may lengthen the life, but may not improve its quality, obviously counter the archetype and incur other responsibilities. But what about a pacemaker? What is its effect on the archetype and the course of one's evolution? With clairvoyance one may be able to investigate such phe-

nomena, but few have developed that capability and decisions have to be made every day, with or without clairvoyance. Intuition and prayer are great when facing these kinds of situations but because we are what we are, those too are not always available.

When we are in ignorance, we have the scientific method to aid us. If we take action according to the best positive hypothesis available to us, and then judge both the hypothesis and its consequences after the fact, we have done our best and have given ourselves the best chance learn intelligently.

It would seem that for us, as Christian mystical aspirants, the best hypotheses would have to be as much as possible in the direction of the opposite of selfishness, in altruism. What is the most unselfish thing I can do in this situation? What is most likely to produce positive change? Questions like these become the vessels for intuition and soul growth.

Why Do Birds Sing?

Illusion. Aspirants to the mysteries have always been warned about the possibility of illusion. We are told that it is easy to be fooled by the appearance of things versus their reality. As present day aspirants to the mystery school of the Rosicrucians, Christian mysticism, we are tempted to think we are not as subject to illusion as aspirants in the past because of its logical, scientific basis. We think that since our waking consciousness is focused in the chemical subdivision of the physical world, we are less subject to illusion than we would be if our consciousness was focused in the deceptive desire world. After all, we are mastering the physical world through rigorous skepticism which weeds out illusion. As students of Max Heindel, we are especially prone to believe we are free from illusion because everything he shared was so clear. It appeals to both intuition and logic.

This attitude about illusion is itself an illusion, an illusion that is easily dispelled.

When we read the works of Max Heindel, we think we know what he is saying. It is so clear that it couldn't be anything but true. It is in that clarity that there is illusion, the illusion that we think we know what he has said. That is often not true.

On the title page of the first edition of the Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception there is a simple quote from St. Paul: "Prove all things." This sentiment is echoed in secular folk maxims, as in, "...the proof of the pudding is in the eating." In spiritual aspiration there is one proof of knowledge that is paramount— life. We cannot say we know something spiritual unless we can live it. High ideals may help us in our quest but the true test of definitive knowledge is our life. If we knew the teachings of Max Heindel as we think we do, we would be initiates, and few are.

Beyond holding this illusion, there is farther intransigence in Rosicrucian aspirants with regard to the teachings of Max Heindel. We neither heed nor follow his directions and suggestions about how to study what he has given us. His writings are meant to be vessels for spiritual content, soul food if you will. We cannot benefit from our aliment until it is digested, absorbed and assimilated. There is a parallel with spiritual nutrition. We have to break

it down, take it in, and make it our own. Max Heindel tells us repeatedly, especially in his letters, that to benefit from his writings, we must get beneath the surface of them which, in itself, is beautiful, inspiring and dense in wisdom. He describes it like digging for treasure and unearthing gems of unspeakable beauty. This writer has spoken with aspirants of varying ages and backgrounds and has found few who even try to follow this suggestion. Understanding why this happens has baffled this writer because, to the small extent that he has tried it, it has proven so spiritually rich and satisfying that he almost doesn't want to study or ponder anything else.

One tentative answer as to why this happens is that this behavior is founded in another illusion. When intuition comes, it comes easily and effortlessly. Intuition happens. When intuition comes through the vehicle of reason, it seems even easier to be received and it has an added backstop of provability to prevent relapsing into disbelief. All of the writings of Max Heindel are like that and, perhaps, we have been spoiled by them. All of this happens despite Max Heindel telling us that we must build moral muscle, and that we do that through "prayer and work."

What seems to happen is that people choose instead to seek more information and answers to things in other sources, which may or may not be attuned to the Rosicrucian Order to which we aspire. When that happens, aspiration is diluted and some even drift away.

This is not meant to be a polemic or an indictment of fellow Rosicrucian aspirants. It is meant as a reminder, and as an encouragement to do the work from one who, from the little of it as he has done, has nothing but gratitude and enthusiasm. Doing this does not have to mean laborious pondering on metaphysical concepts of convoluted logic. It can be as simple as applying the principles of Rosicrucian philosophy to the everyday world around us for deeper understanding, appreciation, and harmonious living with the purpose behind it all. It can be as simple as asking a question like "Why do birds sing?" or "Why do wolves howl?"

A biologist might say birds sing as a mating strategy or that they sing to mark territory. Someone with a romantic, religious temperament might say they sing to the glory of God, and to make the creation more beautiful. Both are no doubt correct, but are we content that those answers are all of it? Or

that these are the most important reasons? Perhaps the Rosicrucian philosophy can help us to a more spiritually satisfying answer.

The great seers of the Rosicrucian Order have found that when our evolution carried us into the chemical subdivision of the physical world, the evolutionary conditions became markedly different from any that preceded them. Previously, in the higher worlds, our various vehicles of consciousness (even the physical), could be perpetuated for long periods of time and new vehicles could be generated without mating because of the fluent, unified nature of the higher worlds, and because we were bisexual (in the true meaning of the word.)

Things are different in the chemicals. The chemicals are the end of the line for us. In the chemicals there is only the “without,” an extreme limitation. It is the hard physical world of separation and specialization. To function here we had to separate and specialize our vehicles of consciousness pertaining to the physical world - the etheric and the chemical bodies. This specialization is called the separation of the sexes in Christian mysticism. It was more than the gender separation of complementary body types for procreation. There is also an internal division. Previous to the separation of the sexes, we are described as being in large, bag-like bodies. Vaguely, one could say that the structure resembled that of a large single cell with a creative nucleus. In it the becoming constitution was in something like a fetal shape.

The separation of the sexes took place over a long period of time and several things happened. The form opened and became more linear. Organs developed. Everything happened gradually. Even the nucleus divided and found expression in two centers at the ends of the developing spine: the generative organs for one, and the brain and larynx for the other. Gradually we developed organs to meet our needs in the hardening discrete conditions of the world around us. We could do this because only part of the creative energy was used cooperatively for procreation and the rest was available for body building. Previously, the process was analogous to mitosis, after which division both new cells must rest because of the taxing demands of the division. In the developing organism less creative energy was used in procreation and more at the nucleus at the other end of the developing spine. At that nucleus special emphasis was placed on developing the brain and central nervous system. This was done so the spirit could enter into its body and function

here through the concrete mind with the brain as its vehicle. This took place over many millennia. Nature works slowly and perfectly.

During this span there was a recapitulation of old evolutionary work done in the new conditions. When we recapitulated the work of the Moon Period, (a period in which we went through an animal-like stage, developing the ability to feel, emote and desire), we again went through various emotional and desire complexes in animal-like human forms. As we outgrew these animal-like complexes, we retained their essences, transformed into human expressions. We then discarded the forms which were no longer necessary. The discarding was not like the discarding of a food wrapper which would have been a waste. Nothing is wasted in nature. Instead, the forms were passed along to the animals whose evolution follows ours one step behind. It was similar to hand-me-downs in a family of several children.

From these basic forms all sorts of species have ramified, developed and evolved. The book of Genesis (2:20) describes this as, “Adam gave names to the animals,” a phrase with which Mark Twain had great fun in his *Diaries of Adam and Eve*, with delightful humor. However, Mark Twain was biblically incorrect, because Genesis tells us the naming occurred before the appearance of Eve, i.e., before the separation of sexes was completed. Juxtaposing the Genesis idea with an evolutionary table, such as the one on page 416 of the Cosmo-Conception, we can learn when, in the span of the recapitulatory process, the separation of the sexes took place. It was a gradual process, as are all evolutionary processes.

The means of the expulsion of the animal forms is fascinating and it is pertinent to why birds sing.

During the time of the “naming” we, the emerging and becoming humans, were still creatively potent in the world around us. We did not create in the world with machines as we do now. We created more directly from ourselves, like magicians. We were also more morally pure. With this combination of potency and purity we could, under the guidance and direction of divine hierarchies, focus on the panoply of desire forms within us, retain human versions of them, and externalize the forms for the use of the animals. Doing this gave us the freedom to become human. The formative work was accomplished through voice. Did we sing the species forms into existence? Only

careful clairvoyant investigation can tell.

This brings us back to why birds sing. This mystical view of the relationship of voice and creation agrees with the biologist's connection of birdsong and mating, but it doesn't give us an answer to the question we are asking. However, if we remember the basic nature of the chemical subdivision of the physical world, we can come to at least a partial answer.

The physical world is different from all of the other worlds in which we work, in that it has no "within." It is interpenetrated as are all of the worlds but it has no within. If we slice through an apple to see what is within, we see only two different withouts but no within. A form in the desire world has a character within that is different from its exterior, and both the without and the within can be seen by clairvoyants who warn us about surface illusions. Forces from the higher worlds enter chemical bodies and the chemical world resonantly through the positive poles of the ethers if there are vital bodies. However, many forms do not have desire bodies and some physical forms do not have vital bodies. Limitation.

This chemical world is glorious but it still needs direct expressions of higher forces to evolve. There are the mechanical forces expressed as sounds, such as the winds, but nothing direct from the within. There is no hosannah chorus in the chemical world, as there is in the inner worlds. But we do have the birds ... and the wolves. Each avian species has its specific song which brings a particular spiritual force into the world. A wren gives everything it has to deliver its song. Its entire body shudders in the effort, and it sometimes does this for hours, in an effort that would exhaust a human many times over.

Why do birds sing? They sing to bring forces into the world that can come into the world in no other way, and they do it wholeheartedly. To be in a jungle where a multitude of sources are constantly singing and bringing sound into this world is a wonder that must be experienced to be appreciated.

We humans do not have the purity and potency we had when through our voices we named the animals. However, we are growing in soul power and virtue through experience so our words are progressively more potent — which should give us pause to ponder before we speak and bring forces into the world through our voices. We have a responsibility in self-consciousness

that the birds do not have, which suggests thinking thoroughly before we speak.

The relationship between voice and procreative potency may potentially also answer a question puzzling contemporary, evolutionary biologists. Among the tens of thousands of bird species only three percent have penises. That fact is remarkable in itself, but what is more remarkable is that there is evidence that in the evolutionary past all species of birds had penises. This condition has prompted questions about the why and how of it. Several theses have been put forth as to the why of this, such as flight being easier with less weight. The how of it is more difficult to explain, except to say there was a gradual diminution. The Rosicrucian philosophy can offer a speculative answer as to how this came about. We know that in male humans the voice changes at puberty and that we lose our voices when we weaken. It is likely that there are similar relationships between voice and potency in birds. Thus, it is possible that the birds with heartfelt singing may have sung their penises away. To this writer's knowledge there has been no study to prove or disprove this tentative hypothesis. If it is true, it might mean that the current animals, through the birds, will be less likely to fall for the reason we did when they reach the human stage. Not only that, they will have had the joy of soaring away from plodding on the earth.

Are there other reasons why birds sing? Perhaps. What do you think?

Lot's Wife

At one time in this life, this writer had the wonderful experience of living with a composer of music. All kinds of music from songs to concerti for orchestra and voice. It was a marvelous experience to witness the creative process unfold. It was painstaking and thorough. When a note or chord finally entered a score, there was no doubt about it being the right note or chord. When the music was played by the composer, the atmosphere was thick with it, as if it had been a pungent perfume. The experience was not without trial. The composer was rather eccentric and peculiar, weird in that Neptunian way. He had both personal and artistic eccentricities. Among the latter was a practice of occasionally starting a fire and burning piles of music that had been labored over for many hours. It was painful to see the record of so much beauty vanish into the ethers without being shared by many who could have been uplifted by it. He didn't want his past works around him. He thought they would smother his muse, and that he would become self-satisfied, complacent or content, and his creative life would be stunted. He was not alone in that opinion. This writer has known other artists, some in other media, who have felt this way. To look back at creative accomplishments would be death to their creativity. Some have even urged other artists to do the same thing for their own good. They abhor crystallization.

Lot's wife did look back, when told not to, and she crystalized into a pillar of salt.

As Rosicrucian aspirants we have been instructed to look back at our days at their ends. Have we been misled? Do we misunderstand?

Time is a continuity. A Faulkner character said it brilliantly: "But tomorrow is today also." He was referring to the eternal present in the stream of time as we experience it. Both the past and the future seem illusory in the present, as though they were something in a dream. Yet, the past is decidedly different. To some, time is reversible. Perhaps in a physicist's formula one can theoretically go back in time, change the causal stream, and produce a new future, but in the reality of life that is not possible. The reason why it is impossible can be stated in one word, experience. We may have never experienced something, say music, but once we have, we and the world are forever changed. We cannot go back. We cannot deny its existence. It is knowledge

born of experience. Knowledge is factual. The past is factual — it was what it was.

Perseus, when he slew Medusa, could not look at her directly, or he would have turned to stone. He looked at her reflection on his polished shield.

Because of our limited consciousness, the facts of the past must be reflectively interpreted to appreciate their significance. Each generation of historians has a new interpretation and rationale for the United States Civil War. First it was about slavery, then economics, then psychology, and perhaps in the future there will be a spiritual rationale. Probably all are correct, but also incomplete. Our consciousness is incomplete. There is much more in the events of our individual and collective experiences than we realize in the moment. We often have to mature to be able to understand what happened to us in the past. We can do that because the past is factual. However, to do that successfully, we must have an attitude that matches factuality. An objective attitude. If we are subjective about the past, being what we are at this time, we tend to make the past what we want it to be, not what it was. Fortunately, experience in time mellows and seasons us, and we relent, and learn from the past. We see things differently than before, more as they were. If we don't, we become dangerously subjective and deviate psychologically and spiritually.

When Perseus looked at the reflection in his shield, he was looking forward and backward simultaneously.

Experience in time is not bidirectional. Healthy attitudes about orientation in time are not identical. They are reciprocal.

If we are objective about the future, in the way that we try to be about the past, without even a trace of subjectivity, there will be problems. If we try to be totally objective about the future, we are extrapolating from the past and the present. We are expecting things to continue as they are now. We are not considering the possibility of the future presenting us with something new and different. This writer once worked in a small group supervised by someone approaching retirement. One in the group was covetous of the supervisory position, and sitting in that private office. That individual did everything one could do to win favor, including some not nice things. That individual was successful. The old supervisor retired and the position was given to that

individual. However, during the time when the old supervisor was approaching retirement, everything was changing about what we were doing. Different services and personnel were needed. One by one, members of the group retired, transferred, or were laid off. Eventually, the unit was eliminated, just after the new supervisor was settling into the position. Toward the end, the supervisor sat in the coveted office with nobody to supervise, waiting to be terminated. It was a grim picture of poetic justice. We must have, at least a modicum of subjectivity, about the future to accommodate change, and the wondrous things it brings. It is so much better, if we expect, anticipate, welcome, and even probe the future.

Even the Teacher does not know if the candidate will pass a trial or not, but still, He does think positively and encourages the neophyte.

When Max Heindel was asked how one knows whether something is true, his reply was simple, “Does it work?” It is in the using, that one learns whether an axe is sharp or not. A simple answer like that might be true for axes, but retrospection requires a deeper and more thorough understanding of functional application. For instance, this writer has encountered individuals who experienced horrendous things from the past, which tended to cripple them in the present. When retrospection was suggested and tried, it seemed to not improve the condition, and the flash-backs and responses were as terrible as ever. Some even resisted recalling the events, and recoiled at the thought of it. For them, once was enough. Some averred that the Rosicrucian teaching about the post mortem panorama, and the purgatory that follows, is another example of a religion with a cruel and personal God. Even without a traumatic past, or a painful present, some report no success with retrospection. Have we been misled?

Subsequent conversations with some of these individuals sometimes revealed why retrospection was unsuccessful. Suppose, for example, someone experienced severe treatment that was completely unjust in the context of the event (but probably not unjust in terms of rebirth). It would not be surprising if, when looking back, such an individual couldn't help but want to feel justified — “I was robbed of justice,” or “life isn't fair.” Suffering real or apparent injustice, is one of the most difficult circumstances to treat objectively, which is why the example of Christ-Jesus, in the face of true injustices, is so powerful, for inspiring spiritual aspirants. **He even forgave his unjust accusers!** Because of that action, love is overcoming the entire way of

the world with its ways of private, personal, justice and injustice. Not all of the things we cling to are as dramatic, severe, and seemingly unjust as those just spoken of, but they all have subtle, subjective attachment which makes them so difficult to dissolve.

Lot's wife did not turn into a pillar of salt merely because she looked back, but because she looked back with subjective attachment. She longed to go back.

Different versions of the retrospection exercises are given in various places in the writings of Max Heindel. Some versions emphasize one aspect of it or another. Some emphasize the feeling and re-feeling aspect of it, while others stress the reverse order and objective judgment of it. The latter aspect takes the form of "objectively judging ourselves." Some aspirants do it by confessing to Christ, before whom one must be completely honest and objective.

Objectivity is of the transcendental individuality, the spiritual Ego. Subjectivity is of the concrete personality. In our dense, physical bodies, we cannot see the entire panorama around us. We only see what is in the field of vision in front of us, subjectivity. Because of this subjectivity, we must judge our actions and inactions before the higher self, if we wish to process experience successfully, and free ourselves from attachment to the past. This is not a new outlook. We learn from the Bible that "God is no respecter of persons." Christ, in the Life Spirit, which transcends even self, said "And yet if I judge, my judgment is true." Moreover, the judgment of Christ carries with it the grace of forgiveness from Life Spirit. In some places in the writings of Max Heindel, he calls the exercise, "the forgiveness of sins." The blessing of forgiveness exceeds even the tenacious pain of injustice.

Over time some words in our language take on unpleasant connotations, not present in their original meanings. Sometimes there are better words to describe what these contaminated words have come to mean. Crystallization is a good example.

Crystallization is one of the most perfect processes in nature. A crystal is not only a thing of beauty, it is utile because of its structure. What is meant when one is said to be crystalized would be better said by saying they are hardened or, if one is pretentious, obdurate. When an anion interacts with a cation, the

result is a salt, a salt that is a crystal. Such an interaction is vigorous. Goethe called its violence a war. A crystal of sodium chloride, salt, is a perfect cube. Through the ages the cube, or one of its square faces, has represented justice. In our folk language we speak of a square deal. The altar of justice of Zeus was a cube. The halls of judgment of kings were cubical. If there are no interactions, there are no salts, no crystals. In our lives, if there are no actions, there is no soul growth. Even misacting results in soul growth. We have to do something to have something to retrospect. The pillar of salt that is Lot's wife may represent disobedient looking back, probably longingly, but that is no condemnation of salt ... or of taking action. After all, "Ye are the salt of the earth, but if the salt has lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted?"

As We Are Known

This writer once participated in a most unusual game of chess which had a surprise ending. It was not the game, itself, that was unusual; it was what happened around it, that was remarkable. The game took place in an area where students go, to relax and have fun. When the game started there was nothing unusual about it. However, when there is a focus of attention, it tends to attract interest. Soon there were several people surrounding and watching the game. Behind this writer was a spectator who became as emotionally involved in the game, as if it was his own. As the game went on, he became progressively more involved. If this writer was about to make a move, he would make approving or disapproving sounds, sometimes even saying things. Eventually, when it was this writer's turn to make a move, a longer than usual time was put into deliberation. The suspense was too much for the spectator, he couldn't contain himself. Suddenly, he reached over and moved one of the pieces. Instantly, this writer was up and heading for the exit, with the spectator behind him tugging at his sleeve, begging him to return and promising not to interfere, but all was to no avail.

The spectator did not have sufficient emotional self-control for the situation. Neither did this writer. Few do in such situations. However, this not an essay about self-control, desirable though that may be. It is about something else in play at that time, objective versus subjective perspectives. Kibitzers have a more objective perspective; they are not subjectively in the game. They have no personal attachment. The players are subjectively in the game and many do not have objective detachment. Even some chess masters, who must have objectivity to reach mastery, will sometimes rise and walk around the board to see it from the other side for the sake of greater objectivity. This phenomenon is not limited to chess games. We have grandstand quarterbacks and coaches. It is also not limited to games; we have back seat drivers and critics of all ilk. It is especially pertinent to spiritual aspirants, in relation to other spiritual aspirants. Max Heindel tells us several times in his letters, that we have to be especially aware of this, with regard to other Rosicrucian aspirants. With regard to them we are in an external, objective relationship. We see things differently than they do and sometimes may even see things that they do not see, just as kibitzers often do. There is nothing wrong with objectivity. In fact, we are taught to observe ourselves objectively in retrospection. Max Heindel loved to quote Bobby Burns on objectivity: "O wad some Pow-

er the gifte gie us, to see ourselves as other see us!” It is one of our goals as spiritual aspirants to attain objectivity, the objectivity of Christ in Life Spirit. What is wrong, is when we use objectivity personally, and subjectively, in judgment and condemnation.

There is nothing wrong with subjectivity. When we are in our individual personalities, it is inescapable. We may only be able to see what is in front of us, not a panorama; but our viewpoint, though subjective, is valuable for its uniqueness. Trying to detach from all subjectivity, is often a sign of mental illness.

There is nothing to be compared to the joy of being deeply involved in something, to be within something, to be part of something, to belong. There are things that can only be experienced subjectively from within. We even have folk maxims on the value of subjectivity. We say things like “...until you have walked a mile in my shoes, you have no right to judge me.” Subjectivity is as pervasive in the world as objectivity. A grandstand quarterback may see a game with external objectivity, but he or she interprets it subjectively. Politics seems to be interpreted with personal subjectivity. It is not the subjectivity that is the problem. It is the personalization, the ego-centric bias.

Objective and subjective perspectives are inescapable. They are inherent in our experience of reality. We all experience the interplay of objectivity and subjectivity, but with varying degrees of awareness. When this writer was a child on the playground and someone lied, they would be taunted: “Liar, liar, pants on fire, tongue as long as a telephone wire.” Objective observation with subjective hyperbole. The culprit, not likely to acquiesce to condemnation, without a fight, would often retort: “It takes one to know one.” In psychology that retort is called projection. In projection, one projects personal subconscious content onto others. If one is in love, one sees all of one’s dreams and wishes in the beloved. If one is in hate, one projects all of one’s nastiness onto the enemy. If we learn to discern in ourselves, what is projected onto others, be they friend or foe, from what they really are, we grow spiritually in clear consciousness and self-knowledge.

This also applies to the spiritual growth, through the service that we are urged to perform. As noted earlier in the chess game, when we give ourselves to something, it attracts interest in others. New students are enthusiastic about

astrology. It permeates their lives. They eat and sleep astrology. It occupies their conversation. Soon others around them take interest and then comes the inevitable request for a horoscope interpretation. The querent usually says something like, "This is just to satisfy curiosity." The astrologer soon learns that it isn't "just curiosity." There always seems to be a deeper reason, a problem of some kind. If it is a maiden horoscope for the astrologer, it might as well be a blank sheet of paper, for all that is known about a human life, or of human destiny. Books usually don't help, because most are impersonal concentrations distilled from the horoscopes of many people, not the unique person in front of the astrologer. However, if we ask questions, observe and ponder in our hearts, intuitions come to us. Then the real work begins -- the work of translating astrological meaning into life meaning. In this it is important to remember that the horoscope to the astrologer is an outward objectification, an indirect one at that, because of its symbolic nature. At the same time, it is also important to remember that the querent is most likely to experience life subjectively, life happens to him or her. The querent is, therefore, likely to experience the interaction with the astrologer subjectively. To be effective the astrologer, or any other spiritual helper, must be able to see the querent as the querent sees self, and the astrologer must be able to bring the querent to see self as seen by others. Only with this balance of objectivity and subjectivity, can one progress in soul growth and be fulfilled in helping. Max Heindel called this ability to appeal to subjectivity "...being many things to many people."

Self-improvement and self-development are integral to spiritual service. If we are not working on self-improvement, we will not be successful in helping others to do so. Some would even say that our success in service is proportional to our work in self-improvement. We are not likely to be successful with helping others if we suggest to them to do what we are not doing ourselves. The reciprocal of this is, that it is in spiritual service that we find self-development, we must act in order to improve our actions. To succeed, we too must learn to see ourselves as others see us. We all long to become conscious Invisible Helpers. That is best done, by learning to leave our bodies and functioning awake in the inner worlds. Leaving the body is more than a somatic detachment, there is a psychological side to it. To attain to that ability, we have to also leave the personality of the body, i.e., to clearly see ourselves at least as clearly as others see us. If we don't, we will be misled by the illusions of the desire world, because we are unaware of the desires in our

own being, and that we are responding to them, another reason why retrospection is so important.

Once, when this writer was waiting to meet someone, he was standing in a relaxed and open state. In that state he saw someone light and take the much desired first drag off of a cigarette. Inside of himself he could feel everything the smoker did as if he were the smoker. That was something resembling a low-grade type of inner vision, or spiritual sight. Spiritual sight is when an observation occurs simultaneously with inner intuition of its meaning; subjectivity and objectivity unite. That inner, intuitive component is why the higher spiritual worlds are sometimes called inner worlds. In the desire world the inner component is more pronounced, than here in the physical, but it is still somewhat subjective. There, the outer appearances are closer to the inner truth. Monstrous forms usually harbor monstrous intents, but not always. This is why neophytes are taught to hold their vision until they can see through the form to intuitively see the truth within. As one proceeds inward and upward, through the spiritual worlds, the inner becomes more important and objective. In the world of Life Spirit, the inner subsumes the outer and assumes its objectivity in perfection. This is why Christ can judge perfectly. This is the path we aspire to follow. Eventually, we hope to get beyond, even the trace of subjectivity, or point of view, we have in Human Spirit. We hope to leave the Self, analogously to the way we are now working to leave our physical bodies. Only then will we see the truth as perfectly as is humanly possible in both the within and the without. It will be as it is said in the line from our Temple Service: "Then we shall know even as we are known."

Christ and the Cattle

In the fairy tale, *The Two Caskets*, the heroine is a beautiful little girl who sleeps in a chicken coop and works very hard serving her evil, widowed, stepmother, whom she serves with an always pleasant disposition. Her stepmother hates her because she is more beautiful, talented and industrious than her blood daughter. Eventually, the stepmother trumps up a flimsy reason to be rid of her, and throws her down a well. She alights in another world where she serves a wise old woman. At the end of her period of service, she is told she can win a special reward and return to her home by performing three tasks. The tasks are impossibly difficult, for example, one is to fetch water with a sieve.

Psychologists tell us that heroes and heroines represent individuating Egos. The tasks and trials are adjusting to psychological health, and adapting to the greater psychic world. Mystics have no argument with that interpretation, except to say that it is incomplete. To mystics, a hero or heroine is not just a Self, but a Self who is seeking initiation. The trials represent objectives in the evolutionary creation, in which we are extremely fortunate to participate. Those objectives are also initiatory objectives, because the mysteries are based on the scheme of the evolutionary creation. The ultimate objective in the evolutionary creation is godhood, whether by the normal evolutionary process, or by the accelerated and demanding path of initiation. This is borne out by mythology itself, in what is the most famous of all hero myths, the twelve labors of Heracles. The ancient Greek mythographers called those labors the twelve steps of the apotheosis of Heracles. Each of them is almost impossibly difficult.

We too are aspirants to the Christian Mystical initiations of the Rosicrucian Order. As candidates we must also face trials through which we grow and advance. We can be sure they will be as trying as the tasks of Heracles. More than that, they will be more difficult than they were in times preceding ours. In several places in the Rosicrucian literature it is stated that it becomes more difficult to enter the path of initiation as time goes on. This is partly so because as time goes on, the pace of evolution accelerates. It is like hitching a ride on a freight train. When the train is inching out of the train yard almost anyone can hop on it. As the engine builds up momentum its velocity slowly increases. Eventually, it's going so fast that running at full

speed, one cannot keep up, much less vault onto it.

The mysteries of yesterday are not the mysteries of today. At one time candidates were initiated into the mysteries of the outer, material world, just as we aspire to be initiated into the mysteries of the inner worlds in the modern mysteries. The trials of Heracles were symbolic, but even in that, they seem more physical than spiritual. Much has changed over the last several thousand years. Cultures have risen and fallen, and each culture had its own trials, its own strengths, and weaknesses; but there is one thing that has constantly increased, consciousness. The Rosicrucian philosophy teaches that consciousness is one of the chief goals of the evolutionary creation. Thus, it is obvious that our initiatory trials will be trials of consciousness. We may not have to hold lions over our heads, and choke them to death as Heracles did, but we will surely have to develop a soul body as dense and impenetrable as the lion's pelt that Heracles wore to be invulnerable. Some of our trials will be unique to ourselves, according to what we have and have not done. Some of our trials will be to bring us to evolutionary objectives, and some will be to help us to develop our tools of consciousness, such as being in control of every thought we think. That is as difficult fetching water with a sieve. One aspirant described it as being as difficult as greasing one's hands, and trying to catch fish bare-handedly.

Many trials are trials of attitude and are before us constantly. One quality of an initiate is a positive attitude. An initiate is undaunted by anything. Some think Heracles was cocky in his positivity. It is a valid question to ask ourselves, "...how does one develop positivity?" As tradition would have it, positivity is born of the courage of conviction. Webster's defines it as the courage to do what one believes is right. But it is more than belief. It is knowing and living according to true principles, the principles within and behind, the evolutionary creation. Before we can know and live these principles, we must find them. The path of initiation is called the mysteries, things to be sought out and solved. Seeking is looking for something. In this case we are seeking the principle behind positivity, behind the courage of conviction. In Christian Mysticism we are taught that the principle behind positivity is found by looking for the good.

Often one of the trials of looking for the good, is having to go against the tide of prevailing societal attitudes. It has always been that way; our ways are

not the ways of the world. In many ways society is negative. The news media scream the evils of the world. Many religions teach a doctrine of original sin, which says we are basically bad from birth, and are born from sin into sin. In our salons of higher education many savants pride themselves in seeing how bad it all is, often with sardonic cynicism. The path to positivity can be a lonely path. When we do set out on the path of positivity, we encounter another kind of problem, the problem of our own negativity. We may not be doomed by the doctrine of original sin, but we do harbor a lot of negativity—we do contribute to societal darkness. We have a lot of base metal to transmute. Before it can be transmuted, it has to be seen and acknowledged, not an easy task. Max Heindel tells us that, in our desire nature, we have a worthy adversary, perhaps more so even than an evil stepmother. As truth seekers it is imperative that we be honest with ourselves, or we cannot be successful in looking for the good or developing any other virtue. When looking for the good, we cannot be superficial or artificial. One cannot fake goodness. It has to be real goodness that gives the courage of conviction. Perhaps a difficult example might help.

Let's take one of those almost impossible examples for contemporary aspirants, cattle. Our humanity owes an enormous debt to cattle for the way we treat them. We drink milk intended for their offspring in such excess that cows are kept in constant breeding, often in inhumane conditions. Calves get little, if any, of the milk, and most are slaughtered for veal. Beef cattle are raised for slaughter with concrete as part of their diet, and dairy cattle eventually suffer the same lethal fate. Every bit of the animal is used in some way -- from wetting solution for contact lenses, to leather, to gelatin, and many other things. How can we possibly see a real good coming out of this? The answer is in hand-me-downs.

This writer has a friend who had an unhappy childhood. Alcohol. She promised herself that when she had children, she would never say some of the things her mother said to her. Then she had a daughter of her own. One day, in one of those moments that come up between parents and children, that try one's patience, she blurted out one of the very things, she promised herself she would never say. She was in shocked silence. It was a hand-me-down reaction that had been planted in the

unconscious part of her being by her childhood experience. Some hand-me-downs are benign, like family traditions, but even then, they are not as good as waking conscious intention. Some hand-me-downs are deep and sinister. Child abusers were often individuals abused in their own childhood. Some hand-me-downs are long term. The rebellion and fall of our humanity, that brought us into discord, and too deep into matter, is a hand-me-down from the Lucifer Spirits. Just as this writer's friend did not want to continue the chain of a hand-me-downs that may have gone back several generations, we do not want to visit the effects of our fall onto the animals. How that can be accomplished is part of the Christ-Jesus mystery.

It is the mystery of the "cleansing blood." Like all mysteries the "cleansing blood" has several meanings and levels of meaning. One meaning is that the "cleansing blood" is the desire body of Christ given to the earth to purify and raise it. It is a marvelous vehicle filled with love and purified emotions, that we admitted into our world in a most untoward way. It is sufficiently strong to have significantly changed the desire aura of the earth giving all beings on earth a better chance to improve. Grace.

As beautiful as that meaning is, it is not the meaning of the "cleansing blood" we are seeking to solve our dilemma. In one part of the Rosicrucian philosophy we learn that when creatures, including humans, die of disease, or what are called "natural causes," they form an attachment to the earth. After many such deaths the attachment is quite strong. However, if one dies by the letting of the blood, the spirit can leave the body directly from the ethers released in the flow of the blood. This is why Christ had to leave the body of Jesus from the blood, lest Christ be attached to the earth until the dissolution of the earth, which would have been a tragedy of colossal, cosmic proportion. In this meaning the "cleansing blood" was cleansing for Christ, not from Christ. This is why cattle and other animals that have been slaughtered many times are much less likely to be attached and too deeply immersed in their earth, when they reach the human stage of evolution, as we are. As heinous as our slaughter of animals is, there is some real good in it; real good based in cosmic principle. This does not mean that we should condone the heartless slaughter of animals, or even look the other way. It is a nasty practice and we must continue to help humanity realize what it is doing, and persuade it to give up its bloody ways. But as we do this, we can do it without being completely negative (which is a big thing), because we know there is something

truly good in even this merciless activity. A grain of unmitigated positivity.

GDP

When he was young this writer loved to argue. He would argue about almost anything. And, of course, he thought he was always right. After many instances of being disabused of that opinion, (facts have a way of doing that), that balloon has been deflated. Along the way, he has become sensitized by the discordancy of argumentation to the degree that his body shakes when there is a strong argument. However, some of the topics of some of those arguments still engage his consciousness. Among them is the question of whether Jesus was a capitalist or a socialist. Certainly, there are more than just those two options, and certainly the incarnate Christ was above petty politics; but this dichotomy persists, and is even a factor in present day political discussion. Some believe they are compatible. Democratic Socialists have governed capitalistic nations in Europe for decades, and those nations have prospered. In its simple and sharp distinction, this dichotomy is still intellectually engaging.

To capitalistic thinkers, the parable of the talents seems to be incontrovertible evidence. On the other side, when Christ sent out his disciples, he commanded them to take no possessions and no money, only the clothes on their backs. In a debatable way, there is even democracy in the New Testament in the various forms of elections of new apostles. If one sets out to count the numbers of capitalist versus socialist allusions in the Gospels, one finds something different; one learns the dichotomy is not between capitalism and socialism, it is between a heavenly and an earthly outlook. Christ frequently speaks of “the kingdom of Heaven,” which is so foreign to earthly consciousness, that it can only be intimated in parables. Christ even states succinctly our duty to both: “...render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesar’s; and unto God the things that are God’s.”

Christian Mysticism tells us there is a continuum in the cosmos. It stretches from “clod to God” as the maxim says. Throughout this continuum, the unity of the Universal Spirit is discovered by the Principle of Analogy, “As above, so below....” In the continuum are different worlds with different laws, through which different kinds of experience is gained. We humans are fortunate to have vehicles of consciousness corresponding to almost all of the worlds except the highest, which is the World of God. However, though we have vehicles of consciousness, we are not very conscious, if at all, of most of

the worlds. This is, in part, because we are undeveloped in them, but mostly because of our fall into matter.

Our fall into matter has been so deep, and so thorough, that we are almost unaware of the higher spiritual worlds. It wasn't always this way. Paul, in the first chapter of Romans, tells us we could see to the very godhead before we fell into corruption. We think in the world of thought, and we emote in the desire world, but we still believe it all originates in the physical world. The belief that everything has its origin in matter is classic materialism. We have focused our attention into matter so exclusively for so long that materialism is a habitual attitude, a bad habit. Materialism is the norm. We are told to "come to our senses" (the senses that relate to the outer material world) when we focus deeply on inner things. The psychiatric definition of sanity is based in materialism. Mental health workers try to bring patients back to reality, which means back to the physical world, back to materialism. Mention of other worlds is called "crazy talk." Many psychologists and psychiatrists see religion and spirituality as enemies of mental health.

Even a brief visit to a mental hospital, opens one to the fact that many patients do try to escape adjustment and responsibility to this world, by focusing attention into the inner worlds in a skewed and distorted manner. Disorientation in the inner worlds is an easy thing to have happen. Most neophytes are disoriented when first opening consciousness to the higher worlds. One such individual told this writer that it was astounding how seers like Max Heindel could be as clear and objective as they were about something so chaotic. However, the fact that there are people with mental health issues relative to the higher worlds, and that there are involuntary clairvoyants who do not have fine-tuned control of higher world consciousness, does not mean that one cannot have healthy, stable spiritual development. That is one of our goals when we say "a sane mind, a soft heart, a sound body." The inverse of the current outlook might be true, i.e., that psychological health is impossible if one is a materialist.

One of the dangers and problems with adjustment and adaption to reality lies in the structure of the continuum of the cosmos. The continuum is more than a series of worlds or states of being along what is called the spirit-matter pole. At the heart of the spirit-matter pole is the focus of a great divide. Everything on one side of the divide is abstract and spiritual. On the other side,

everything is concrete and material, even though interpenetrated by spirit. The farther one proceeds from the divide, the greater the degree of abstraction, or concretion. The heart of the spirit-matter pole is more than a locus. It is something like a compound lens and mirror. By means of it, the Universal Spirit accomplishes the manifest creation in a process called reflective projection in Christian Mysticism. Thus, the deeper states of creative manifestation are reflective projections of the corresponding deeper states of spirit. To be specific, the chemical state, which is the objective of materialism, is the reflective projection of the state of spirit called Divine Spirit. Divine Spirit is the deepest state of being in our human spiritual anatomy. It is the home of that great being of the Christian godhead called the Father (not God, a being far greater, behind and within the godhead.) From this, one can see a potential problem, which is that one can mistake the reflection for the reality in a way that is analogous to the way an audience is fooled by a stage magician into believing a mirror image is a reality. Illusion. In this, materialists suffer from spiritual malnutrition in an insatiable hunger for more of what cannot be satisfying. The experience of Divine Spirit in faith is always satisfying, while matter can never be.

Both capitalism and socialism are materialistic. Both suffer from inversion and the resultant confusions and illusions about the nature of reality.

There are other characteristics of the spirit-matter pole beyond abstraction and concretion. One of them is that states of spirit are unlimited, while states of matter are of varying degrees of limitation; the chemicals being the most limited. Inverted misunderstanding of this characteristic has proven to be troublesome to our spiritual health. The value of this material world in which we are focused, lies in its limitation. Limitation is a blessing, not the blockage, as some spiritual seekers have come to think of it. In limitation, we learn the rudiments of reality in a manner analogous to the way little children learn to read with a limited vocabulary. The stubborn resistance of solid matter awakens us to objectivity, and generates Conscious Soul simultaneously. Even our individuality, our discrete focus of the Universal Spirit, is awakened by the separation between chemical bodies. However, the selfishness that brought us to fall too deeply into matter and materialism as we did, has transformed some aspects of the blessing into a curse. In our inverted state we tend to see value and wealth in matter, not spirit. We always want more. In the transcendent spiritual worlds there is always more, but not in the concrete worlds.

That doesn't seem to deter us from trying, at almost any cost. We want more luxury befitting our egoistic self-conceit. It is not the materialistic pursuit that generates suffering, it is the selfishness and excess. This is true in large and in small, in nations and in individuals.

The GDP (Gross Domestic Product) is a measure of a nation's economic activity and is the sum of the market value of all final goods and services produced by an economy during a period of time. The GDP measures the growth or contraction of a nation's economy. Nations are ranked by either the size or growth of their economies. As of this writing the United States is the largest economy and Tuvalu is the smallest, while Libya is the fastest growing economy and Venezuela is the fastest declining economy. Comparative ranking like this implies competition and that is where the rub is. There is a limit to natural resources. New discoveries of natural resources are made but, ultimately, there is a limit. There is only so much Earth. New techniques and technologies allow us to get more out of resources more efficiently, but there is a limit. Eventually, life on Earth becomes a zero-sum game, which is a situation in which one participant can only gain by another losing the exact amount as the gain of the first. Being as we are, this inevitably means war. For example, water is a precious resource, and bitter wars have already been waged over riparian rights, and it is likely that there will be more to come, unless there is change.

The type of change that is necessary is stated in a favorite quote of Max Heinzel by Thomas Paine: "The world is my country, all mankind are my brethren, and to do good is my religion." Eventually, all are to share in the wealth of the world. That sounds like socialism but it is more than that. Socialism is founded in sharing material wealth, so it is still materialistic; matter is the end. It is altruism that is the resolution of the material crisis of the earth. In altruism love is the end. Once we realize the truth that in spirit, we are equal and all essential parts of a spiritual unity, material equity will follow. We do not have to enter politics or statecraft to help humanity progress toward this goal. We are mystics, and as practiced, practical thinkers, we are significant contributors to the psychic background environment. In our prayers and other concentrations, what we think and hold in our heads and hearts, affects what others think and feel. We have a duty to use what we have developed in our spiritual exercises for the benefit of all.

Nations, races, clans and families have played a valuable role in our passing from humanity as a once-homogenous whole without individuation, to becoming a collection of free, stand-alone individuals. As free individuals we may choose to see and live in the true realization of our unity in Life Spirit, and when we do so, it is voluntary. As we do that, we dissolve nations, creeds and all other barriers to free, loving unity. Along the way we must reverse our inverted materialistic evaluation. We must uplift where we have drawn ourselves down along with the Earth.

We have purchased our relationship to the Earth, at the high price of blinding materialism. Now we must be responsible for what we own, and we must tend to its needs. The Rosicrucian philosophy teaches us that it is our eventual duty and privilege to levitate and guide the Earth in its evolutionary path. To do that, we must build our individual and collective soul bodies with the soul being the stuff of the “new kingdom,” the new etheric globe. We do this every time we do something altruistically from the goodness of our hearts. We do this with emphasis in our healing services when we transduce Life Spirit into usable etheric healing force. These are actions we can take, but we must also change our attitudes about matter and the Earth. Christ said, “...my kingdom is not of this world.” He also told us that the Kingdom Of Heaven is like a pearl of great price which can only be purchased with an attitude of selling all that we have, individually and collectively, while still maintaining the responsibility and coming to the realization that, “The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof.”

Adding to the Confusion?

Max Heindel made a bold statement when he said the Great Pyramid, Cheops, at Giza was 250,000 years old. That is more than 50 times older than archeologists currently believe. Archeologists use historical and chemical analysis; Max Heindel used the Memory of Nature. Whom do we believe? Though we, as aspiring Christian Mystics, trust Max Heindel, the world would consider his statements wild speculation, the stuff that dreams are made of. The one exception might be the researchers who study the orientation of ancient monuments relative to the pole shift, whose agreement would also be considered speculation.

Many volumes about the Great Pyramid and its construction have been written. Some have speculated that it was a tomb, others that it was an astronomical observatory. There is abundant evidence for the latter. At least one Christian Mystic has speculated that it was Solomon's Temple. The Bible tells us the plan for the Temple came from heaven. In the Rosicrucian Christianity Lectures Max Heindel tabulates several earth-relevant astronomical measurements built into its dimensions—a plan from heaven. Many more have been found since then. Interestingly, the dimensions of the Ark of the Covenant given in the Bible would have it fit perfectly into the so-called coffer in the King's Chamber. If an Ark were built according to the specifications of the Bible, and it was placed into the coffer, scientists have estimated it would act as an electric capacitor generating from 500 to 700 volts. This would be enough to kill anyone who touched it (as warned of in the Bible). There would also be an energetic glow between the wing tips of the Cherubim, an etheric counterpart to the spiritual Shekinah Glory.

Max Heindel and Madam Blavatsky claim the Great Pyramid was a temple of initiation. The former claims it was built in Atlantean times, though he does not say whether early or late in the Atlantean Epoch. If true, the Great Pyramid would have served as a two-way temple of initiation. The Atlanteans had a type of inner clairvoyant vision but their eyes were not well opened to the external world. In those times the vanguard of humanity was initiated into the outer physical world. This is said to have been done by having them build the inner forces, which they could see clairvoyantly, into the physical edifice. For example, when the ventilation tubes were opened it was found that there is a constant temperature and air pressure in the King's Chamber, no matter

what the outer conditions. The temperature and pressure happen to be exactly what physiologists have found to be ideal for the human body.

Our current situation is opposite to that of those Atlanteans. We can perceive the outer world excellently, but most cannot see into the inner worlds. To advance, we need to reawaken inner world awareness. Until the time of Christ, the Great Pyramid was used for that purpose, because the intense etheric focus (the word pyramid literally means fire in the center) helped to take individuals out of their dense physical bodies and into their etheric bodies while in [a] trance. A brief description of the process from Madam Blavatsky is given in the Rosicrucian Christianity Lectures. Many people throughout history, including Napoleon Bonaparte, have had astounding inner experiences while spending significant spans of time in the King's Chamber. Since the coming of Christ, entrancement and the pyramid are no longer needed for initiation. All that is necessary is soul power, self-control, and abundant, unimpeachable love.

While we are on the subject of pyramid speculation, it is a good time to carry it farther on the way to our theme. If the dating for the Great Pyramid given by Max Heindel is correct, the Great Pyramid could also be another biblical edifice. It could have been the Tower of Babel.

As we passed through the Lemurian Epoch, we were said to have been a unified humanity. Even early in the Atlantean Epoch we were more unified than discrete. We could see into the soul of another, much as our current animals do. Humanity had innocent kinship and comradeship as can still be found in some primitive peoples. Egoism was still undeveloped, and our focus was more inward. We needed individuation to become free beings. We needed to creatively experience the external world, in which we were perceptibly separate, that we were plunging ourselves into so deeply since our fall. In the way that building the Great Pyramid was part of our initiation into the outer world, part of the work of our individuation was accomplished in building the Tower of Babel.

Individuation from a unified whole does not occur in one step, any more than a boulder is turned into dust by one blow from a sledge hammer. First, there are large pieces which become smaller and smaller until they turn into discrete atoms of dust. The large pieces in the individuation process were both

biological and cultural. Some call the former, races, the likes of which are not to be found on earth any longer because the individuation process has gone so far, that such tight control by Divine Hierarchies is no longer necessary, and is even counter-effective. Even the cultural side of the process is being rapidly diluted. Originally, we were brought through races and cultures to receive specific types of experiences. Descending progressively deeper into matter meant that we could no longer experience something from all points of view simultaneously, as one can do in the desire world. We had to experience specific things, and we had to do so sequentially through rebirth. Some liken the parallel biological groupings and cultures to a spectrum through which we have progressed sequentially. This writer finds it more helpful to view them as tools to ultimate destiny as complete beings. We use a spade for one purpose, a hoe for another, and harvesting shears for another, when we raise crops. Together they are all necessary to make a garden, and each is uniquely necessary.

The spiritual hierarchies that guided us used strict biological and cultural control to ensure that we received exactly the experience we needed. In the past, intermarriage outside of the biological group was a capital crime; now, as we are voluntarily uniting as free individuals to create a unified humanity to work together, intermarriage is encouraged. The Hierarchies controlled every significant aspect of culture. In those times, diet, attire, the arts and, especially, language were part of a tightly-bound culture. Language was particularly important because it involved breath speaking. It was through the breath that the Spiritual Hierarchies controlled their charges. Even as late as classical Greece, a repulsive barbarian was someone who didn't speak Greek, not someone who was biologically different.

Consequently, it is not difficult to see that the individuation was increasing, at the same time that we were being initiated into the chemical subdivision of the physical world, as we now know it, through the building of the Great Pyramid. In this, there would be the beginning of a confusion of languages because individuation was occurring at different rates in different cultures and sub-cultures over the extended period of construction. Thus, the story of the Tower of Babel in Genesis 11 is not merely a story about punishing humanity for arrogance in building a tower to reach to heaven. Egoism there was, but the initiation into the material world and differentiation into cultures was necessary, with or without arrogance.

Coming into matter was always part of the plan for us. Coming into matter as deeply and blindly as we have, and with such egoism and arrogance, was not. The potential for sin was always present in the divine plan, else there would not have been the option for freedom that we have. Taking that option did give us a wonderful freedom, but at a high price. Part of that price was the weight of unnecessary excess.

In addition to becoming valuable individuals, we have, in excess, also become personal beings—we take things personally. We even have personal, subjective meanings for words. What might be an objective word for one, could be a personally loaded word for another. In this we have what could be called trash-can words. They are words with all sorts of meanings, personal and impersonal, thrown into them, much as we throw all sorts of things into trash cans. In spiritual and theological matters, “soul” is such a word. To some, it means a divine individuality. In the Aristotelian sense, it means everything between the dense physical body and the threefold spirit. Christian mystics use soul as the essence of experience, the product of the spiritualization of various grades of matter by vigorous interaction with them — the food for the becoming spirit. These are just a few of the more objective meanings, to say nothing of the multitude of subjective or personal meanings. Sometimes we do not have a clear understanding of our beliefs, we have not thought them out to their conclusions. We accept sets of words without distinguishing their meanings, and expect that others will experience them in the same way that we do. Often it doesn't work out that way, so it is imperative to us to clarify what we mean when we use words or sets of words, if we want to share the Christian Mysticism from which we derive so much benefit.

The purpose of this essay is to explore and clarify the spiritual realities to which some words point. The purpose is NOT, by any means, to define the words once and for all. At this time in our history to do that is not possible, and it would be foolish to try it, it would only add to the confusion. Specific words and phrases from our specialized vocabulary will be used, but it must be borne in mind, that in our times, those words might have other meanings for other people; we must be mindful of that, if we wish to share. Even Max Heindel used these words in different ways at various places in his writings, but he was always clear about his meaning. We are seeking meaning, not a dogmatic definition of terms. If one understands meaning clearly, one can

choose or use words appropriately, to share the meaning according to circumstance.

The first set of words we will consider is “virgin birth.” Please remember we are seeking meaning, we are not trying to define doctrine.

Several pre-Christian societies professed saviors born from virgin birth. Their conceptions on virgin birth are not likely to be the same as ours because human consciousness was different then. They did not have science and the scientific method. Their cultural consciousness was founded in myth, astrology and other vehicles of understanding, in accordance with the lingering clairvoyance of those times. Even their conception of the known world was bounded by their common experience, not the entire earth and all of humanity. A savior was one who was to redeem their society from the decadence and moral lapse that had crept into their way of life over time — a renewer of the golden age of the past.

Christ, as understood in Christian Mysticism, came to redeem all of humanity of Earth, and to lead us to a new golden age in the future. Even Christ was born in accordance with that mytho-astrological model. In Christian Mysticism we are taught that Christ, the archangelic Sun spirit, is reborn in the Earth every Christmas Eve. In recent millennia, in the northern hemisphere, where most of the great religions have been born, the celestial virgin is on the eastern horizon at midnight on Christmas Eve. To an ancient astrologer this would mean a kind of virgin birth. In fact, all of the figures of the Gospel’s nativities can be seen in the constellations aloft in the heavens at that time: the wise men, the sheep, the cattle, and so on. Those who are striving to be Christs-in-the-making know and aspire to live according to the purity and service indicated by the sign Virgo, the virgin. They have those ideals ascending in their lives, for them to be born again in Christ through initiation.

Even a mild experience of the Christ in one’s life, has one born again. The term for that second or spiritual birth, with or without initiation, is palingenesis. Palingenesis is a form of virgin birth, but it is not what most people mean by the words “virgin birth,” and it is not what Christian mystics mean by those words.

Palingenesis is more about the birth part of virgin birth. Most doctrinal con-

fusion and controversy is about the virgin part. Clarification of the virgin part can be arrived at by asking “virgin to what?”

For most conventional religious people, the answer to that question would be virgin to sexual intercourse. There is a word for that, too. It is parthenogenesis. Spontaneous parthenogenesis does occur in ticks, some birds, some reptiles such as Komodo Dragons, and a few other species. Scientists are usually too cautious to say that something is outright impossible, but they come as close as possible to saying that with regard to parthenogenesis in mammals. The possibility in humans is even less likely and, even if it was possible, some of the biological conditions for such an occurrence are not palatable to religious proponents of this view of virgin birth. If it was the case with the Virgin Mary and Jesus, Jesus would have to have been a woman. Moreover, it would have been more likely, but still nigh unto impossible, if Mary had some male biological characteristics. There is also a strong possibility that Jesus would have some biological distortions.

This subject is one of the most irreconcilable differences between materialistic science and materialistic religion. The former sees only materialistic laws of nature as far as we know them now, without the possibility of a spiritual meaning or the possibility of change in the laws of nature. The latter group takes scripture, which is often sacred myth containing spiritual truths that cannot be stated didactically, as literal, with a common sensical, materialistic belief about the nature of reality.

To try to understand the theological doctrine of the word virgin in “virgin birth,” let’s look to the Bible. When we do that, we immediately confront problems of authority, authenticity, and interpretation. There are many Gospels. Only four of them are canonical or sanctioned: the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. The earliest existing, large fragments of any of the Gospels are from 125 to 250 A.D., i.e., after the gospelers had passed on. There is a hypothesis that the synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke) came from one original document in Aramaic. Significant inconsistencies between the synoptic Gospels make this hypothesis seem unlikely.

There is an Aramaic New Testament called the Peshitta, but research indicates that it is Aramaic translated from Greek and not an original Aramaic document. Thus, if the Peshitta was the source of the synoptic Gospels, it

would add another level of translation, another chance for error to enter in.

Translation presents its own problems. It is psychologically improbable that translation can occur without interpretation. Interpretation introduces personal biases which are so subtle that most go unnoticed. As Max Heindel puts it, we are always looking through our own auras, which means we are always looking through our own biases—strong motivation for objective purity in truth seekers. Then, there is translation into English, a different kind of language than the earlier languages used in scriptures. One sardonic wag summarized this problem in the statement “If English was good enough for Jesus, it is good enough for me.”

Fifteen different translations into English, including from the Peshitta, were used in forming the statements in this essay, but with only minimal scholarship.

Christian Mystics have a different view of the Gospels than that of conventional Christianity. To mystics, the Gospels are not meant to be biography or history. There are biographical and historical elements in them, but the purpose of them is neither, per se. The Gospels are formulae for Christian Mystical initiations for four different types of people. There may be more. The individuals to whom the Gospels are attributed could have written in the style of biography or history if they had chosen, but they didn't. For example, St Luke was a physician. Some of their contemporaries, such as Flavius Josephus, wrote as historians, and the difference in style is obvious. Initiatory formulae are as much myth as straight-forward physical description. Myth, to a mystic, is a form capable of conveying sacred, transcendental truths, not possible to be conveyed in ordinary language. They speak to the soul, so to speak.

Another important matter in this is the purity of the Gospels as they now exist. They have been altered with both good and bad intent. Not all of the contaminations of the original intent were the result of unconscious bias. There have been intentional interpolations and omissions for doctrinaire and other reasons. On the other hand, there have been beneficent emendations, e.g., several distinctly Rosicrucian and Masonic symbols can be found on the title page of the first edition of the King James version. The Temple Service of the Rosicrucian Fellowship tells us that the Recording Angels give us exactly

what we need for our development — and that includes the Bible. With all of the above in mind, what are we to trust in the Bible? Perhaps only an inner reading of the Bible by one who has well set up the internal, intuitive tribunal of truth can answer that.

In the canonical Gospels there are only two direct references to “virgin birth.” They are Matthew 1:18 and Luke 1:35. Matthew 1:18 (KJV) tells us “Mary was betrothed to Joseph but before they came together, she was found to be with child of the Holy Ghost.” One version actually says she was a virgin and that she became pregnant through the power of the Holy Ghost, which is clearly as much doctrine as translation. There are several phrases in this that need to be clarified if we want to be clear about what we mean by virgin birth in Christian Mysticism relative to the Bible. One such phrase is “she was found to be with child of the Holy Ghost,” or similarly, “she was a virgin and became pregnant through the power of the Holy Ghost.” As Christian Mystics, we know that this cannot be taken literally with regard to the physical world. We know the Holy Ghost as Jehovah. Jehovah is the Highest Initiate of the Highest Initiate class of the angelic life wave. As such, Jehovah does not have a dense physical body and has never had a such chemical body. Therefore, this phrase must mean something other than a literal, somatic, sexual union with Jehovah.

There are several possible symbolical or allegorical interpretations which are not mutually exclusive. One of these interpretations is simple, completely allegorical, and dear to Christian Mystics. In it, Joseph represents the head, Mary, the heart, and their union produces an experience of the Holy Ghost. The Christ child is planted in the heart and the unified being, the becoming Christ, rides off on the lower nature symbolized as an ass. It is dear to us who are trying to unfold and grow spiritually by living out the Christ ideal following the formula given in the Gospel. It is something to which we can relate without a lot of doctrine. Serendipitously, this allegory also agrees well with Luke 1:35. More on conception by the Holy Ghost will be offered farther on. For now, it is enough to state that, as lovely as this simple allegory is, it ignores the lineage of Jesus through Joseph given in both Matthew and Luke. This raises serious questions. If Jesus was conceived exclusively by the Holy Ghost and was of a virgin birth, why even mention Joseph at all?

Then there is the anomaly of two different lineages. The lineage of Joseph in

Matthew is different from the lineage in Luke. It cannot be explained away as a simple mistake. This difference has perplexed many, especially since the ancient Hebrews were so scrupulous about lineages. Some have gone so far as to say there were two different families of Mary, Joseph and Jesus. Elaborate occult explanations, which are not always consistent in content, have been offered along the lines of this thesis. They are fascinating, but Max Heindel states clearly and unambiguously that a thorough reading of the Memory of Nature indicates that there was one Jesus, so we are still left with the question, "Why two lineages?"

The answer to that question brings us back to the purpose of the Gospels. The Gospels are formulae for initiation for different types of people. The generations given in Genesis and the Gospels are quasi-historical at most. If the Temple was the Great Pyramid, as speculated earlier, and not the Temple in Jerusalem, which came much later, it would require many, many more generations to span the time from then until Joseph. There are not even enough generations in the given lineages of Joseph to cover the time from the Temple of David in Jerusalem to the birth of Joseph.

In Christian Mysticism the interpretation of the generations is that they represent changes in the evolution of consciousness. The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception and other writings of Max Heindel show this clearly. The initiations of the Mysteries are awakenings to definite states of consciousness implanted in our becoming being by divine, creative hierarchies at earlier stages in the evolutionary creation. Even before we are initiated, we experience the truth of this. What we conceive the mysteries to be now, is not what we conceived them to be when we entered the path. Thus, we may see the generations must be something other than biological generations, and that they more likely represent stages of inner development on the way to initiation, on the way to mystical birth of the Christ within.

After this very rough perusal of the Gospels with regard to virgin birth, we are left with two issues about virgin birth still to be resolved. One is the part of Joseph in virgin birth, and the other is the part of Jehovah, the Holy Ghost, in that same activity.

In trying to understand the part of Joseph, we come back to the same question, "Virgin to what?" In Matthew 1:18 we find the words "before they came

together, she was found with the child of the Holy Ghost.” Superficial readers and translators take the words, “before they came together,” to mean before sexual coition, which would mean absolute sexual virginity. Other interpreters, with less need to defend a doctrine, interpret those words as “before they came to live together” — a great difference. Without trained clairvoyance it is not clear which alternative set of words is true, but at least one interpretation leaves an opening for something other than absolute sexual virginity. In any case, the question, “Why the lineage of Joseph?” seems to indicate the latter of these two translations.

Luke 1:34, at the annunciation, has Mary saying “How shall this be seeing that I know not a man?” — which would again imply absolute sexual virginity. Again, even without interpretation, which might introduce bias, there is a problem of translation. In this case, the problem of translation seems to rest on the infinitive “to know.” In contemporary English, knowledge involves conscious experience, especially sensory experience. Words in biblical language sometimes have different meanings than they do in common usage. “To know,” is one of those cases. It goes back to the Adam and Eve story in Genesis. Adam is told by Jehovah, “But of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it.” This commandment was given before the creation of Eve, so this use of “knowledge” is about more than sexual coition. When Eve does arrive and Adam “knows” her and she conceives Cain. It is clear that the knowledge indicated is what is called “carnal knowledge.”

In the Rosicrucian philosophy we are taught that the Garden of Eden story is semi-symbolic and that it refers to a time in the Lemurian epoch. At that time, our consciousness was more inward than outward, as mentioned earlier, and we knew each other inwardly more than outwardly. Only in extreme sensory experience, such as touching lava, were we outwardly aware. Sexual coition was such an extreme experience, and in it we knew each other outwardly. However, there is much more to the story than carnal knowledge. It involved “knowledge of good and evil.” Sexual coition for procreation to share the experience of this world with our progeny, surely cannot be evil. If we so consider it, we come to absurd doctrines as the notion that we are all conceived in evil and are doomed to sin. There is an original sin that brought us knowledge of good and evil but it was not sexual coition, per se. It was sexual coition in disobedience, in ignorance of cosmic law, and in selfishly seeking immortality; selfish seeking of pleasure came later.

Carnal knowledge is sensory knowledge. The autonomic nervous system in both males and females play a necessary part in insemination. Both involve tactile sensation, so it fits both the ancient and modern definitions of knowledge. The sensation is pleasurable. However, pleasure is not the problem, it is the attitude about pleasure that is the problem. As we are now, it is a problem with all sensory experience, but not so much with the impersonal senses — sometimes called senses at a distance; i.e., seeing and especially hearing. The problematic attitude is selfish, self-indulgence.

There is a parallel problem with eating that may be helpful to understand this. Eating can be a pleasurable experience and it should be, because if we don't enjoy our food, it will not nourish us as well as when we do. It is when we indulge in the pleasure of taste for its own sake, that we are misdoing. Some things are eaten exclusively for pleasure without regard to nutrition or natural appetite.

In sexual coition it is possible to be aware of sensory pleasure but not selfishly indulge in it. It is a high ideal, but one can be virgin to sexual self-indulgence. This is possible if the divine nature of the sacred, creative energy involved is kept in consciousness. This is possible, if one knows that one is unselfishly fulfilling the purpose of sex in sharing ongoing existence on earth, where we do our most important work at this time in evolution. At one time, this sacrament was celebrated in a spiritual rhapsody in temples, to provide vehicles for special incoming beings. This is the ideal of generative purity taught by the Rosicrucian Fellowship. The answer to the question, "Virgin to what?" is, to the Rosicrucian aspirant, "virgin to selfish, self-indulgence."

If that is the answer, why is there mention of "the child of the Holy Ghost" and "the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee"? Again, one can appeal to the simple allegory mentioned earlier about Mary, Joseph and the ass, and the birth of spiritual Self, the microcosmic Holy Ghost or Spiritual Ego, but that is not enough to explain the words, "conceived by the Holy Ghost." Max Heindel tells us the moment of conception is the moment when the sperm, which contains the seed atom of the incoming physical body, unites with the ovum, which contains the seed atom of the incoming vital body. This is an important moment, a significant starting point. Because of that importance, it is usually attended to and brought about by Angels, working through the

ethers, who are in charge of generation. As this writer understands it, in special cases the conception is brought about by the highest of the Angels, Jehovah, the Holy Ghost. This is one meaning of “conceived by the Holy Ghost” in Christian Mysticism.

This brings us to another set of words that are surrounded by much misunderstanding and controversy, and which also have several meanings. This set of words is “immaculate conception.” To most conventional Christians it means the same thing as “conceived by the Holy Ghost” or “virgin birth.” Even Max Heindel sometimes uses them that way. As stated earlier, none of these terms is standardized, nor can they be at this time. In the history of mysticism, “immaculate conception” has a far greater meaning. Conception, in this case, is used more like it is used in the word, Cosmo-Conception. In this usage, a conception is an idea. Ideas transcend the concrete worlds. To be technical, ideas exist in the abstract subdivision of the world of thought. In this usage, the concrete worlds are considered incomplete and imperfect, (unlike the way abstract mathematics are perfect), so they are not immaculate.

Our spiritual Self, or spiritual Ego, is an immaculate conception of the Spiritual Hierarchies during involution. Early western mystics often studied mathematics, and used mathematical figures to represent transcendental spiritual things. The figure used to represent immaculate conception was an equilateral tetrahedron pointing downward. The upper triangle represented a threefold being and the lower point represented its manifest focus, an idea. This is a greater meaning of “immaculate conception” in inner consciousness. This usage is not fashionable in our times but, historically, it is important and it is still a source of insight for those contemplating mathematics spiritually, as recommended by Max Heindel to rise above or transcend petty emotions and desires. This use of “immaculate conception” is mentioned to avoid confusion in those who might encounter it in their studies.

There is one confusion of words in biblical translation and interpretation that, to this writer’s knowledge, only Max Heindel points out. This set of words is “the only begotten son.” Max Heindel states it as “the alone begotten son.” In the fourteen translations used for this essay, each of them says “only begotten.” This writer does not read ancient Greek, and the original Aramaic version (if there is one) is lost to all but those who can read in the Memory

of Nature, so this is almost impossible to authenticate. However, there is internal biblical evidence to support Max Heindel and refute the others. There are four places in the Gospels where the words translated as “only begotten” appear. The first pair is in John 1. John 1:14 describes the “only begotten” as “full of grace and truth.” Both grace and truth are primary attributes of the Life Spirit, the home of Christ (not Jesus). The Life Spirit is also known as the Word in both conventional and mystic Christianity. The other verse, John 1:18 describes the “only begotten” as the one “which is in the bosom of Father, he hath declared him” in the way that the will of the Divine Spirit commanded the love-wisdom of the Life Spirit at the dawn of the creation. Christian Mysticism teaches us that the Life Spirit is an expression of the Divine Spirit, home of the Father which declared it as the “Word” or, in other words, “in the bosom of the Father.” The Greek word translated as “only begotten” is monogenous which means “one begotten.” These verses describe something purposefully declared within the Divine Spirit, the first principle represented by the Father, without external assistance; therefore, begotten alone. Moreover, John 1:11 tells us “But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God.” Clearly, there are to be many “sons of God,” if there are not already, not just one only. This is just one of many instances of the clarity and consistency of the Rosicrucian philosophy, from which we derive edification and avoid many theological errors.

In the Rosicrucian philosophy we are taught to apply the principle of analogy, which is expressed in the Hermetic Axiom, “As above, so below...,” to everything in life. Max Heindel tells us that our ability to analogize truly is an indicator of our spiritual unfoldment. It even applies to the purpose of this essay, to clarify what we mean by our words. One universal principle of analogy is the triune principle of manifestation best known in the trinity. Its objectivity is easily understood in mathematics. In simple geometry the least number of straight lines capable of producing an object in a space of any number of dimensions is three. That object or figure is a triangle. This mathematical analogy demonstrates in a simple principle how the Universal Spirit manifests in our evolutionary creation. In cosmogony the Divine Spirit is manifest first, followed by the Life Spirit and then the Human Spirit. These macrocosmic states of spiritual being and Beings are represented, in epitome, by participants in the creation: The Father, The Son, and the Holy Ghost. The character of the Father is invisible power, the character of the Son, also known as the word, is expression of the intent of the Father, and the Holy

Ghost represents the individuated Being of the godhead, the specific being which activates things. The prayer for the Holy Ghost in the Lord's Prayer is "hallowed be thy name." This triune principle even applies to how we communicate, express and share the marvelous philosophy given to us. In verbal sharing, definitions, words and names correspond analogously to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, respectively. The deeper we pass into concrete manifestation, the more we are subject to the possibility of error. Names are specific and denotative but they are also likely to personal bias. Words are expressions of divine intent but, as we have seen, we have managed to contaminate them in the babel of our subjective personalization. We see this in how the words of Christ, the Word, have been quibbled into denominations and sects. It is only when we approach the ever invisible, but purely universal, intent of the Father, the Definer and Definition, that we near the truth whether it be found in simple facts or ideas. As truth seekers it is our duty to always try to find the invisible meaning of things as clearly as possible in order to have something true and valuable to share.

What's in It for Me?

Max Heindel often quoted Goethe. One of his favorites was from Faust:

“From every pow’r that holds the world in chains,
Man frees himself, when self-control he gains.”

Freedom, a state of being we all long for, but do we do what is necessary to attain it? Our spiritual exercises are a means to freedom. In performing our exercises, we not only develop the self-control mentioned in the quote, we also have a gauge of our success or lack thereof. When we turn inward everything is meaningful and sacred. If, when we are in a state of prayer or meditation, unwanted thoughts and desires enter our consciousness and divert us from the object of our attention, we are not free. We are the prisoners of thought and desire habits. To the degree that we can focus our attention where we want it, to the degree that we can keep our stream of consciousness pure, to that degree are we free. “When thy eye is single, the whole body is full of light.” This is internal freedom, but what about freedom from “every pow’r that holds the world in chains,” external freedom?

New aspirants to the spiritual path often misunderstand its nature. There are expectations of spectacular psychic fireworks, and dramatic demonstrations of powers. The reality is that the spiritual path is a path of increasing subtlety, not sensationalism. At first, we think we know ourselves, and are in control of ourselves. We soon learn otherwise. As time goes on, and we apply ourselves to what we intuitively know to be better living, we see things differently. We see the inner adversary as almost unbelievably cunning and subtle; even some of what we believed were our most blessed intentions, turn out to not be as beneficent as we thought them to be. As Shakespeare, in one of his sonnets, puts it:

“What wretched errors hath my heart committed,
Whilst it hath thought itself so blessed never!”

Self-mastery is at least as demanding as any other kind of mastery. Subtlety is also as important regarding powers that “hold the world in chains,” as it is to inner freedom. Since the time of the ancient Greek mystery schools, aspirants have been admonished to “know thyself.” The admonishment applies to both the within and the without. Many do not take the time to know

themselves. Consequently, when a thought comes into consciousness, many cannot distinguish whether it is their own, or another's. Hypnotists and propagandists take advantage of the power of suggestion in thoughts and feelings. If we were to tell almost anyone of almost any nation that they were under the influence of a national spirit, which influences and directs many aspects of their lives, we would not be believed. Subtlety. But if an issue of patriotism arose, that same individual would be fervently patriotic, believing their patriotic sentiment came from them, and them only. As sure as there is a national character and a national patriotism, there is a guiding nationality spirit. Along the same line of thinking in our time, White Supremacists are certain they are intrinsically better than people of color, and that it is not a matter of prejudice.

Spiritual beings, such as nationality spirits are, not the only factor curtailing our freedom. Even our physical environment influences what we become. A mountain man is bound to be different from the same man reared in a tropical rain forest. However, the natural physical environment is not inherently inimical and inhibiting to the attainment of freedom. It is just one of almost infinite evolutionary conditions, each of which brings out another facet of infinite possibility in the spirit. It is morally neutral.

The psychic environment is another matter. Nationality spirits, and the spirits of religions, are part of the psychic environment. There are too many other components to the psychic environment, which is in a constant state of flux, to enumerate them. One component is of supreme importance to us. It is our human contribution. We influence one another directly and indirectly through the psychic environment. We care about what others think of us, just as others care about what we think of them. Social pressure, specific and general, is enormously powerful. Almost no one is so self-reliant, and so self-secure, as to be free from it. Peer pressure and its resultant conformity is usually a direct influence in the psychic environment.

There are also indirect influences. Fads and styles are examples of indirect influences. A style may have an individual originator, but it takes on a general life of its own as more people espouse it. Fads and styles are short-lived. Some cultural attitudes linger in the psychic environment for generations or even centuries. Cultural attitudes can be morally beneficent or malevolent. Unless we are free, we are influenced, for better or worse, by cultural atti-

tudes, whether we are aware of them or not. Few are sufficiently sensitive to tune in directly to cultural attitudes in the psychic environment. Nonetheless, anyone can be aware of them in their outward manifestations. Colloquialisms are some of the most common outward manifestations. It is easy to be ensnared by them, because many of them are clever and, in our egoism, we pride ourselves in the appreciation of cleverness. There are many kinds of colloquialisms. Some have endured from the time of Shakespeare, e.g., “tomorrow never comes.” Some contain several cultural attitudes. “My dollar is as green as anyone else’s” expresses both pride and materialism. Selfishness is one of the most nasty and pervasive attitudes in the psychic background. When asked to do something, the response is often “what’s in it for me?” Selfishness is likely the most inhibitive attitude to freedom. It was the selfish desire for immortality that caused us to fall into the bondage of sin we find ourselves in.

We are seeking spiritual freedom “from every pow’r that holds the world in chains.” Spiritual freedom is expressed in different ways and degrees. The freedom in the Goethe quote is freedom “from.” Freedom “from” is elective freedom. One can choose or elect to not be enchained. We say the United States is a free country because we elect our government. A deeper way and degree of freedom is the freedom “to.” Freedom “to” is creative freedom. In freedom “to” we create in the psychic environment. It is a service, an important human service. The service of the minerals is providing form, the service of the vegetable kingdom is vitality, the service of the animal kingdom is desire, and the service of humans is thinking. In thinking, the spirit expresses itself in all forms of matter.

Freedom “to” is the very nature and duty of Spirit. Creator is synonymous with God, the Spirit. As trained thinkers and prayers, it is our divine duty to ourselves, to add positive, pro-evolutionary contributions to the psychic environment. Ever since we have been able to precipitate our first thought, our first expression of creative freedom, we have been responsible for our freedom. We have polluted the psychic environment more than the physical environment. It is our duty to redeem our misdoings. We do this by creatively transforming the negatives of our deeds into positives. To have the full post-mortem experience of the desire world as a first heaven, with no purgatory, is a worthy goal.

Before we can contribute positively to the ongoing creation through the psychic environment, we must know what it is. This can be done by simple intuition which never fails but, as children of fire, we know that it is much better to not only know what is true, but to also know why and how it is true. Rosicrucian students begin by observation and discrimination. This activity, too, can be simple. One glimpse of a continent of plastic floating on the Pacific Ocean, which eventually kills life forms, is sufficient. One experience of a destructive, negative attitude disrupting and spoiling a previously harmonious group activity is equally obvious. We can take heart in the fact that doing the obvious right thing opens one to more subtle and complicated things. Soul growth is a slow and careful activity, and it is so because perfection is its goal. It is heartening to know this also, but it is so much more spiritually gratifying and efficient, to have a method harmonious to the workings of the cosmos in doing it. That is what the Rosicrucian philosophy is, and it is why we study it. So, as aspirants, we ask ourselves, “how do we know what to do about the pollution of the psychic environment?”

Much of the Rosicrucian philosophy evolved out of the ancient mystery schools, particularly those of the ancient Greeks. We learn from Plato, an Orphic initiate, that it is best to refer things to the macrocosm for accuracy. That is what we do when we pray. As the old hymn says, “take it to the Lord in prayer.” This works intellectually, as well as devotionally. For us, the macrocosm is the threefold spirit expressed in the Holy Trinity. The Greek mystery schools had a simple means for characterizing the threefold spirit. Simply put, the characteristics of the threefold spirit were truth, beauty and goodness. Truth represented the third attribute, and the equivalent is found in Christianity where the Holy Ghost is known as “the Spirit of Truth.” Beauty represented the second, the love-wisdom attribute which we associate with our loving Savior, love being the basis of beauty. Goodness represented the attribute of the first and deepest aspect of the threefold spirit. This last association is not always so obvious in Christianity except in the passage of St. John’s Gospel wherein Christ refers to carrying out the will of the Father which is unspeakably good.

From the above we see that, if we want to know what the right or the best thing to do is, our observations and actions must be founded in

the good as deeply as we can understand it. This way of looking for the good is a little different than Rosicrucian aspirants usually conceive it, but it is no less important.

One doesn't have to look very far to find the intrinsic good in the cosmos. One example can be found in the principle of attraction in the desire world. According to that principle, self-sacrificing love attracts, while self-assertive grasping repulses. Suppose a salesperson wants to attract more customers and tries to do so by expressing love. It would not work because the self-seeking intent would be repulsive. Intrinsic goodness. If the salesperson really cared about the client, the result would be different. The principle of attraction is founded on the principle of cause and consequence which is, itself, inherently good. Consequences inhere in causes. If one tries to "play" destiny by acting with the motive to have a more pleasant rebirth in the future, the selfishness taints the act, and it must come out in the consequences.

The beauty of Christ, and the Life Spirit, is within its common character. The core of that character is caring for the other. St. John's Gospel states this repeatedly. Christ carries out the will of the Father but also cares for the individuals, all of us, given to him by the Father. The Life Spirit is the ultimate other. St. Paul tells us, "the end of the law is love." The purpose of the law is to bring us to love, and to bring love to us. This latter function it carries out in abundance. "I come to bring you life more abundant." Life Spirit transcends Human Spirit, so it is beyond the limiting ring of selfhood. Because of this, when we act for the Christ's sake, for the Ultimate Other, we partake of the unlimited love, the love that is spoon-fed by the law.

The least experience of this love, as grace, is life-changing beyond words. Even seeing only the effects of it in others is a moving experience. This writer once knew a young man with a problem that would be a blessing to anyone. His complaint was, "I cannot sacrifice." He said something to the effect of "Every time I try to do something with no return in mind, I am blessed beyond belief." That is a problem we would all be blessed to have.

The character of Life Spirit is manifest in Christ. The act of Christ, in taking on human experience, is a stupendous sacrifice. It was not in the divine plan. Our sin in choosing the option of going against the divine plan was also not in the plan, and it required the sacrifice of Christ to offer us the possibility

of redemption through the grace of Life Spirit, if we accept it. That sacrifice was not without commensurate reward, a reward of cosmic scale. Exactly what that reward was is not clear among writers on Christian Mysticism. Some have stated that, because of the sacrifice, Christ was initiated into the world of the Supreme Being on the highest cosmic plane. If that were true, it would be a glorious reward of unthinkable proportion. This writer is not of sufficient spiritual development to say if that statement is true or not. Having met at least one writer who has made this claim, this writer is pretty sure that said writer could not substantiate it either, except by secondhand experience. One doesn't need to appeal to that claim to appreciate the reward from the sacrifice of Christ. There is another kind of glorious and unprecedented reward, from a much more reliable source.

From our experience of life, we know that putting forth action calls up necessary resistance. That is a simple manifestation of a cosmic principle. In the Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception we are taught that experiences of the Universal Spirit call forth resistances in matter in the evolutionary creation. The subsequent interaction between spirit and matter results in the spiritualization of matter through the generation of soul, which is absorbed and assimilated into spirit. The concrete worlds of matter called forth in the creation are part of the creative process called the materialization of spirit. The way in which the concrete worlds are called forth is called reflective projection. Reflective projection is specific in character. The will of Divine Spirit is reflectively projected into the Chemical Subdivision of the Physical World, where resistance to will is a characteristic. Life Spirit is reflectively projected into the Etheric Subdivision of the Physical World, the realm of vitality and energy, which is a reflection of spiritual life. Likewise, the Holy Spirit is projected and reflected in the Desire World. Through the lens of mind, spirit can focus and enter into matter as it does in humans. In our human microcosm this has resulted in waking self-consciousness which, as the spirit draws into its bodies, will spiritualize those bodies directly from within. St. Paul tells us we are "a peculiar people." Indeed, we are, because we alone, in this creative manifestation as threefold spirits, can awaken personally in all of the worlds of this creative manifestation. In the divine plan, the Human Spirit or Holy Ghost, was meant to, and did, awaken within its reflective projections, the Desire Body and Desire World. Jehovah did, and dooe, function in his reflectively projected Desire World. In the divine design of the evolutionary creation, the Father, representative of Divine Spirit, and Christ, the Son, repre-

sentative of Life Spirit, were never to have entered their respective, reflective projections, the chemical and etheric subdivisions of the physical world.

Life Spirit, through its representative in Christ, would never have entered into its reflective projection in the ethers, except for the sacrifice of Christ taking on the etheric vital body of Jesus and, eventually, the etheric body of the Earth. Entering intimately into one's creative projection, which previously could only be experienced in reflection, must have been a cosmic Deja vu experience of unparalleled wonder and creative satisfaction. And then, entering into chemical experience as well, must have been astounding even for Christ. Yes, there was, and is, limitation in this ongoing sacrifice, but it is not without glory, immense glory. Thomas was like our modern humanity. He wanted proof. We want proof, we want to see for ourselves. The Life Spirit through the sacrifice of Christ does see its part in the creation from within and, as indicated in the book of Genesis, it sees "it was good."

Christ offers us a way to see the Kingdom of Heaven for ourselves, if we accept it. To do so we must, as St. Paul says, become like him. It means that instead of thinking, "what's in it for me?" we must think, "what's in it for you?"

Vicarious Atonement

The 13th century ecstatic poet, Rumi, told a now-famous story about an elephant. Some Sufis needed to raise money. To do that they brought an elephant to a place where an elephant had never been seen. They brought it in during the dark of night and kept it in a darkened tent. Then they sold tickets for brief visits to experience the elephant in the tent. One man went in and came out and said the elephant is like a temple with great pillars; another said it was like the large fans used to cool the queen. Yet another said the elephant is like a giant hose. At this point in the story Rumi remarks, “What a difference a little light would make.”

In the Rosicrucian philosophy we have been given more than a little light; we have received what is like the summer sun at noon on the Sahara. It sometimes seems like everything is revealed and made clear. The reality is different for the world. The sun does not brighten things everywhere at the same time; there are dark quarters. There are also theological pillars and fans. “To whom much is given, of him much will be required.” It is our duty to bring light where there is darkness. “Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” It is ours to expose the pillars and fans for what they are in the whole of things.

One of the theological pillars that needs clarification is the “doctrine of vicarious atonement.” There are many variants of this doctrine whose names reveal their meanings. They include the ransom theory, Christ the victor theory, the recapitulation theory, the satisfaction theory, the penal substitution theory, the moral influence theory, and others. They all have one thing in common – the idea that Christ died for our sins and in that death redeemed us.

According to the findings of Christian mystical seers Christ did have to die, but it wasn't the death of Christ that gives us the blessing of the path to redemption and salvation, it is the life of Christ that does that. Mystical reasons for the necessity of death will come farther on. For now, it is more ripe to speak of the historical basis of this doctrine.

The Rosicrucian philosophy teaches that religion evolves as we evolve. In the time depicted in the Garden of Eden story, our consciousness was predom-

inantly inner. We did not need a religion. We beheld divinity, a fact echoed by St. Paul. We were then becoming aware of the without, and were only mildly aware of the taking on, and leaving off, of physical bodies. We were coming into the chemical Earth as it was forming. While we were becoming more outwardly conscious, we were losing our inward awareness. To become outward was one of the goals for us in the divine plan. To become preoccupied with the without so extensively that we lost touch with the within, and its laws, was not. We were distracted. The gradual losing of inwardness led to some insecurity in us. We were vulnerable, as we often are in periods of change. We responded by becoming more focused on the loss of our physical bodies, and the outer world. In this state we were tempted to seek immortality through reproduction of physical bodies at will. We took the temptation and rebelled against divine injunction about the sacred creative force. We did this before consciously knowing the inner laws about the creative force and its purpose. Consequently, we became out of harmony with the cosmos and its divine plan. The result was that we “fell” more deeply into matter than was intended.

In taking the sacred creative force into our volition, we were effectively declaring spiritual sovereignty from the spiritual hierarchies which previously controlled our progress. Procreative license did not satisfy our insecurity. We still needed the Divine and its guidance, so we sought spiritual connection through religion. When we declared spiritual sovereignty, the divine hierarchies had to respect that, as all divine beings do. They could no longer control us willy-nilly. They had to use other, indirect means to bring us to what we needed. One of the means to humble our burgeoning selfishness was sacrifice, in return for spiritual connection, which is exactly what the word religion means. We were asked to sacrifice our most precious possessions, animals, for divine blessing. For many thousands of years animal sacrifice was a part of religious experience. Ritual sacrifice became an integral, almost constant, component of religion.

“Blood is a peculiar essence.” Mystics and occultists know there is a power to be gained in the taking of the blood of an animal or another human. This is true whether it is done by an individual or a group. It is a power that binds those who are complicit, and, in that, freedom is sacrificed. Psychopathic murderers feel this power, and the taking of blood is a tool in the rituals of criminal and sorcerous societies. There have been cultures in which priestly

leaders held power by perverting this principle in human sacrifice.

With these things in our long history, and still present in the psychic background, one can understand how many might be inclined to see the sacrifice and crucifixion of Christ as a propitiation, a cosmic ransom, a substitution, or a ritual sacrifice, after so many millennia of conditioning. However, understanding these origins of the theological theories, and the environment from which they sprang, does not make them true. Any Christian aspirant, of any ilk, ought to be ashamed to think their religion is founded in ritual, blood sacrifice. One of the worst forms of materialism is literalism, of the kind that leads to the belief that one is literally, not symbolically or analogously, consuming flesh and blood in communion. The religion of Christ, the new religion, the religion of the Son, is a religion founded in love, not in death and blood. The old religions, the religions of Jehovah, were religions of separation unto individualism, and they were preoccupied with death. The theories of vicarious atonement seem to be reversion to bargaining with God in the fear of death, the fear that took us into the “fall” in the first place. Perhaps a perusal of the purpose of the life of Christ can help to understand the necessity for the death if it was not literally a blood sacrifice, the binding power notwithstanding.

A light perusal of the Gospels, without even going into any esoteric interpretation, is a good way to begin to understand of the incarnation of Christ. Doing that reveals that St. Johns Gospel does that much more than any of the synoptic Gospels. In St. John’s Gospel Christ frequently tells us why he came. He came to bring things to those who were in need, and who were willing to receive what he offered. The list of offerings is not very long but it is repetitious. It includes light, vision, love, peace, joy, truth and, above all, life. The gift of life, expressed in several forms, is clearly at the front of the purpose of Christ. The life is not offered in contradistinction to death, for which preoccupation it is an antidote. It is Life, per se, “abundant” life, “eternal” life, life not of this world. A simple scan of the scriptural source material for all forms of Christianity, should lay to rest notions of ransom, substitution or any other reasons for a sacrificial death. It doesn’t. One sees more crucifixes than celebrations of the life and love of Christ, as though death instead of life purges transgressions. Our continuance in spiritual blindness, instead of “light” and “vision” offered by Christ, seems to be self-perpetuating. It seems to be a stubborn persistence in materialism. We exiled ourselves from

the Garden of Eden (inner vision), and we have become accustomed to our exile — we are sensible people, literally. Like little children, we think we can get away with something if we aren't seen, and if we are caught our sins are atoned for. In that frame of mind, someone dying to remove our sins seems pleasant, and has even proven plausible to many. It doesn't work that way. We cannot escape the consequences of our deeds anymore than we can escape ourselves. To understand the remission or forgiveness of sins, even a little, it is beneficial to appeal to esoteric Christianity, to Christian Mysticism.

It must be stated *ab initio* that this subject is well beyond the bounds of a short essay. Many books have been written on the remission and forgiveness of sins, and many more will be written. It must also be stated that a deep and living understanding of the subject is also currently beyond the author of this essay. At best, this will be a little sip from the deep well that issues the water of life.

There is a pagan creation story which roughly states that darkness (invisibility) was first. The first thing created in darkness was love and the first thing love created was the law, under which all else was created. Besides roughly paralleling one of the creation stories of Genesis, this story is the inverse of St. Paul saying, "the end of the law is love." Love is the beginning and end of the law. It subtends it. Love is also an attribute of Life Spirit, the home of Christ, the Son, who represents it. All of the "I am" statements of Christ in St. John's Gospel are attributes of Life Spirit. For example, when Christ says, "I am the truth," Christ is speaking of pure truth which transcends the principles that contain it in the abstract subdivision of the world of thought, and through which principles, we currently experience truth. Central to these principles is the principle of cause and consequence, the law. The love of Life Spirit gives forth as manifest creation through the law. Creation is a manifestation of something new. Newness is another attribute of Life Spirit—"behold, I make all things new."

Under the law we get back what we gave. There is something new in the interval between cause and consequence, or there would be no change, and we know from experience that, in the actualization of events, we and the world are forever changed. One cannot go back to the ignorance antecedent to the change. In the net of causes and consequences, we occupy ourselves with the activity of the causes and consequences. Like the law, our Self is also an idea,

a divinely conceived idea, in the abstract subdivision of the world of thought. This is the same Self that was beguiled and misdirected in its infancy and innocence, at the “fall of humanity;” there was no lower nature to be culpable at that time. Thus, we were introduced to Self, selfishness, cause and consequence, and sin simultaneously. We have become preoccupied with all these things, especially in our focus deep in matter and materialism. We were meant to experience and create in matter but not so blindly, obsessively and selfishly. Something had to be done because we were on the verge of making our continuance on the Earth impossible. Our misuse of our creative power was severe.

What was done was that Christ came to live among us as one of us to offer us a way to redemption, **if we accept it**. Everything in Christ and Life Spirit is free and voluntary, including this act of Christ. Our acceptance of Christ and the way to redemption also had to be free and voluntary. Christ brought a new religion, not just a new sect, but a new order of religion. Previous religions were religions of Jehovah, of the Holy Ghost. Those religions were for individuation. The religion of Christ is the religion of the Life Spirit, of the Son. Some of what this means can be found in another essay about grace and the forgiveness of sins.

The self-proclaimed mission of Christ was not to do away with the law but to fulfill it. Without law there would be no order in the concrete cosmos. There would be no creative feedback for the Divine. The forgiveness of sins does not mean that causes will have no consequences. It means, in part, that the weight of personal heaviness is lifted. “My yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” We are freed when we live in Christ and Christ lives in us. In living the religion of Christ an internal, abundant love is perpetually injected into the causal stream. The love of Christ is supremely creative love. “They will know that you are mine in that you love one another” or “Love thine enemy.” Bringing Life Spirit into things makes everything new. It is like forgiveness between friends. The deed that necessitated forgiveness is still what it was, and it will still have consequences, but those consequences will take place in the state of clarity that is like starting with a clean state. One is no longer living under a pall of guilt. Again, the experience is like things are when one has made up with someone, and can start fresh, but, because of the love, everything is made better. The only difference in general reality from these examples is that in Christ, this attitude can be sustained, if we will it, every-

thing is new.

Whether it is by intuition or by invitation (“ask and it shall be given unto you”), with Christ everything is new. “Behold, I make all things new.” The newness of being in a state of grace means our lives become more creative. There is nothing humdrum about the Christian life. Our lives are neither prescribed nor proscribed, they are as spontaneous as we ask them to be. Lest we forget, it is easier to say these things in word, then it is to live them. In the face of onerous consequences, the asking is not always so easy. There is no promise that for Christians life, will be easy (it never has been for Christians), but with Christ it will be easier, “my yoke” Nonetheless, the vitality of trying to live the Christian life is well worth all of the duress.

Bringing the Life Spirit into our lives, brings in love. Love needs an object, something to love. The pure love of Life Spirit, the love of Christ, loves anything and everything simultaneously according to the need for love. It is universal love. With regard to humans, this means altruism. In Christ, when we act, when we initiate new causes, we do so for the sake of the other and for the sake of love, i.e., for the Christ’s sake. Living this way gets around another problem with sin, the problem of selfishness, the selfishness we have nurtured in, and since, the “fall.” Again, this is not easy, though it is certainly worthwhile, and it becomes easier as we learn to love impersonally. In trying to live this way we become vulnerable to those who are not trying to live this way, but, if we are not vulnerable to suffering, we are not vulnerable to grace. “My grace is sufficient to thee.” This statement of the matter is a bit simplistic about what is a difficult moral issue involving self-respect, and other considerations. Though simplistic, it does point to the start of a new way of life of perpetual rebirth in the moment.

Many of our human acts are single-purposed. They are done to accomplish one thing. It is not like that in spiritual things. Many things in many directions on many levels are involved in spiritual acts. The incarnation and life of Christ is like that. Its objectives and ramifications are manifold. One of those objectives relates to what is called vicarious atonement in a more macroscopic sphere of activity.

Sometimes we err in such a way that we cannot immediately atone for our transgression. Circumstances do not always allow rectification of a chain of

causes in the moment. Some causes take longer to ripen, than we have time for. Some consequences can only be harvested in certain seasons, like childhood illnesses for example. In large, this has been the case with our human destiny on Earth. Our fall into materialism is aptly described as a “fall” for its speed and precipitousness. We have many unredeemed sins, so many that some describe it as us “bearing a burden of sin.” These unrepented commissions are not only actions. Behind actions there are thoughts and desires. While actions might last for only a few moments, the thoughts and desires behind them linger for a long time, more in terms of millennia than minutes. Acts do not completely discharge thoughts and desires. They continue to have influence. They develop into an atmosphere of influence which some call the psychic background. A psychic atmosphere has great influence. It is likely that we have all experienced this. We may have participated in a group that went bad, and dark feelings lingered and spoiled, a once pleasant atmosphere so badly that the group could not recover. This example, though apt, is minuscule compared to the psychic atmosphere of the Earth after many millennia. Before Christ came the psychic background of the Earth was dark and heavy. Corruption was prevalent everywhere, even in the temples. It was so bad, the Divine Hierarchies, which guide and direct our evolutionary destiny, feared our progress could not be sustained. Something had to be done for the sake of all evolving beings on Earth. What was done is called a deed of Christ.

The evolutionary creation in which we have been blessed to participate does not happen all at once in one activity. It happens in waves. It is like the petals of a rose, some are falling off while others are beginning to form. Each evolutionary wave has unique conditions for it to pass through the stages of creation. In the world around us, we see the evolutionary waves in the mineral, vegetable and animal stages, that precede our human stage. Those who have done the work to develop spiritual vision, report there are many other waves of beings in more advanced stages. In those stages are Angels, Archangels, Lords of Mind and many others. Each wave has reached each stage under differing cosmic conditions, as the whole of the creation unfolds. Consequently, each wave has developed a specialty according to the state of being in which it attained self-consciousness, in the human-like stage, the stage of objectification. We humans have reached self-consciousness in the Chemical Subdivision of the Physical World. We are becoming masters of form in chemical matter. The current Angels reached self-consciousness during

the period before this, in the Etheric Subdivision of the Physical World, the Archangels attained self-consciousness in the period before the Angels did, and they reached it in the Desire World, and so on. Not every being in any wave puts the same amount of effort into the creative work. Some in each wave supersede the normal input and they become the Initiate Class capable of penetrating the mysteries of the creation. Among Initiates some excel so much that they go as far as one can go into the mysteries and they are called the Highest Initiate Class. One of the Highest Initiates becomes so perfect in the creative work as to become *the* Highest Initiate. That singular Highest Initiate becomes the epitome of its wave which it leads and represents. It also represents the aspect of divinity in the Creator invested in its life wave, and the substance specialized by it. Christ is the Highest Initiate of the Archangels and the being representing the second attribute of deity, the Son. Christ, when invested in form, is the living epitome of the Desire World by having created a desire body almost beyond human comprehension, especially in the attractive desires of loving and giving. It was this desire body that was brought into the psychic background of the Earth at the crucifixion. This gift has already radically changed our evolutionary environment, and will wax in influence as we learn to respond to it. This is a macrocosmic manifestation of what is called “the cleansing blood.” This cleansing blood does not remit our sins, but it does give us something new, and powerful, to creatively do that ourselves. It gave us a brighter creative atmosphere or psychic background. Creative advancements since the crucifixion are proof of this.

This gift is, in its higher aspects, called grace. The love of the higher desire world is a manifestation of the much higher love of Life Spirit. Life Spirit is the home of Christ. Life Spirit transcends the Abstract Subdivision of the World of Thought, so it transcends the law. It is free, except in the paradoxical way that love cannot help but love, in its very nature. We did not deserve the love that brightened our psychic environment. There was nothing in our stream of causes and consequences that indicated that we deserved grace and all the wondrous things that it is, and that its love can give. Christ gave us a break that we didn’t deserve. Can we do the same and receive grace by passing it on? Think about this the next time someone cuts you off in traffic.

The curious thing about freedom is that everything about it is free. “*Freely* have you received, now *freely* give.” One cannot store freedom, it must be given, it must be live, that is the way of Life Spirit. Freedom must also be

accepted freely. We must accept grace to receive it. It can be denied but one wonders who would want to. In cases of pride, it must be asked for. Before we could receive the grace of Christ, we had to accept Christ as one of us.

We humans have strange ways of accepting strangers. Some of them involve blood. The heart and blood are the seat of the Life Spirit in the human body. Thus, for example, we find the altruistic love of Life Spirit manifest in the mixing of blood. Mixing of blood is how much of the separative prejudice of races and cultures are being dissolved. Blood is mixed in other ways beyond interracial marriage, though often it more symbolic than actual. Native Americans and some Scandinavians required mixing of blood by cutting vessels and letting blood flow together to be accepted into their community. To us earthlings, Christ, manifest through the body of Jesus, was an alien, not one of us. We had to accept Christ to receive the divine gift of grace. Mortality is the defining agency of our humanity. We say things like “man is mortal.” It may seem strangely perverse to our seemingly finer sensibilities, but, by our own definition, to receive Christ among us, we had to kill Christ by killing the body of Jesus as though killing Christ. We received the greatest gift that humanity has ever been given, in our most ignominious behavior. Paradox. This should not be a surprise because paradoxical opposites unite in the truth beyond reason, in Life Spirit.

Again, many things are accomplished in one deed. Christ, the epitome of life, had to face death as any human does in order to be able to bring grace to us in our most frail need, the fear of death. Christ had never been in an etheric and a chemical body. There was something new to Christ also in the incarnation. Christ had never experienced exile in the outer world, alone and away from direct knowledge of divinity, as we do. Christ did not know the fear of death. To be able to bring grace to us in a way that we could accept and benefit from it, Christ had to experience what we experience. “Come unto me, ye who labor and are heavy laden, and I shall give you rest.” Those are words that cannot be spoken by a being that had only experienced spiritual joy. The body of Jesus had to experience human existence, and it had to die, and Christ had to experience it for our sake. There was agony on the cross as well as exaltation.

The body of Jesus had to die by the letting of blood. There is an occult principle about blood death that has been known for centuries. In the orient it is called samsara. It has been found that if the body of an individual dies

without the letting of blood, there is an attachment to the physical world. The principle seems to have something to do with the engagement of the spirit in the spiritualization of matter while working directly through the blood, but that is a topic which is too much for now. With the letting of blood the spirit and the higher vehicles can escape directly into the inner world's atmosphere without lingering attachment in engagement to a world unredeemed. Had the body of Jesus with Christ engaged in it, died of natural causes or poisoning or some other death without blood flow, Christ would have been stuck here, like us, until the end of the chemical Earth. This would have been a tragedy of colossal proportion, perhaps something as monstrous as a second "fall." It had to be by blood, a different kind of "cleansing blood."

Did Christ die for our sins? Yes, but it seems not for any of the reasons given in any of the versions of the doctrine of vicarious atonement.

In the Movies

Part two of The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception is a wonder. It is magnificent in the magnitude and majesty of its scope, and the depth of its meaning. It is engaging in the intricacy and detail of describing spirals, within spirals, within spirals. It is amazing when one considers that, with all of its depth and intricacy, it is merely a skeleton of a reality far more dense in form, and meaning.

There is a peculiarity about wonder and amazement. In such a state one is apt to dwell in awe, as if the experience of the emotion were sufficient in itself. If you do that, you neglect to ask the fundamental questions, the whys and hows, of the quest that brought you to read the Cosmo-Conception to begin with. You can feel that you don't need anything more. Contentment. As Rosicrucian aspirants we are warned about the dangers of contentment. For example, Max Heindel tells us there is no standing still in evolution. Either one is progressing or regressing. Standing still in a continuously progressing flow is regressing. In Greek mythology, Theseus, on his way to becoming a hero (an Initiate), sat in the chair of contentment in Tartarus when invited to do so by Hades, the lord of the land of the dead. He was immediately stuck. He would have remained stuck for ages had not the true hero, Heracles, pulled him out of the chair.

Christian Mysticism is an active way of life. It is to be lived, not merely studied. If we merely accept the content of the Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception and leave it at that, we are no better off than the people who accept the creed of their belief and have that as their religion for life, without question. Not only is the life of spiritual aspiration active, there is a sense of urgency about it. This chemical world, which is so important to awakening consciousness, will not be here for long. There is urgency in relieving the unnecessary suffering of so many in this world. We want to help as many as we can to awaken while we can. There is personal urgency in that we don't want to continue to do the hurtful things we have been doing for so long. Who hasn't harshly criticized a friend, for example? We even need to approach philosophical questions with a sense of urgency. It makes it easier to find answers if we really want to know, if it is important to us. "So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spew thee out of my mouth."

Why are there all of these spirals within spirals within spirals?

Sometimes the best answers are simple. This seems to be one of those times. The simple answer lies in the fact that spirit has unlimited potential character facets. Thus, in evolution, the more different conditions the spirit can be brought to experience, the more character facets it can develop to the glory of God. There are conditions about evolutionary conditions. In our evolutionary creation there is a cosmological order in which the conditions are presented, so they can best fulfill divine intent. In the Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception the cosmological order is both simple and far-fetched. Intellectual understanding of how it works, sometimes seems vague and distant; although music seems to be a good way to get the feel of it. In music, one set of thoughts and feelings in a chord, resolves into another chord of thoughts and feelings, and it feels intuitively right to our understanding. We get it.

There are other limitations about evolutionary conditions, such as one must experience a condition thoroughly enough to develop and awaken a character facet. Often this means sufficient duration, experiencing something long enough for it to take effect, for it to sink in. In evolutionary time that can be a considerable duration, millions of years, if years are even a viable unit of measurement. Some things can come in a moment, in a lifetime, or many lifetimes.

If you drive an auto across the United States, you can get a sense of the interplay of conditions and consciousness. Driving through the flat and seemingly endless Great Plains, you can get a sense of the character development of the sodbusters. In this way, you can see this with river people or mountain men and other environments, and their effect on character development. These are examples of external environmental conditions. One can also see the effect of inner conditions on character. A life lived in fear can have devastating effects on character development.

When we come to more inward and psycho-spiritual conditions, another factor comes into play. In inner things we are more active participants. We are creative free agents. We do change the outer physical environment, but not as much and as immediately as we change our inner environment. It doesn't take long to produce an environment of fear with an attitude of anger. Our thoughts and emotions are our creations. We cannot change the mountains,

but we can change how we think about them. Thoughts and emotions are our responsibilities. They are our duties and our creative privileges.

We have found something precious in the Rosicrucian philosophy and are filled with the blessings of the spirit, if we accept them. “That my joy may be full in you.” We want to share these blessings but we don’t want to be preachy or proselytizing. We want to give our best.

The best way of sharing is to be found in the way we live our lives. If our lives are true to spiritual values, those values will shine through. Others will see them and respond. “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your father which is in heaven.” Our lives are a general statement, within them are the particulars. Each of us has particular talents, callings and interests through which he or she can share. We want to do that well. Max Heindel, when corresponding with students and Probationers, repeatedly reminded them of the importance of efficiency. We have only so much time and energy available to us, we want to use it efficiently to get the most out of it.

Sometimes the way we do things thwarts our intentions. Inefficiency. Our personalities get in our way. Emerson said, “what you are speaks so loudly, I can’t hear what you say.” Sometimes we don’t take into account the beliefs of those with whom we would share and that contributes to inefficiency. Doing so, we generate resistance instead of receptivity. Max Heindel recommended doing good secretly.

Sharing the truth secretly often avoids unnecessary resistance. Efficiency. Some of the problems of today are different from the problems of the time of Max Heindel. There is a large and growing proportion of society which has no cultural background that includes Christ and Christianity. Often such people are suspicious and resistant when they encounter religious language even though they might eagerly accept the values. One should be able to share the truth of Christ and Christianity without religious names and terminology. In doing this, one does not deny Christ, a thing forbidden by Christ in the Gospels. Instead, one glorifies Christ in truth rather than in name. It is the truth that counts and not the wrappings, which can be modified to conform to the truth. The parables in the Gospels are wrappings designed to share truth that could not be received directly because the hearers were not yet ready to re-

ceive truth directly. Who of us is? If we were able to, we would all be Initiates.

Christian Mysticism is an open philosophy which we want to share effectively and efficiently. If we cannot share it directly, we must find another way. Arts have proven to be excellent means of sharing. People seek them out for entertainment and will be inwardly affected by them, provided they point to truth, and are not too preachy. Whether on the large or small screen, movies are enormously popular. Certainly not all of us will become filmmakers or playwrights but, if we study how things are shared effectively by them, we can see how modern parables can be produced to share ideas about how we can share Christian Mysticism in our little lives.

Artistic presentations are distillations of life. They are intended to communicate something has been learned in life, in a concentrated form, that speaks to other humans. Brevity is important to hold audience attention. Efficiency. Few will sit through lengthy presentations unless they are compelling. With that in mind, we can briefly share a couple of simple movie scenarios that accurately convey Christian Mystical principles. We remember that they must be accurate, or the truth will be diluted. These examples could be longer, but there is insufficient space for that.

A western movie is a classic genus to begin with. A gang of outlaws are drawn together by greed. Attraction. They hold up a bank. Then they flee to the badlands to hide from the posse that is sure to pursue them. While in hiding two of them conspire and decide that the lookout didn't do enough to deserve a full share of the loot. Besides, there will be so much more for everyone if they eliminate him, which they do. Repulsion. This action begets another similar action and the gang dwindles and nobody trusts anyone else. In the end only two remain and they kill each other. The posse arrives and retrieves the money without having to fire a shot.

This is a simple scenario which this writer has actually viewed in a theater. It is also an accurate presentation of the principle of attraction and repulsion in the lower desire world during life and in purgatory. Its accuracy hits home. Its simplicity and action hold the viewers' attention without it being diverted into unnecessary complexities. More complex emotions could be conveyed with more artistry when one is skilled enough to bring that about.

The war movie is another classic genus. In a war movie, action and sacrifice can draw the viewer in. In violent action, especially when the odds are against them, soldiers draw together. Among military people it is a well-known fact that soldiers fight more for each other than for their country, which is too abstract for the situation. Buddy relationships develop. In the heat of the action of battle a soldier is hit and dies in the arms of his buddy. As he dies, he says something like, "Joe you have to live for me and do the things that I cannot." Joe promises. He goes on to become a hero and, after the war, he lives an exemplary life with a special charisma that influences many for the better. In Christian Mysticism we are taught not to live for ourselves, but rather to do things for the Christ's sake. Christ is the universal and ultimate buddy. When we do this, we transcend egoism and draw on the power of the Life Spirit. This scenario, again seen by this writer in the movies, demonstrates the power of living for the Christ's sake without even having to mention his name. As stated, it is perhaps too simple, but the concept can be sophisticated considerably without diluting or distorting the principle. It doesn't matter if our sharing is simple or complex, or deep or shallow, or sophisticated or commonplace. What matters is that it is true. If it is true, it will have its effect.

It is hard to conceive of a romantic comedy conveying some sublime esoteric truth, but there are other genera that can, both in the movies and in life. We are becoming divine, creative beings. Creativity is not something which will be bestowed on us in the future, it is something we are developing *now*, if we take the opportunity. From third heaven until the death of the dense physical body in the cycle of rebirth, our lives and everything we do in them are our greatest and most important creations. In the words of our master, "Freely have you received, now freely give," to which it might be added, "and do so creatively."

Supply Side Economics

Inversion. Because our eyes have lenses, we take in reflected light from the external world with image reversals. Unlike the image reversal of a mirror, which is only a right-to-left reversal, the image reversal of a lens is in all directions, right-to-left and upside-down. It is an act of consciousness that makes the corrective inversion that rights the image for us.

In the first Innsbruck Goggle Experiments, the subject wore goggles that brought the image of the external world to his retina upside-down. It was disorienting and difficult for the subject to do anything at first, but after ten days, the correction was made, and he could function almost as he normally did. When the goggles were removed and the retina received the images naturally, there was a period of reorientation, but it was shorter. Experiments with goggles that inverted images right-to-left had similar results. Neuroscientists understand some of this phenomenon in terms of brain function, but they do not understand the correction in consciousness. Phenomena of consciousness are psychological as well as physiological.

Psychology is referred to as a “soft” science compared to the “hard” sciences like physics and chemistry, which are more measurable and certain. Soft science is messy to the mind of materialistic scientists. Psychology is messy because not all psychologies are healthy. For example, in parapsychology, children capable of telekinesis often have disturbed personalities—it isn’t physical energy, by itself, that produces the phenomena. The psychologies of the disturbed telekinetic children, or those of saints, that produce remarkable phenomena are extreme. The psychologies of ordinary people, like ourselves, are not so extreme, but we have biases nonetheless. Perhaps the subject of the Innsbruck experiments was averse to some of the colors that struck his retinas, whether inverted or not.

Collectively, our biases make the world we create messy. There are moral and ethical components in our psychologies, whether healthy and unhealthy. They are blended with many other psychological elements in us. We sin and err, and so we have problems. Many of our problems are shared, some society-wide. In our egoism, we tend to lie to ourselves and deny our faults until they become invisible biases. Some of our bias problems, and their solutions, involve inversion. What is called “supply side economics” provides a good

example.

Supply side economics is a philosophy about how to improve a weak or sluggish economy. It involves boosting the supply side of the supply and demand relationship. This is usually done by reducing taxes on suppliers or outright bailouts for them. The idea is that the suppliers will use the boost to improve and expand production, which will produce jobs and lower prices. It doesn't work. It doesn't work because we are humans which, in our current fallen state, means we are at least a little selfish. Altruism is not part of many business models. What usually happens is that the suppliers, who are usually wealthy, keep part of the money for themselves, and do not reinvest. What follows is a headline of an article from a moderately conservative website which does economic reporting. It was published on the day this essay was being keyed in: "The Fed Just Unleashed A Trillion in New Debt: Companies Took the Money and Spent It on Dividends While Firing Millions." Bailouts are usually funded out of tax revenue. Those who are not wealthy pay a larger proportion of their income in taxes than the rich do, so those who are not rich, give to the rich. The result is that the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. If improvements are made by the supply side, say in modernization, efficiency is improved and that eliminates jobs. Then, there is the nagging fact that if production is increased, there may not be a demand for it. Moreover, prices rarely go down except in extreme economic duress.

The health of an economy is measured by production. An economy that increases its gross domestic product (GDP) by some given percentage is considered a strong or healthy economy. The GDP is the monetary value of goods and services in a given amount of time. It is measured in terms of expenditures, production and income. It doesn't indicate to whom the income goes, which is a different measurement. Thus, it is possible with this measurement to have a healthy economy and increasing poverty. If one considers "monetary value" in the GDP calculation to be in terms of material things, unlimited growth is impossible because there are limited material resources. Wealth is actually the result of the agents of production in an ongoing supply and demand relationship, not in resources alone. One might say resourcefulness, not material resources, produces growth. The suppliers, who are beneficiaries of supply side economics, usually reach their status through resourcefulness. They were inventors, innovators, energetic achievers or, in some other way, resourceful. It is not surprising that they are resourceful in maintaining

their status, whether by productive means or not.

Demand drives a healthy economy at least as much as supply, and probably more. A glut of worthless products, or products that nobody wants, diminishes the monetary value of the products. If there is insufficient monetary value in the hands of the demand side to purchase necessities, an economy collapses. Even the most selfish supply-siders, realize that it is better to bend than to break. There is a necessary interdependence between supply and demand in an economy. Knowing this, it is obvious that boosting the supply side of an economy, at the expense of the demand side, cannot maintain a healthy economy or a healthy society.

It is interesting to note, in passing, that the blind bias of those who most enthusiastically support supply side economies are not blind to the fact that it doesn't work in other areas of society, such as social welfare programs. Many of the programs of "the war on poverty" were obvious failures. It is always easier to see the faults of others than our own.

At this point some might think this essay is devolving into a liberal or left-wing diatribe. It isn't. This isn't even an essay on economics or politics. It is an essay about inversion to get at spiritual values such as resourcefulness and self-application, and how those values are more important than material things to healthy spiritual development. Economics and politics only add relevance. We want to see through the biased inversions to the spiritual truths within and behind them.

Liberals and the left have their own supply side misconceptions and biases, and they are just as blind to them. Besides throwing money indiscriminately at social problems, their supply-side misconceptions seem to be more often about diminishing the supply side rather than stoking it.

The city in which this writer lives has a long history of being one of the most left-leaning cities in the United States. A few years ago, a Native American tribe wanted to build a full-scale casino on the edge of the city. The hue and cry from the liberals were instantaneous, and "not in my back yard" were the words of the day. They demanded a referendum against the casino, which they won, so now those who have a yen for gambling must drive fifty miles to do so, which increases the likelihood of highway accidents – liquor is cheap

at the casinos. Reducing the supply side of gambling doesn't solve the compulsion to gamble. It tends to drive gambling underground, where there is no regulation or supervision. This writer has witnessed craps games at a park in the heart of the city.

The United States spends \$51,000,000,000 annually on the war on drugs. The problems of drug abuse and addiction are as bad as ever. Removing or reducing supply doesn't reduce demand. The drug problem is solved by helping to build character in people, so they don't need to escape from themselves into a reality controlled by a drug. With a positive attitude there is no demand for drugs, no matter what the supply. Condemning drug use, as religions tend to do, tends to ostracize users and brings them to feel worse about themselves, leading to more escape. Helping people to experience clear consciousness at their control is a tremendous positive. Experiencing clarity of consciousness and realizing its infinite depth is our aspiration in Christian Mysticism. That is what we need to share, not Rosicrucian doctrine whose truth and beauty come from clear consciousness. As of now, this writer believes we are failing in spreading the gospel of clear consciousness. In the meantime, \$51,000,000,000 could train and employ a lot of character-building counselors, which would reduce unemployment in the same stroke.

The attempt to remove or diminish an undesirable supply, in a supply and demand relationship, is actually an attempt to remove or diminish temptation. It doesn't work. Alcoholics will drink Sterno if liquor is not available. Removing temptation is impossible. To do so would require removing desire, both good and bad. Without desire we would be insipid beings, beings without motivation to do anything. We, as spiritual aspirants, actually want to consciously enter and function in the desire world, where we have a deeper and broader field of service. Do we realize the desire world is rife with intense temptations? The stuff of the desire world is the very stuff of temptation. The trial given to Max Heindel prior to his initiation was a temptation. Our Lord was tempted. The prayer for the desire body in the Lord's Prayer is, "lead us not into temptation;" it is not, "remove temptation from us." Again, the answer is to build character, not to diminish life.

Not all supply and demand relationships are biased or perverted. Most are healthy and can be cultivated and developed for the good. Spiritual heal-

ing is a good example. Max Heindel tells us three things are necessary for a spiritual healing. One is a source of spiritual healing power. It is available in abundance. We literally live in a sea of divine, spiritual power. We are never at a loss for it. Another necessity is a healing agent who can access this power, focus it, and apply it where it is needed. The final necessity is an obedient patient—one does not apply the precious panacea where it will drain off or dissipate without lasting effect. The spiritual power is, obviously, the supply side. Unlike material resources, the spiritual supply side is unlimited. The healer and, especially, the patient are on the demand side. We are all in this together and we all need to heal and be healed. The difference between the healer and the patient is the degree of conscious volition. The healer is conscious of spiritual power, of what is necessary to use it, and does whatever is necessary to do. It entails sacrifice and discipline – discipline to handle that most subtle and precious substance and, sacrifice, to become compassionate and humble to open to it.

Ignorance is at the base of sin and suffering. We are blind to our own failings until we become painfully aware of them. Thus, through cause and consequence, the patient is brought to awareness and opened to humility in the need for respite. One might even say the patient is self-beaten into obedient receptivity through cause and consequence. To be healed, the patient must have developed at least a modicum of self-consciousness and control, to receive and hold the spiritual influx, to become a new person. There are numerous instances that illustrate this in the healings of Christ in the Gospels. Long-suffering patients were asked to do something trivial like bathing in a river. Patients were also asked to not waste the healing power as in, “go and sin no more.” In healing, the demand is urgent and intense while the supply is unlimited, as well as edifying and without stint.

There is more to the healing supply and demand relationship. The demand is not merely a wanting of something. The healer and the patient, who are together on the demand side, must develop discipline, obedience and, above all, humble openness. Healing is more than removing suffering, it is a positive step forward. Supply-and-demand aren't a balance in isolation. They are a balance for progress. The balance of supply-and-demand are as necessary to evolutionary progress as physical balance is to propelling a bicycle forward. Health is not an end in itself; it is something found in the striving for something greater. Progress.

Supply and demand are also found in the macrocosm. The transcendent spiritual worlds are the supply side and the phenomenal, concrete worlds, and the forms and creatures in them, are the demand side. The forms in the concrete worlds are the creations of the Life of the spiritual worlds. The existence and evolution of the forms depends on the Source of transcendent life. The need of the forms can be seen as a demand on the grace of the Universal Spirit. In this image the heart of the macrocosmic world of thought is the lens of manifestation. There is also an inversion through this lens. The misunderstanding or perversion of this inversion is, potentially, the most deadly of all. The physical world is an inverted, reflective projection of Divine Spirit, the deepest and highest state of spirit in our creative manifestation. Sadly, in our human wave of creation, the inversion has become misunderstood and perverted. In our fall, we have become somewhat spiritually disconnected in our personal consciousness, and we sometimes get things backward. This perverted inversion is called materialism. Materialism is the belief that everything comes out of matter, not spirit. In our spiritual disconnect, we are insecure, as might be expected since spiritual being is the source of the only true security. The combination of insecurity and perverted inversion explains the insatiable hunger, the greed, that is the engine of supply side economics. Materialism can be serious enough for there to be a complete rupture between spirit and matter in us, individually, and collectively—an abortion of the creation. As spiritual aspirants with this knowledge, it is imperative that we do something about it.

Knowledge of this conditions begs the questions, “What is to be done?” and, “How do we do it?” The simple, almost simplistic, answer is that we reach into the spirit within and live it out into the world around us. It is not a mechanical or mental process, it is a living process. Obviously, this is not something that can be thoroughly discussed in a brief essay like this. Only a few leading statements can be made.

The process is twofold.

One part is purging ourselves of biases and illusions. That is what purity really is. We have placed ourselves in material exile since, what is called, “the fall of humanity.” The exile has been long, many millennia. During that time, we have taken on many of the illusions of materialism. To some extent we are

all materialists. We think we know the nature of reality when we do not. We even pride ourselves egoistically in our “knowledge.” If we are fortunate, we are shocked out of our materialistic presumptions. If we are truth seekers, we examine everything we believe. We follow the admonition of St. Paul quoted on the title page of the first edition of the Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception, “Prove all things.” If we are earnest, honest and persevere, we gradually dispel the cloud of unknowing and begin to see reality more clearly for what it is, glorious. The moments of clarity along the way are more than ample stimulus to persevere.

We also have illusions about the transcendental spiritual worlds. We are sometimes blessed with intuition. Those moments resound with truth, but in our vain ways, we often tend to think we know more than we actually do. “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.” Much of the difference is due to our human presumption, born of materialism, that blocks higher understanding. It is only when we allow ourselves to be humbled by, and open to, the spirit that we come to light.

The other part is preparing ourselves to receive and unite with the spirit.

In Greek mythology Zeus, the chief of the Olympians, was a bit of a rake, and unfaithful to his wife Hera. At one time he had a beautiful, young human lover. Hera got wind of it, but instead of scolding him, she sought jealous revenge on the girl, while simultaneously giving Zeus his comeuppance. She befriended the lass and instilled doubt in her by saying she could only know Zeus loved her if he showed himself to her as he really was. In their next tryst, after a moment of tender intimacy, Zeus said she could have whatever wished. She said she wanted to see him as he really was instead of the human form he had assumed. He pleaded and pleaded with her to ask for anything else but that, but she persisted and, because he had nodded his head, he had to comply. The brilliance of light was so intense that she was instantly disintegrated, much to his sorrow. It is only a story. In reality, spiritual light is actually healing, but the point of the story is well taken.

We must prepare to receive the spirit. We need to become whole beings capable of receiving and sharing the spirit. Spiritual growth doesn't just happen to us. It comes about by the lives we live. We must bring our lives to conform to the spirit within and be able to respond to the “Shepherds voice.” There is

potential, perverted inversion in this also. Too often we try to have the spirit conform to our personalities rather than working to conform our personalities to the spirit – we get it backwards. The preparation, we know, is done by persisting in “loving, self-forgetting service,” which builds the soul body that is the “golden wedding garment” for the alchemical wedding of body and spirit. The soul body is the spiritualized matter which is our contribution to the inverse supply and demand relationship. In a small but necessary way, we supply soul food for the spirit.

As said earlier, spirit is the ultimate supply side, but is given to us only as much as we are ready, only as much as we have prepared ourselves to receive it. The light of the spirit is, indeed, dazzling. It blinded Saul when he experienced it on the road to Damascus, but it is as subtle as it is powerful. It is so subtle that we are told to be ever watchful for “it cometh as a thief in the night.” It caught Saul by surprise. We can, and sometimes do, miss our spiritual opportunities. We need to be ready. In this, our lives as spiritual aspirants must become lives of perpetual preparedness, lives of perpetual invitation to the spirit. Perhaps Shakespeare’s Hamlet said it best: “The readiness is the all.”

Cosmic Rays

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
then are dreamt of in your philosophy.—Hamlet

In his youth, there were many things outside of the scope of this writer's philosophy. He laughed at vegetarianism and scoffed at astrology. Now he embraces both enthusiastically. He has studied astrology for 57 years, has taught the fundamentals of astrology since 1969, and has tried to use astrology to help others for 52 years. His use of astrology is usually in one of two ways. One, is to work together with another to resolve an issue or problem from a spiritual outlook. [Please do not bombard him with requests.] The other use is as a vehicle to understand spiritual principles. Despite his experience, most astrologers would not consider him a good astrologer. They are right. He does not intend to become a good astrologer by their definition, any time soon. This writer does marvel at the complicated, mathematical methods of good astrologers. It is amazing how they can correlate earthly events with astronomical events through mathematical astrology. Even though the correlation is often after the fact, it is still impressive. That said, the complicated mathematics used to predict events does not seem to enhance the understanding of the events.

There is a distinction between prediction and prophecy. The former is more about when events will occur, and the latter is more concerned with why they occur. Events in the material world are culminations and convergences of causal forces, but that is only the outer part of it. Simultaneously, they are precipitations of causes from the higher spiritual worlds, the source of prophecy. The human soul, or psyche, in the higher worlds, is also complicated, and the spirit behind it is deep beyond our current comprehension. However, many of the most important things of the psyche can be gotten at with simple, rudimentary astrology and prayerful pondering. This writer doesn't shrink from astrological complications, but the complications must correlate to things in the psyche or they aren't of much use.

Research and the practice of technical astrology will continue, and that is good because it is progressive and evolutionary. Evolutionary progress is exceedingly slow, whether in the gradual perfection of nature, or in individual, spiritual evolution. Even with ardent aspiration, our spiritual growth is slow. It takes many years of many, many tiny good deeds and positive thoughts to

produce noticeable progress in soul growth. However, sometimes there are giant steps and radical changes in both nature at large, and in us. When great changes occur in nature, it is often in cataclysms. In our lives, they come in calamities. After major giant steps, conditions are new and different.

Newness is rich in unknowns, which constitute a large part of it. Even the timing of cataclysmic changes that bring about radical new opportunities is unknown to our current astrology. At the moment the meteorite struck, ending the times of the dinosaurs, the heavens may have held numerous planetary trines. Knowing this makes one feel “penny wise and pound foolish” in one’s stance about life. One also feels vulnerable to greater things. Nonetheless, little things accumulate to produce large changes, and the ability to thrive in them. Every one of those little good deeds and positive thoughts is necessary to bring about a major change in life, like initiation.

We don’t have an astrology for many of the little unknowns of our lives either. Take, for instance, what are called cosmic rays. The earth is continuously struck by tiny charged particles and waves of radiation, but we don’t always know when they will strike. We know that some come from solar flares, whose frequency and arrival, we can only roughly estimate. We do not know when cosmic rays will come from outside of our solar system. It is known that some come from sources in our galaxy, but we don’t always know when. There are also powerful extra-galactic cosmic rays which are also unpredictable. Scientists suspect some come from supernovae and even galactic collisions, but we don’t when these events will occur either. Cosmic rays are important because they do affect our well-being in ways other than interfering with radio reception. They can change DNA, cause cancer, cause cataracts and produce other conditions conducive to illness. Flying increases our risk of danger from cosmic rays, because there is less atmosphere to dissipate them. As this essay was being edited, a scientific paper was published indicating that at least one mass extinction on earth was caused by cosmic rays from an exploding star.

The findings of reliable mystics do not always agree with those of material science. The methods of material scientists are usually excellent. They are careful and thorough. At the same time, adherence to some beliefs prevents them from seeing, or even trying to see, some things. They claim to be open, neutral and unbiased. After a career working for particle physicists as an

outsider, this writer can say that isn't true. It is not that they are bigots or anything like that. It is that their education has been indoctrination as much as education. It isn't like political indoctrination. It is indoctrination by qualified truth. Students learn how scientists have come to scientific principles whose validity is demonstrated by experiments. The conclusions are undeniable, but the attitude is that material science is the only valid way to truth. Science is sure, and it is sufficient for them. The fact that the scientific principles apply to the extent of the material universe cements this attitude. This writer once had a discussion with one of the physics professors. In it, the mystical approach, which includes what alchemists called the "great experiment"—that involves living all of one's life and being with total dedication and vigor, inside and outside of the laboratory—was put forth. Inner worlds, and examples of them in our consciousness, was also part of the discussion. The response was, "that's fine, but what I am doing works." Subsequent discussion brought out that he wasn't implying that mysticism doesn't work. What he was trying to say was that the rigor of the lab and the material world were sufficient for him. What he was doing was true, which it was. He didn't want to commit himself so completely to something that he didn't know would work, no matter how great the potential scientific rewards. He was content with a qualified truth. One cannot judge him, because all of us, in our fallen materialistic blindness, cling to what works in this world more than is good for us. Anyway, this outlook influences how materialistic physics deals with uncertainty and knowing in little things.

Currently, physics has different theories about the large and the small, the macrocosm and the microcosm. Relativity is for the large, and quantum mechanics is for the small. Currently, the two theories contradict each other because each has a different assumption about time (one relative and one absolute) and each has a different view about fields. The following is a non-technical look at the science of the small with extreme brevity. This is not an essay on science. It is about unknowns and uncertainty. We are seeking principles in mystical philosophy that can be used to better our lives by contrasting mysticism with material science. The physics of the small, including quantum mechanics, deals more with unknown and uncertainty, so it is more relevant.

There are three principles relevant to us concerning the very small in physics – particle physics. One is called the observer effect. It states that the at-

tempt to measure a very small changes in very small things, changes the phenomenon being measured. Thus, the phenomenon cannot be measured, one can only estimate. By very carefully calculating the energy used in attempted measurement and observing the outcome, scientists do quite well at estimating how the phenomenon would have proceeded had there not been a measurement, but the result is still only an approximation. Uncertainty. Another principle is referred to as the wave-particle duality. What are called “particles” can be studied either as waves or as particles, but either viewpoint is incomplete. Both studies have to be complementary to derive a complete description. Again, the description derived is quite accurate, but not the same as Max Heindel describing an atom from etheric vision, which is complete. Then there is the uncertainty principle. It states that complementary variables, such as momentum and position, in a conjugate relationship phenomenon cannot be expressed in a simultaneous, single value even if all of the initial conditions are known. In other words, the exact single momentum-position at a given moment cannot be derived, only approximated.

These principles are firmly established by experiments. According to physics, the stuff of the chemical world we live in is uncertain. There is no alternative to uncertainty in the materialistic view. However, the degree of variance is very tiny, so the world seems stable. This is the kind of outlook that one gets when one views the world from the outside, which is what material science does exclusively. It is quite different when the world is seen inwardly, as mystics see it. A well-trained clairvoyant can see things as they are, in the fluid universe. A magician or a saint performing a miracle can actually control some of the flow with certainty for a moment.

Before moving on, it is interesting to note that materialistic science, even physics, seems to be becoming closer to agreement with mysticism in describing the universe. For example, there is a phenomenon called, “quantum entanglement,” which maintains that two particles that interact become entangled in such a way that they affect each other when they are apart, even far apart, like the other side of the universe. Thus, the mystical idea of a sensitive universe, where even the smallest act affects the whole, is no longer far-fetched to physics. Recently, physicists found evidence of a particle they call the “Higgs Boson.” They are “particles” of massless energy in a field in which, when they are clustered together, attach themselves to cosmic energy streams enough to slow them. When energy streams are slowed down, they

assume mass, according to the principle described in Einstein's equation of energy equals mass times the speed of light squared. The mass, in turn, is the basis of the particles that build matter. A verbal description of the assuming of mass is nearly identical to the descriptions of the formation of matter found in an ancient gnostic mystical text as found by Peter Canova. Since it is the same universe, one would expect that the enquiries of materialistic science and mystics would eventually come to the same conclusions.

This essay is about unknowing, uncertainty and a life of spiritual aspiration. Its author doesn't pretend to have answers to the questions that arise en passant. He isn't a physicist, only someone thinking about the ideas of physics. He doesn't even know if the questions asked are valid questions. The hope in this is that by enquiring together, we can come closer to answers. The questions about the three principles of unknowing and uncertainty in particle physics are more about the materialistic methods of obtaining knowledge from without than they are about the fundamental nature of physical matter. Only relativity and the quantum uncertainty principle raise questions about what mystics would call the far reaches of the creation. Is the foundation of the physical world uncertain? Einstein, who came down firmly on the relativity side of the mutually contradictory relationship between relativity versus quantum mechanics, thought "no," but could not prove his view. Metaphorically speaking, he did not think "God was shaking dice" and said he was uncomfortable with "spooky action at a distance" of quantum entanglement. He also said, "No amount of experimentation can ever prove me right; a single experiment can prove me wrong." A few astrophysical observations have supported his relativity theses. There are also experiments that support quantum mechanics. To this writer's knowledge there is no experiment that proves either of them wrong. To date, the contradiction remains, even though some String Theorists claim to be able to reconcile relativity with quantum mechanics, but their ideas are not near experimental testing yet. The works of some alchemists, and magicians, and the "miracles" of saints would seem to favor the Einstein view about "dice shaking." Christ, in St. Matthew's gospel, also seems to support that view: "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And not one of them shall fall to the ground without your Father." Yet, the experiments that back quantum mechanics are sound. Perhaps a different approach to this can clarify uncertainty for us the mystical mind.

We are in a creation. It is a divinely conceived and controlled, evolutionary creation, but it is still a creation. Creation means something new. Robert Frost, the poet, once said, "...no surprises for the writer, no surprises for the reader." This applies to the creation and the Creator. What joy would there be in an "old hat" or "run of the mill" creation for the Creator? Speaking from his mystical experience, Meister Eckhart said, "God is enjoying Himself." The Elohim in Genesis looked back on their work and "saw it was good."

When an artist creates, the creation is a projection into the unknown. Usually, the projection is an intuitively inspired dream, an exciting possibility. In creation there is a struggle between the creator and the unknown, which carried on through the dream and the projection. In the struggle, something new is realized. It is as though the new is born out of the unknown. In Rosicrucian philosophy we learn that our creation is an involution into matter and an evolution out of matter. The involution is a materialization of spirit, a projection. The evolution is a spiritualization of matter through the compounding of soul out of matter. The result is an evolution of consciousness from soul absorbed into spirit. In this activity, matter, in its various grades, can be seen as a congealed unknown, and spirit as known knower. There is much more to it than this exceedingly brief and fleeting statement, but this should be enough for our immediate purposes. The chemical subdivision of the physical world, especially the solid part, is the farthest reach of the Creator in our creative manifestation. It is the front line in the battle with the unknown. Mass is produced out of potential in cosmic root substance at the frontier, where life (everything from the lively, energetic ethers to the substance of the worlds of pure spirit) meets the inert unknown. It should not seem surprising then, that creative activity would not be constant, because everything in the scheme of the evolutionary creation happens in waves of activity and rest. Most of the creative activity is regular and rhythmic, but not all. Uncertainty and irregularity might even be expected. Not knowing, or uncertainty, is not insecurity, nor is it ignorance, which is something much different. One can have faith and confidence in the spirit, in the face of unknowing and uncertainty. One would expect that an attitude of divine adventure would be the best way to approach the unknown.

At the time of writing, this the author is uncertain about uncertainty in quantum mechanics. He does not know whether the spirals in the materialization of spirit have anything to do with the waves of quantum mechanics. He is

sure that he will know someday, and he is also sure that mysticism is a better path than physics to follow to come to that knowledge.

It is known that there will be bursts of radiation from solar flares and other solar phenomena. People have even developed algorithms to roughly predict them. It is not currently possible for material science to predict the magnitude of bursts of cosmic rays from a solar flare before they occur. Cosmic rays from beyond the solar system, which are more powerful, are also not predictable. By averaging the data from cosmic ray detectors, it is estimated that one secondary particle, called a muon, from a cosmic ray strike, hits every square centimeter of the earth every minute. The uncertainty of quantum mechanics is another matter. There is a field called statistical quantum mechanics. It applies statistical methods to determine a probability of the possible quantum states in a given quantum experimental model. The uncertainty is usually within a small range.

Statistics is the mathematics of organizing, analyzing, and interpreting data. It is used to determine the probability an event. For example, mathematically analyzing the data gathered from past instances of an event can indicate the likelihood of that event happening again. More data results in a more accurate prediction of recurrence. Statistical methods to determine probability apply to many more things than quantum mechanics. Statistical probability used in this way, is educated guessing. Insurance companies use sophisticated guessing, called actuarial science, to determine the likelihood of all sorts of events in life. Of course, insurance companies base rates on the safe side of actuarial findings. To insure is not to ensure. Many life events seem as uncertain as subatomic events seem to be uncertain. Consequently, faith and reliance on spirit is as necessary in life as it is at the frontier of the materialization of spirit in the evolutionary creation. Statistics and probability can only provide a modicum of confidence in life, never certainty. Ninety-nine out of one hundred people may not die in an automobile crash and that is comforting but one still wants to know if one is the one or one of the ninety-nine. Since death is currently a certainty, faith and abiding in the immortal spirit is a better way to deal with the unknowing and uncertainty of life.

Probability can be abstracted away from phenomenal data. It then becomes the mathematics of permutations and probability, the mathematics of chance. Yes, we are back to wondering if God is shaking dice.

In some primitive societies, dice are used to communicate with the gods. When it is not mediumistic, it is called divination. Horary astrology is sometimes a form of divination which uses the astrology of the moment as a focus for intuition to determine an answer to a question born in the moment. Are these forms of divination truly divine communication? If there is true intuition, and not a desire impulse, they are. If we don't know ourselves well, it is uncertain whether something is impulse or intuition. Another unknown.

Even atheistic, materialistic scientists, who pride themselves in their reason as being anything but primitive, believe that all of the magnificent, multi-faceted life we see around us began from random chance events. They also believe that some of the changes in the evolution of life forms, come about by chance events like cosmic ray strikes changing DNA, and not from a divinely guided evolutionary creation utilizing cosmic rays. Can chance and logical certainty coexist? A materialistic scientist will swear that reason is certain, but if the entire structure in which reason is born has its roots in chance, can one be sure? It might be just a house of cards. Mathematicians are closer to mystics, in that they say something is logically true because it can be shown that the results of their reasoning are true intuitively. They are even more like mystics, when they believe that the intuition of other reasoners will concur, without realizing the metaphysical implication of a shared, universal spirit of truth in that belief.

Is chance unavoidable?

In some mythologies the gods do shake dice and there is even cheating. If the dice are loaded (given a weight bias) or shaved (slightly beveled at some edges), some desired combinations are more likely to occur than others. This is more sure than the insurance company being on the right side of statistics. Just as there is nothing new for a creator when there is nothing unknown and uncertain in a creation, there is no honesty when certainty feigns uncertainty. That is what cheating is. Cheating removes that divine feeling of adventure, when facing the unknown, which is the essence of creation. It is assuming. Experience then becomes as dull as a dress rehearsal.

That feeling of adventure can be abused and perverted, even addictively. This writer has been fortunate enough to have worked with the horoscopes and

psychologies of gamblers. Several different combinations are often found in these horoscopes, but one is found most often. It is discordant interactions of Uranus and Jupiter. Uranus is the planet of spiritual newness, the future, and unpredictability. Jupiter rules goodness, pride, optimism, confidence and overconfidence. Their combination produces an irrepressible, undying confidence in one's future. In the psychology of such a gambler, there is a belief that the goodness of his/her being carries into the future. There is often also a sentiment that destiny owes them something. The extreme pride and the allure of the unknown, heats the personality into something resembling a psychological fever. There is a feeling of certainty in the face of uncertainty. There is no giving up, because there is an undying optimism that a change of luck is immanent. Even intelligent gamblers, who intellectually know better, will sometimes go against the odds. This writer has literally heard an intelligent gambler say, "my luck is as good as anyone's," when placing an unsound bet. A divine fever.

Uranus rules other things beyond newness, things such as altruism, irrationality, creativity, discovery and spiritual rejuvenescence. Altruism is of the Life Spirit. Life Spirit is, in one of its attributes, the selfness from which selves are precipitated in Human Spirit. To know Christ in Life Spirit, is to know anyone, or everyone, as one's self. "Love thy neighbor as thy self." Life Spirit is the pure truth of which truths or principles in abstract thought are precipitated. It supersedes any logic. The irrationality of Uranus, when it represents Life Spirit intuition, is better described as supra-rational. Life Spirit is whole. In its wholeness even paradoxical opposites meet, perhaps even certainty and uncertainty. In the Book of Revelation the being representing Christ, the Lord of Life Spirit, says, "Behold I make all things new." Life Spirit is new even to itself. Perhaps the newness born out of matter at the frontier of the unknown is complemented by a discovery of newness in Life Spirit to itself. The ethers, as the energy at that frontier, are a reflective projection of Life Spirit. Perhaps the two seeming newnesses are the same thing. After all, Max used to love to say, "God is closer than hands and feet."

The feeling of discovery, also ruled by Uranus, is another manifestation of that divine excitement that feels like a fever. Many discoveries, such as semi-conductors and penicillin, were accidental. In our life experience, we often learn that what are called "accidents," which are also ruled by Uranus, are actually benign events, awakening events. In our fallen, materialistic blindness, we

cannot always tell whether something is a random event, a divine creative stroke, or both. Is a cosmic ray changing the DNA of a species causing a mutation a random event or a creative manifestation? Being the one out of one hundred that dies in an automobile accident might be a benign event. If that is true, then the adage, “all things work for the good,” is true, and all we have to do is free ourselves from egoism, and the insecurity attached to it, to know. We all want spiritual security, even in the face of unknowing and uncertainty, but are we willing to pay for it? If that price is surrendering egoism, the price might be more like a bonus.

Perhaps the probabilities of pure, abstract mathematics are more than postulates. Perhaps God is shaking dice, and mathematical probability is one of the ways the Universal Spirit manifests itself via macrocosmic abstract thought, and randomness and certainty do meet in Life Spirit. As beings of faith, we want to believe this is true. As truth seekers, we want to know this is true. In this we have a promise. We remember that promise every time we go through the Rosicrucian Fellowship Temple Service. “For now we know in part and we prophecy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away...” promises us that we will transcend self and egoism. In manifestation we will still have to face unknowing and uncertainty, but it will be with an attitude of spiritual surety. For now, this is a matter of faith for us, but St. Paul, who did transcend self in the experience of Christ from Life Spirit, tells us, “...faith is the substance of things hoped for.”

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
then are dreamt of in your philosophy.

Recycling

Ancient Chinese people had curved walkways to their houses to protect themselves. They believed devils could only walk straight lines. In our times, when a person is dishonest, we say that person is crooked. We want to deal with “straight shooters.” We look down on lines of thought that go in circles. These differences are not quaint, cultural quirks that happened in the course of history.

Ancient societies tended to be more rural and agricultural than ours. Agricultural life demands that one be attuned to nature. Nature is cyclical. Day follows night, which follows day, and one must “make hay while the sun shines.” Season follows season and, if one doesn’t anticipate and heed that fact, one starves. On the other hand, if cities are laid out with curving streets, land parceling and measurement becomes prohibitively complicated. Plumbing and electrical lines are easier to fabricate, install, and maintain when straight.

There are also psycho-spiritual benefits to both the rectilinear and curvilinear ways of life.

Repetition is essential to education. It takes many iterations to learn some things. It takes many more to perfect them. A concert soloist will readily confirm this. Organizing our soul bodies is accomplished by repetition. The entire evolutionary creation, in which we are blessed to participate, is founded in repetition. Regular, rhythmic cycles abound in our creative scheme and repetition is integral to them.

Keeping to the straight and narrow avoids many problems. When problems are unavoidable, approaching them straight on and immediately, before unnecessary complications can set in, usually makes dealing with them much easier. It is easier and safer to drive on a straight highway. Linear simplicity is clear and communicative.

There are potential psycho-spiritual drawbacks to both ways of life.

It is easy to be lulled into a passive, unassertive attitude toward life with a cyclical outlook. One thinks another opportunity will always come around, when that very attitude lessens the likelihood of taking the next opportuni-

ty, or even seeing it, when it does arise. The Rosicrucian philosophy teaches that awareness of the cycle of rebirth had to be removed from cultural consciousness, because humanity was developing lackadaisical attitudes about spiritual progress, i.e., “I can do that in my next life.” In western societies the doctrine of one lifetime with an end goal of salvation, a linear view of life, was inculcated. The result has been vigorous progress in learning to master the lessons of the world. In a cyclical outlook on life, one develops familiarity with things, but when familiarity becomes too much of a factor in one’s consciousness, one misses new things, or doesn’t even look for them.

A linear outlook has its own blindness. If one has a single objective, one can miss sidelong or new things. It is called tunnel vision. A straight highway may be safer and faster, but one misses all the things one sees on a winding country road conformed to the contour of the landscape. In our society we are willing to sacrifice scenery for speed. In the linear society we now have, we are willing to sacrifice many things to attain our objectives, or even for our convenience. We don’t call these things sacrifices, we say they are disposables. Our western, linear society is a society of disposability, and too many of the disposables are for the sake of convenience. We are choking land and sea with disposable garbage and trash. Our most serious transgression of disposability for convenience is most likely abortion. It is a serious matter to deny a highly evolved being the opportunity to express in a new form, when steps have already been taken through nature and destiny, to do so. It indicates a selfish desire to be free from inconvenience, as well as a disbelief in providence and progress, which linearity is supposed to be about.

Rectilinearity and curvilinearity are not mutually incompatible. They are complementary. Together they form spirals. The expression of life in form is spiral, throughout the cosmos. Everything in the evolutionary creation advances in spirals. There may be many spirals within spirals with barely noticeable differences from their predecessors, but things do advance with thorough surety and perfection. There is progress. Evolution is just a way of saying things are getting better in new ways.

In evolutionary work, many forces are in play. Some are adversarial but, “all things work for the good.” Even seemingly dark forces contribute to the good. Max Heindel used to love to cite from Goethe’s Faust:

“The Spirit of Negation, the power that still

works for the good through scheming ill.”

As aspiring mystics, we know there are divine, occult forces within and behind all of the activities we see around us. Some of them are not currently apparent to us, in our materialistic consciousness, which is blind to many inner realities. In the progress of material science, we learn the physical world is complicated. The inner worlds might even be more-so. Some inner workings are not obvious, but their consequences are. One of the inner, adversarial activities in our lives is the struggle between the etheric vital body and the desire body, for use and control of the dense physical body. It is so important that we are told many times in the Rosicrucian philosophy, that this struggle is responsible for all consciousness. The dense physical body is the prize. It is the most completed and perfected vehicle we have. At present, in the Earth Period, it is ripe for full use. Our life here on earth is the only time in the life cycle when we can awaken to new consciousness. This is true because it is only in the dense physical body that we can compound Conscious Soul. Everything from the gentle touch of light on the retina, to the body striking the earth in a fall, has an impact. The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception points out to us that impact produces Conscious Soul, out of the chemical matter in our dense physical bodies.

Each of our bodies has a character of its own. Each of our bodies has a degree of autonomy to express its character (at least until the spirit becomes completely indwelling). The vital body, unchecked, would have the dense physical body grow and metabolize without surcease. It would be like a plant that grows as long as it lives. It would live longer without an adversary spending its energy. When the desire body is activated at puberty, it checks growth. Then, desire motivation spends vital energy in its ambitions, and the vital body barely has the capacity to maintain the physical body before the onslaughts of desire. This continues until around twenty-one when the mind begins to awaken and, through it, the spirit can begin to enter and take hold of its vehicles from within. The entrance and control of its vehicles, by the spirit, continues throughout life, and success in this activity, depends on the application of the spirit. The character of the desire body is given in its name, desire. Left to its own, it would ravage both the physical and vital bodies by constant demand for satisfaction. The more intense the thrills, and the more exiting the experience, the better it is for the desire body.

The struggle between the desire and vital bodies is back and forth. Sometimes one is in ascendancy, and sometimes the other. One of the effects of the expression of desire on the physical body is hardening. The Rosicrucian philosophy teaches that in one period of desire ascendancy, the skeleton was hardened. The skeleton, itself, was precipitated in the Lemurian epoch which was a recapitulation of the Moon Period, when the desire body was incipient. The vital body is expressed in the softer tissue, like the lungs. The vital body thrives in rhythmic repetition such as breathing and the heartbeat. The ethers of the vital body are an expression, a reflective projection, of Life Spirit. The Life Spirit has its home in the heart and circulatory system. From this it can be seen that the physical body, in its development and evolution, has been a battleground in the struggle between the vital body and the desire body for eons. There is also a vigorous interaction between the Life Spirit, reflectively projected in the vital body, and the Human Spirit, reflectively projected in the desire body.

Even the simple things of our lives and bodies have spiritual and cosmic significance. The outlooks of linearity and cyclicity are included.

The character of the vital body is more in harmony with cyclicity than linearity. It thrives in regularity. The character of the desire body is more in harmony with linearity. Desires have objectives. Once a desire is attached to an object, that objective becomes all important. Nothing else matters. When a cat sees a mouse, it sees nothing else. Linearity. From ancient China to the present, human activity has become increasingly linear. We even have attitudes about it. Among intellectuals, it is an insult to be called “nonlinear.” From ancient times to the present, desire gratification has waxed. In contemporary United States gratification is a mania. It is almost considered a divine right by many. Concurrent with the rise in linearity, with the rise in desire, is an increase of psychological hardening. Desire hardens more than the skeleton. Abortion requires a certain amount of soul hardness.

At this point, it is mandatory to mention that desire expression is only one factor in evolution, one factor of variable importance. Extremism is not the divine intention. There are other factors. For example, the word altruism didn't even exist in ancient times, so new factors are coming into being. But even though the dominance of desire is only one factor in our evolution, it is an important factor for aspiring Christian Mystics to keep in mind.

The loop from ancient China to the present is part of an epicycle, not a trend. From the Lemurian epoch to the present is also part of a loop, a much larger loop, but in terms of desire hardening, it seems more like a trend – a trend sufficient enough to harden the earth more than intended in the divine plan. It is serious. A continent of plastic floating on the Pacific Ocean is more than a metaphor for our times, it is a serious and deadly reality. When many of our most brilliant scientists and scholars cannot sense purpose behind nature and history, it is serious. A straight line, in what is a cyclical reality, is a tangent that soon loses touch with that reality never to return. We need to turn the corner. How do we do it? Recycling!

Recycling wet garbage and plastic containers is a good beginning, but it is only a beginning. By looking at the bottom of a plastic container one can determine what kind of plastic it is, and its recyclability. Some things are not recycled. It is not that recycling is impossible, it is that it would be too expensive to do so. Even nuclear waste can be recycled, but it is extremely costly to do so, and humanity thinks in terms of personal cost, not long term, general good. In our desire nature we want things that we don't have to recycle. We want disposability. We want to be able to bury and forget things we no longer want. The spiritual reality is that nothing is lost. Nothing is forgotten. Nothing. In the panoramic remembrance of our life just finished, which we view at the moment of the transition called death, everything is remembered right down to individual thoughts. It can all be remembered if we have the endurance, skill and willingness to do so. We can remember things we forgot or wanted to forget. We can see things that we were not cognizant of, when they occurred. We can see the workings of things we do not yet consciously know, things we developed in the world from divine principles, when we were elementary nature forces in second heaven between lives. Even if our vital bodies are destroyed by fire, we have the imperishable memory of nature in the world of thought. Nothing is lost. Everything must be processed.

Trained clairvoyants, like Max Heindel, tell us that “thoughts are things.” They are dynamic things that effect change. To us they are nearly immortal things, lasting millions of years. Every time we think, we are creating thoughts that have elemental being. Thoughts are our basic service and responsibility at this stage of the creation. The basic service of minerals is to provide stable forms, plants serve by giving vital life to the kingdoms that have sacrificed

the ability to do so, i.e., animals and humans, so those kingdoms can do higher things. Animals, through the spectrum of species qualities, which are reflection of the principles of the zodiacal signs, contribute rudimentary desire types to the world. Humans serve by creating living thoughts. We are responsible for what we create. In the act of creation, we generate an unbreakable bond with our thoughts.

Thinking is a good place to begin soul recycling, for several reasons. One is to stop the bleeding. Every day we think many new thoughts. Some of them are negative, and potentially so, if one is angry. If one can stop creating new negative thoughts—not an easy thing to do—it can change our general attitude greatly. Another reason is that thoughts are at the beginning of a creative stream. Many thoughts become clothed with desire, and desire stimulates actions in the ethers, and actions eventually precipitate forms into the chemicals in the chemical world. With regard to this there is a magnificent old saying – “we reap from the seeds that we sow.” Starting streams of good thoughts changes our future. Another reason to begin with the concrete mind is that it is in its infancy. The dense physical body is our oldest and most complete vehicle. The physical body contains several intertwining, interdependent systems. Significant change of the physical body requires a major overhaul that must take into account these complexities. Often physical change requires a fresh restart, like those at the beginnings of the great periods when new systems are brought into the physical body to accommodate new higher vehicles. With determination and almost constant application, the mind can be changed in a few weeks, as was done by Max Heindel.

Changing the mind to stem the flow of negative thoughts by redirecting it is fine, but what about all those old thoughts that have not died? The number of thoughts we have created is staggering. In our fallen, deathly consciousness, our first impulse is to destroy them. It can't be done. To attempt to do so only creates new thoughts, new destructively negative thoughts. They must be recycled.

Thoughts do not come from nothing. Concrete thoughts are precipitated out of ideas and principles in the abstract subdivision of the world of thought. Thinking is done by the Thinker, the Self, which has its home in that abstract region. The recycling, or regeneration, of thoughts is done by transforming them using their parent principles in a regenerate way. The transformation is

not arbitrary or capricious. It is done according to the divine intent inherent in those principles. To be successful, our reference must shift from the petty, personal ego to the Self and its purposes, as well as those of the greater Creator. At first this sounds impossibly distant and difficult. It doesn't have to be. For example, in some conventional Christian circles there is the WWJD practice. When one is confronted with a moral dilemma, such as having one's bad thoughts and their consequences return in a very ugly situation, one asks "What would Jesus do?" It is an appeal to intuition. If one is sincere and spiritually obedient, the appeal is heard and answered in regenerate thoughts. "I am with you always even unto the end of the world."

When we think about recycling thoughts, we are likely to panic or lose heart, considering the enormous numbers of thoughts we form. Such attitudes are illusory and unnecessary. There is a principle such that, the deeper one proceeds into the spiritual worlds, the more unity one finds. Unity is expressed in spiritual coalescence. In the desire world it is called the principle of attraction. In the world of thought, individual thoughts coalesce and become compound thought forms. The archetype of our earthly lives, and the bodies we use to live them out, is a complex thought form. In the world of thought, archetypes are compounded of other archetypes. If one tries to transform individual thoughts one by one, one would be at it almost forever. If one transforms archetypes, which are actual living thought elementals, much as individual thoughts are, one transforms individual thoughts within them. Attempting to transform every individual thought is not only tedious, it is petty, and likely vain. Some petty things do have to be confronted and changed, but that is best done by appealing to greater things.

Appealing to greater things brings us back to principles and ideas, back to the abstract subdivision of the world of thought. Ideas and principles are lofty but, after millennia of living and falling into materialism, we do not always see them as they really are. We tend to see them as strict laws. After all, mathematics is from the deepest region of the abstract subdivision, and mathematics is absolutely strict. Then, there is the spiritual fact that the abstract subdivision is the home of Jehovah, the Holy Ghost, the giver and keeper of law. From the Old Testament we have the legacy of Jehovah as a strict and demanding task master, almost without mercy. For example, when a man is caught gathering wood on the Sabbath, Moses asks Jehovah what to do and is told to cast him out and stone him. It is not surprising that

principled people often become rigid people. It is much healthier in spiritual aspiration to see the abstract subdivision as a realm of ideals rather than strict laws. Unlike the law, ideals are open-ended. Ideals foster enthusiasm. Ideals transcend concrete existence.

Students of the Rosicrucian philosophy do not lack sources for ideals. For one, astrology is an amazingly rich source. Each of the signs of the zodiac contains numerous ideals. If one wants more definite demonstrations of ideals, planets represent personifications of ideals. If one wants still more character in ideals, one can commune with archangelic messengers for astrological guidance. Beyond horoscopy, one of the highest functions of astrology is as a gateway to idealism and angelology.

For us, there is one ideal that transcends all others. As Christian mystical aspirants, we know that Christ is the ultimate ideal. The home of Christ is Life Spirit, the world that transcends abstract ideation. It is the home of the highest ideal, Love. Christ, during the incarnation, describes Life Spirit in all of the "I ams" in St. John's Gospel. For example, Christ-Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth and the life," all attributes of Life Spirit. Christ gives his word, the creative Word, that his Life is the way that raises us to the Father. Whether we call it salvation, or redemption, or being saved, that upliftment is the ultimate in recycling. Christ even tells us what we must do: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as is your Father which in heaven is perfect." St. Paul tells us how to do it: "And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that the good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

Recycling.

Celebrity

For forty years this writer owned a bookshop that never made a profit. Profit was never the reason for its existence. Speaking humorously, it was a front for mysticism. It was a place where people could talk about astrology and spiritual things. In that regard, it was a success. Seekers of every stripe visited. So, also, did the spiritually and psychologically troubled, a more painful success. In the early days, the days of the flower children, there were astrological groupies, young women dazzled by the stars. Some of them were also dazzled by other stars, celebrities. The bookshop was located near an arena that was a venue for high attendance rock concerts. Once, some of the young women with eyes on the stars, both varieties, made it back stage and connected with some of the performing groups. So it was that a rock star, still famous to this day, went from a coliseum seating 10,000, to a bookshop measuring 12 feet by 20 feet. It was a difficult evening. There were no unpleasanties but it was painfully awkward. The young women wanted the proprietor to spout clever astrological things, which he is disinclined to do, given the circumstances. The rock star didn't know anything about astrology anyway. His ignorance of the subject didn't keep him from talking about it. He probably thought that he had to say something to impress the groupies. He spoke in an offhand way about astronomy, about which he didn't know much either. After a few minutes of disjointed conversation, the star gave his address to the proprietor and said to visit when in Los Angeles. He was actually a nice guy caught in a star syndrome and an awkward circumstance.

One wonders why someone would pontificate on a subject in ignorance of it. Almost everyone has done it at some time, but celebrities seem more prone to it. It is as if in a state of inflated self-importance, there is a belief that one's being exceeds what it actually is. It is an illusion, but to merely state that, and say no more, isn't very helpful. One wants to know why it happens, so something can be done about it. We want our self-estimation to be true to reality, which is why Rosicrucian aspirants retrospect and set aside special times for accurate self-judgment.

After much pondering, it was concluded that this phenomenon is part of a larger phenomenon which, in vernacular, is called a performance high. When one is performing successfully, the audience is not only receiving, it is giving back. It is an exchange. In the exchange the audience members are pro-

jecting. They are identifying themselves and their ideals with the performer. Even if it is only appreciation, the audience is lavishing a lot of love and other feelings and thoughts on the performer. This has a pronounced effect on the performer. The performer experiences self-awareness through the eyes and projections of the audience. One sees one's self as more than one would normally see one's self. In the aura of love and appreciation, the performer can do things not normally possible. One actually does exceed one's normally, petty personality.

When the performance is over, some of the effects of the performance high linger on. Performers, remembering the reality of the performance high, are prone to believe that they know more than they really do in their ordinary consciousness. This phenomenon is a matter of consciousness, especially self-consciousness. At present, our consciousness is not constant in either degree or quality. Sometimes we are more conscious than we are at other times. Some people have more tonal consciousness, others more color consciousness. We are not always highly self-conscious. When we haven't been highly aware, we say things like, "I forgot myself."

Performers vary in their reactions to a performance high. Many have felt a little bit of heaven and want to stay there. St. Peter at the Mount of Transfiguration wanted to build tabernacles and remain. Many performers take drugs, in lieu of the performance high, thus adding another layer of illusion. Other performers, like some artists, are more aware of themselves and of the performance high. Among painters there is a phenomenon called, "the painter's eye." It is a state of visual awareness that exceeds normal vision. It is possible to control the experience of the painter's eye. The French artist Matisse, when asked if he saw a tomato with the eye of an artist when eating it, answered: "No, when I eat a tomato, I look at it in the way anyone else would. But when I paint a tomato, then I see it differently."

Painting does not involve an audience, so elevated consciousness is volitional, though the intensity of elevated consciousness is not as great as the performance high experienced by the performance artist. Keeping control in a performance high is more difficult, even when one is aware of it, especially if the audience is large and ardently enthusiastic. A performance high is not necessarily a bad thing. Some performers learn to play it as part of their art. A virtuoso performance of this type is wonderful. Losing control in a perfor-

mance high is not a good thing. In a performance, the love given and received is certainly a good thing, even in prosaic activities. When we pour love on our children, they thrive on it and flourish. When we love someone special, the effect is similar. Pablo Neruda may have said it best when he wrote: "I want to do with you what spring does with the cherry trees." The love lavished on a rock star in a concert may be tainted with desire, but that is not the main of the problem. Imperfections in the performer are another part, but that is not the main of it either. It is the magnitude and the intensity of the love, tainted or not, that makes it hard to control. A large dose of intense love is likely to magnify the creative capacity, as well as the problems, of the performer. Extreme expressions of love carelessly given with too much intensity can harm the development of a child.

There seem to be several factors in play in a performance high and its kindred phenomena. One factor is control, bilateral control. Control of the emotional expression of a frenzied crowd is unheard of. The onus is on the performer. Beside exceeding their normal capacity for creative expression, some performers also lose control. Some performers plan for loss of control. One rock star trained himself to perform outrageous acts, such as biting the heads off bats, when he became frenzied in a performance high. Responsible parents develop an ability to control their temper so their expressions do not overwhelm their children, who are not yet able to develop control themselves. Intent is another factor. A crowd can come together to form a temporary emotional entity with enormous intensity and a specific intent. At a rock concert the intent of the crowd is usually celebratory. A lynch mob is a crowd out of control with a nasty intent. Beside the collective intent, individual audience members often project their own personal desires on the performers. Intent can be subtle, sometimes so subtle that it is not self-consciously discerned. Some loving parents use their love to control the behavior and development of their children, without being completely conscious of their intent. These factors notwithstanding, intensity remains the strongest factor in a performance high, whether for good or not good.

Each day presents us opportunities to give love. Each day presents us opportunities to receive love. If taken, the effects of these opportunities are cumulative and mounting. It is healthy to see these opportunities and take them, if we want to grow spiritually. Most of the factors that apply to a performance high apply to the little expressions of love in our daily lives. Effi-

ciency in our spiritual aspirations is at least as important as it is our mundane employment. This means that understanding factors like control and intent, is important. We are Christian mystical aspirants. Christ is our ideal. In our aspiration, we are learning to supersede egoism by doing things for the Christ's sake. Christ comes to us from the world of Life Spirit, the world of the purest love. When we do things for the Christ's sake, we are doing them for love's sake. The ways of love are often different from the ways of the self, many times they are diametric. A self-made personality is different from a personality built and tamed by love. We want to become people who will do anything for the sake of love, which requires real control. It is similar with intent. When dealing with a difficult personality, we may want to teach the person a lesson. It doesn't work, at least not lastingly, and it often backfires. Christ in the Gospels tells us to love our enemies, not an easy intent to fulfill, since vengeance is such a deep and strong emotion. St. Paul tells us that loving our enemies is like heaping coals of fire on their heads, but harm is not our intent either. St. Paul's statement awakens us to the efficacy of love. Love will always have its way, and its way is always good. Learning to surrender to the reality of love is our intent. Sometimes it seems as though living this way is impossible, but love will eventually have its way with us if we persist. Though we fail numerous times, we have the reminder from our Rosicrucian Temple Service that love is patient and will never fail us.

It does not often happen in our daily lives that love is given, or received, with the magnitude of a performance high. It does happen, but only on rare occasions that can be brought about by persistent application. We can understand how this works by turning to the Bible. In the Rosicrucian philosophy we are told many times that the Bible is not an open book. Only with the infallible inner eye of intuition can we see beneath its surface. Some simple statements made in passing in the Gospels are passed over and not understood. A perfect example is the description of St. John as "the disciple whom Jesus loved." It is used five times in St. John's Gospel. That is an unusually high number of incidences for a simple description. The frequency of its statement stresses its importance. Most readers take that phrase to mean that St. John was a favorite or a pet to Jesus, or that St. John was bragging. What the phrase means esoterically is that St. John was initiated by Jesus. As this writer understands it, in the Christian mystical initiation, the hierophant applies love to the candidate generously. Love always has its way. At this magnitude, the effect is instantaneous. It purifies the candidate by bringing

to attention as much as the candidate can bear of past experience. Some of it is like heaping coals on one's head. The purpose of this is to harvest the soul power from past experience that is necessary to carry out the rest of the initiatory work. In street language, it is like a retrospection on steroids. It is like purgatory and first heaven combined. The section of the Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception that describes the life cycle can be initiatory, if read and lived with sufficient sincerity. This writer has met such an individual who did so, and who lives an amazing life of service. To be given the love of Christ with that magnitude, control, and intent, exceeds a performance high. May we all be so fortunate to have such an experience.

Chances are that most of us will not become celebrities or initiates any time soon. That does not mean that we are barred from having a taste of the stuff of a performance high. There are other expressions of this phenomenon, though not usually of the same magnitude as an initiation. The love of the Christian mystical initiation is the same love that we seek to draw on in our healing work. To the degree that we are successful in our control, intent, and intensity in the performance of healing prayer, we experience a performance high as a side effect of our purpose, which is healing. An illness can be a micro initiation. Max Heindel tells us that initiation often occurs synchronously with illness. Goethe's life was changed radically toward spiritual things after suffering a severe illness. The healing of an illness can also be a micro initiation. As we struggle with errant thoughts and desires, when trying to draw on Life Spirit in our healing prayers, we undergo a micro purgatory. To the extent that we are successful in our prayers, we become better people. Initiation is about becoming better people. In a quiet way, the person sitting next to you might be undergoing that experience. It is a good and useful way to approach the stuff of a performance high without all of the noise and distraction of celebrity.

Praise

This writer feels blessedly fortunate to remember taking his first step. It was one of the happiest moments of his life. The praise and encouragement he was given were pure, genuine and generous. It was like being in a glow of positivity. There was no thought about anything before or after the event. It was truly living in the moment. There have been other good moments in life but none to match the innocent, childlike joy in that achievement.

Things didn't remain in that state of innocence. He grew up and became a questioning young man. His questioning did not have that childlike, purity and innocence. It wasn't even genuine. It was vain. It was more about him than the things he was questioning.

Among the things he questioned was religion, even God. Influenced by what eventually proved to be sterile academic philosophy, he became an atheist for a short while. Atheism won him the attention he craved in his insecurity. He loved to ridicule religion. He would say things like, "He can't be much of a God if he has to be patted on the back with praise." Beneath all of that glibness, he was still insecure.

He continued to search and question. There seemed to be no good alternatives. In his youth, before atheism, when he would ask hard questions in church youth groups, he would be told, "that's nice, here's a cookie," instead of being given an answer. He liked most of the other young people but they seemed satisfied with "cookie Christianity." Academe had its own shortcomings. It opened him to all sorts of new ideas and even provided a few answers, but it lacked life and ultimacy. The beatnik counter culture had its own limitations, including drugs. Drugs produced illusions and promises of truth that eventually fell short. There was also no incentive. There is no freedom when a drug determines the direction of one's consciousness.

With extremely good fortune, his dissatisfaction and questioning brought him to mysticism, first Theosophy and, shortly thereafter, to his spiritual home in Rosicrucian Christian Mysticism. Finding his spiritual home didn't put an end to his questioning. It persists to this day. The difference is that in mysticism, he knows there are answers. The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception, which was read for the first time in a span of two days, had answers to many

questions he had never thought of asking. Moreover, in the Rosicrucian philosophy, there were means of getting answers and testing them.

The Universal Spirit is boundless. Because of that, some of the questions about it, are also boundless. We can come back to them again and again, and each time the answers are deeper, broader, and more satisfying. It wouldn't be much of a spiritual universe if all of the questions were already answered, and the answers were pat. It would be boring. Max Heindel tells us contentment on the spiritual path amounts to the death of growth. Goethe ends his masterpiece, Faust, speaking of the "infinite feminine" ever leading us onward, leading us onward in divine curiosity.

One of those early questions is the basis of this essay. It goes something like, "If God doesn't need praise, like a pat on the back, what is the place of praise in spiritual reality?"

In the Rosicrucian teachings we have astrology to help us answer questions like this. Traditionally, in astrology, praise is ruled by Jupiter. For centuries Jupiter has been called the greater benefic and Venus the lesser. Both are forces for the good. Jupiter represents not only the greater good, but also good in general. Simplistically, one could say that it is good to praise God. That is true but it isn't very insightful, it is astrological "cookie astrology." We want something more satisfying.

When we page through astrology books and focus on Jupiter, we don't find many references to praise. Perhaps praise isn't important to astrologers. Perhaps praise isn't important to humanity. We do seem to carp and criticize a lot more than we praise. We are often negative about others, and we seem to suffer the illusion that lowering someone else, raises us. Negativity is ruled by Saturn, the planetary opposite of Jupiter. Saturn is the planet of selfishness and egoism, as well as materialism. Those planetary keywords for Saturn describe our outward condition pretty well. Contrariwise, praise is like Shakespeare's "mercy" that blesses both the giver and the receiver.

Not finding much in the way of direct reference to praise in the Jupiter section of astrology texts, we can try indirect means. One of the most frequent descriptions and keywords for Jupiter is generosity. Jupiter loves to give. Individuals expressing the qualities of Jupiter will give to the exclusion of

everything else. Even receiving for such people is a form of giving. Praise is a form of giving. With this in mind, our question takes the form of, “What do we have that is a worthy gift for God?” Experience.

In our present state, we can do things that God, the Universal Spirit, is not capable of. Some of these things are so simple that we take them for granted, and overlook their true value. Ocular vision is a good example. We are the only beings capable of peering self-consciously into the external world. We have the exclusive responsibility of being the self-conscious eyes and ears of God. This is no small gift. Imagine a gifted painter who could not see the final product of his/her work, but could only see it in the inner imagination. It would feel frustratingly incomplete. This gift of ours is necessary to the creation.

Jupiter is positive. Jupiter sees the good. When we are in our right minds, and look out into the world, we see that it is good, that it is spectacular. A true artist knows intuitively when his/her work is good. It is even better when the creation is completely understood and appreciated. The objectivity of an independent witness closes the circle of creation. When we witness the glorious good without, we intuit that it is good. It is an authentic good, and we rejoice in it. In this there is no false praise. To pat God on the back is blasphemous insolence.

Jupiter is expansive. Jupiter does things in a big way. Jupiter is inclusive. The gift of praise is not given in only one small instance of praise. Our lives are filled with such instances and, being self-consciously aware of them, we give praise without even knowing it. We are experiencing the joy of authentic existence. With Jupiter, there is always more. The more, in this instance, is all of us. Billions in our life wave are giving the gift of experience in several worlds in many rebirths. One could discuss other epochs or revolutions or periods, but the attempt to do so, might dilute and distract our conscious attention.

Jupiter is big spirited enough to be open to incorporating the views of others. If we do that with regard to the Creator, while trying to answer our question, we encounter something of almost unspeakable awe. It is not possible for us, at this time, to comprehend the creation with the consciousness of the Creator. Part Two of the Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception gives us a wonderful

view of the creation but it is external, and only skeletal. If, in our imagination, we try to grasp the creation from the initial, grand, creative, spiritual impulse down to the dust beneath our feet, from within, it is beyond words. When we realize that all of us, including all other creatures and creators, are developing unique, creative views of the creation, it is almost incomprehensible. As amazing as such a view is, it is only partially internal. If we could see it with a God's eye perspective, we would experience every being coming to waking, conscious, recognition of the glory of the creation. Each being gives back to God a new and creative, independent perspective of the creation as it is realized. This is true praise in the form of genuine, appreciative realization. Thus, the Creator, in giving and sharing the creation with us, receives a new and wondrous outlook from each and every participant in the creation. It is no wonder that this ongoing revelation between Creator and living creations, is experienced as divine hymns of praise and glory.

At this point, it is obvious that the subject matter beggars the cognitive capacity of the writer and his ability to put it into words. Fortunately, for writers there is a reprieve. A writer can always cite someone who says it better. One of the best examples of the feeling of praise for the divine is the fourth chapter of the Book of Revelation:

“...and immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald. And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment and they had on their heads crowns of gold. And out of the throne Proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind. And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle. And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, the four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou has created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.”

It is clear that the reporter of this experience also struggled with the magni-

tude and glory of the task. However, there is wisdom in the temperance of the author of this book, in choosing to use symbols to describe something that is currently beyond human language. Another thing that adds perspective to this passage is that there are divine beings, beings beyond humans, offering praise. In this regard it is like the nativity story in St. Luke's Gospel where angel choirs raise their voices to God in paeans of joy.

We humans in our materialistic blindness suffer in many illusions. One of them is that we think we are the highest product of evolution because we are advanced beyond the creatures we see around us. It is hard to praise something greater when one thinks one is the highest. "Praise God for making us the best" is not really praise. Having the scales of materialism and vanity removed from one's eyes, one realizes this almost immediately. One is humbled and, in humility, is more willing to offer up praise when one sees one is on the lower rungs of Jacob's Ladder of apotheosis. Even a brief baptism of the Holy Ghost accomplishes this. Recipients of such a blessing often cry out, "Praise the Lord."

Jupiter rules the abstract subdivision of the world of thought, the home of the Holy Ghost in macrocosm, and the Human Spirit in microcosm. Both are ideas. Spirit is spirit but God and Self, or spiritual Ego, are ideas. They are holy, divine ideas, important ideas. Some of their divine value is to be found in something like praise in the abstract subdivision of the world of thought.

On page 52 of *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* is an invaluable diagram. In that diagram, the permanency of the spiritual worlds and the means of manifestation of the concrete worlds is likened to a stereopticon. The center of the mind in the world of thought is the lens of the stereopticon. In the diagram, the Divine Spirit is both the Creator and the operator of the stereopticon. The will of Divine Spirit engenders spiritual light and the capacity to imagine, in Life Spirit. Through Life Spirit abstract ideas are imagined in the abstract subdivision of the world of thought. The will of Divine Spirit projects the ideas through the lens of mind, and they become concretions. This activity takes place analogously in the divine macrocosm, and the human microcosm. In the concrete macrocosm, the worlds of thought, desire and physical stuff, are the products. In the concrete microcosm, the products are forms in concrete thought, desire and physical matter.

Actually, the lens of mind is a two-way lens. (It is also a variable focus lens, but that is for another essay.) It is through the lens of mind that the essence of experience in concretion is taken into the spirit as soul material. This is done through various grades of retrospection.

Also, both surfaces of the lens of mind are reflecting. The center of the mind is a mirror as well as a lens. We know all too well how the lower nature in the desire body takes hold of the lens-mirror and reflects a multitude of all sorts of pseudo thoughts to satisfy desire. Unless the Spirit, the Self, controls the mind from within, the desire nature will use it to its own cunning ends. It is amazingly cunning, but it can only counterfeit illusory thoughts, it cannot create. Creation belongs to the Spirit.

The side of the lens facing the abstract mind is also reflecting. Sometimes in our quiet moments, we reflect on the higher meanings of things. This kind of transcendental reflection can be raised to exalted states of consciousness through spiritual practices. Those exercises, which follow concentration, are called meditation, contemplation and adoration in *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*. Like many other things in *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*, that passage begs elucidation.

There are definite goals for us in the evolutionary creation. One of them is waking, objective, self-consciousness. Though this is a definite objective, our attainment in this goal is open-ended. Unlimited attainment is in the very nature of spirit. Being unlimited does not mean that there is nothing that cannot be done. Perhaps a discussion of states of spirit will clarify this.

As spiritual entities, we are threefold spirits. This is true in our microcosm, and the spiritual macrocosm of the One. The threefold spirit, whether in microcosm or macrocosm, consists of Divine Spirit, Life Spirit, and Human Spirit. The Human Spirit is sometimes also called the Spiritual Ego or the Self. Being in the abstract subdivision of the world of thought, the Self is an idea, a divinely conceived idea. In the macrocosm, that idea is named God, which is not the Universal Spirit, only its focus. The Rosicrucian philosophy points out that Human Spirit is different from Life Spirit or Divine Spirit. Life Spirit and Divine Spirit are called states of pure spirit. By this it is meant that they do not have the internal structure and quasi-limitation that principles and ideas do. Principles and ideas are universal but not complete, as the

incompleteness theorem Gödel demonstrates. They are truths, not *the* truth. Ideas, including the idea of Self, are conceptions. They are conceived in the imaginative capacity of Life Spirit, which Max Heindel sometimes refers to as the spiritual feminine. Since they are conceived within the Universal Spirit, without any outside agency, mystics have called ideas “immaculate conceptions.” The Self, whether in microcosm or macrocosm, is an objectification—not a concrete object but an abstract objectification.

There are various transcendental relationships between the states of spirit that unite to form a threefold spirit. In theogony and cosmogony there is a progressive relationship. Divine Spirit is the spiritual will to be. It just is, and its being is both active and passive. Life Spirit is the love-wisdom which carries out being into spiritual life. It has the capability to conceive a being of life. Human Spirit is the conception. It is a being, albeit an abstract entity. Another way of trying to get at this exceedingly difficult matter, is to see ideas, the idea of Self included, as truths. Then Life Spirit is pure truth from which truths are formed. Life Spirit is the light of truth and Divine Spirit is the ultimate, subsistent, authentic reality behind truth.

In our current incarnate consciousness, it is difficult to understand transcendental, spiritual consciousness. Unless we are in the Spirit, it is foreign to us. “The ways of God are strange to the ways of men.” In the transcendent spiritual worlds, everything is whole. Here, in concretion, things are experienced in parts — “now we know in part, but then we shall know even as we are known.” Thus, to understand waking, objective self-consciousness, we have to try to grasp parts of it and hope that, in spirit, we can unite them to get the gist of the whole. It is something like using a springboard out of concretion.

Chiseled into the lintel of an ancient Greek mystery school were the words, “Gnothi se auton,” “know thy self.” That command is easier said than done. We have many different self-conceptions. The Self is singular but in the concrete worlds, its manifestation is manifold. It takes practice to attain to and maintain consciousness in and of the Self. If we are observant in our daily lives, over time we recognize a constancy of our being. Self-conceits and identifications come and go but this remains constant. That constancy exists outside of time as we know it. To recognize and place our attention in it, is a beginning of self-consciousness.

Another way to self-awareness is arrived at in doing things. Some tasks in life require deep concentration to fulfill them. We have to deliberately apply ourselves to do these things. If we apply ourselves deeply and deliberately enough, we become aware of ourselves as the Doer, the Self. This is one of the goals of our concentration exercise. If we attain to this and shift our attention from the concentration to the Concentrator, concentration becomes meditation. In this state one realizes that one is much more than one has ever believed. Recognizing the divinity of one's being in this state is a baptism of the Holy Spirit. Baptisms of the Holy Spirit can occur in other ways, such as momentarily letting go of personal, preconceived notions, but that is not the way Rosicrucian aspirants go about it. Control is passed, or surrendered, from the personality to the individuality, but there is control.

This is waking self-consciousness. In waking self-consciousness, one cannot truly know something, without also simultaneously knowing one's Self.

It is ironically paradoxical that as one becomes transcendently self-conscious in this manner, one is less selfishly oriented. One realizes that divinity resides as selfhood in others, human and divine. This realization approaches altruism but it is not quite altruism. Altruism occurs when one transcends the Human Spirit to Life Spirit. We remember that a Self is a conception in the pure imagination of Life Spirit. Altruism is a manifestation of the universal love of the love-wisdom aspect of Life Spirit. However, we must be careful to not think of universal love as a thing or an object, as we are prone to do in our concrete consciousness, such as we do with definite, concrete emotions. In light of what we are doing, which is following transcendental, antecedent causation back to origins, it is better to penetrate and transcend selfhood itself. When we do that, we see that Life Spirit is the selfness out of which selves are conceived. When one knows Life Spirit selfness, one knows all selves. One doesn't have to practice altruism. Once one has realized that universal love is the essence of all individual beings, altruism is a fact. However, love, including altruistic love, requires an object, something to love, and altruism conceives the selves as objects to love. This is the basis of seeing the Spiritual Feminine as the Divine Mother, which is, indeed, virgin.

Paradoxical irony continues when we consider objectivity. The physical world, along with the worlds of thought and desire, are worlds of objects. They are not objective. Objects, including the Self, have points of view and

points of view are subjective. The specific knowing of things in subjective points of view, is the purpose of subjectivity. Objectivity is the experience of all subjective points of view at once. Objectivity is experienced in Life Spirit and the transcendent worlds beyond it. (Scientists like to think of their work as objective because anyone can do an experiment and come to the same conclusion. There is objectivity in their work, and there is faceless universality, but it is a faint and distant echo far from complete objectivity and, in a way, it is really a grand subjectivity.) The worlds of objects are for experience. The essence of experience becomes spiritual consciousness in the transcendental spiritual worlds.

We have arrived at a vague and crude idea about the nature of waking, objective, self-consciousness. It is not the same thing as a direct experience, such as a baptism of the Holy Spirit, but it can help us to reach the real experience, provided that we don't objectify it, which would block our way. More irony. In the real experience, one knows one's divinity without doubt. That is one of the purposes of spiritual exercises.

Mystical aspirants are truth seekers. In mythology truth seekers are portrayed as heroes or heroines. One theme common to hero myths is the seeker needing to know his/her self. In myths this often takes the form of not knowing fundamental origins — “Whence came I?” This is true to direct spiritual aspiration. Self-knowledge is divine knowledge. Though there is a higher spiritual logic, self-knowing is not just proving a theory. One experientially knows divinity, but one also knows the internal limitations inherent in selfhood. One wants to get beyond one's Self. Grand and supernal as it is, there is cramping in the experience of self-knowledge. One realizes as Dostoyevsky did, that “God is what it is all about.” Hence, we have exercises such as contemplation to experience Life Spirit and adoration to experience Divine Spirit. These exercises are not merely to satisfy the aspirant, they have purpose. In contemplation and adoration there is a completion of spiritual being. In these lofty spiritual exercises, the effects of waking, objective, self-consciousness in the Human Spirit are reflected into the higher states of spirit. It is not that waking, objective, self-consciousness is not intrinsic to the higher states of spirit. It had to have been, because those higher states are its origin, but its being in the higher states is implicit. If it was not implicit, the states of pure spirit could not be states of pure spirit. There would not be the pure unity that there is. It is not merely for the sake of creative, spiritual sharing that

all of the spiritual entities are created. It is for creative fulfillment AND the fulfillment is not merely for satisfaction, it is because it is GOOD. Thus, when the threefold spirit ponders Self, all of the qualities of higher states of spirit manifest in the Self are reflected back on themselves without extinguishing their purity. These reflections are thus a true, and probably the highest, form of praise of the Universal Spirit.

Prayers to Saints

Why do people pray to saints? Many people do, and many have done so through the ages. The petitioners come from different religious persuasions. Sometimes the petitions are successful. With these successes, one wonders if saints are special agents. Wouldn't it be more effective and efficient to go directly to the Source?

To answer these questions, it is necessary to understand, at least a little, what prayer is. Prayer is thinking, concrete thinking; a special kind of concrete thinking. In the Rosicrucian philosophy we learn that concrete thinking is an evacuative activity. In concrete thinking a thought form is produced in thought stuff. In effect, a thought form is hollowed out of thought stuff. The Thinker, the Self, does the hollowing or evacuating.

Here in the chemical subdivision of the physical world, we like to say nature abhors a vacuum. It is difficult to create a complete physical vacuum. In a physics lab a vacuum is created in a sealed, bell jar using a vacuum pump. The vacuum pump doesn't pump vacuum, it pumps air out of the jar leaving it empty of chemical stuff. It doesn't pump the ethers out because ether is too rare, light still passes through the jar. When the seal is broken, one can hear the air rushing in. A similar sound can be heard when opening vacuum-packed food.

The laws of nature in the world of thought are different from the laws of nature in the physical world. However, the principle of analogy, the Hermetic Axiom, functions throughout all worlds, so there are some analogies between physical and thought evacuation. One doesn't need an apparatus in the world of thought because one works from within rather than from without. In the physical world, the form for the vacuum is determined from without by the bell jar. In the world of thought, the form is determined from within by the intent and skill of the thinker. There are properties of concrete thinking for which there is no analog in the physical world. For example, thought forms are combinative in marvelous ways amazing to our earthly consciousness. Another thing is that thought forms emit tones, some say they sing. These and other differences are not germane to our topic, but the form is.

To understand why the form is important, we have to understand the vacuum better. The thought form is an evacuation of thought stuff. It is not an

evacuation of the higher states of spirit. In this regard, it is analogous to the physical vacuum in the bell jar, where there is not an evacuation of the ethers. In the same way that the ethers permeate the physical vacuum, Life Spirit permeates the thought vacuum. The life of Life Spirit is what vibrates the thought form. The divine power in Life Spirit is what answers our prayers. This is why prayers in the name of Christ, whose home is Life Spirit, are so effective — “Ask whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.” Seen another way, Life Spirit is pure truth, out of which truths or principles are conceived, from which principles come all concrete things. “I am the truth.” Thus, Life Spirit is the truth contained in thoughts. Knowing this, is what led Plato to question, through Socrates, whether all thoughts aren’t true. To answer that would lead into macrocosmic thinking versus microcosmic thinking, and other fascinating topics, which would lead us away from our goal. A simple, generic answer is that Life Spirit can be anything, but what it becomes manifest as, is determined by the thought form. What is thought, is what becomes. There are qualities in thought. One quality of thought is the intent of the thinker, i.e., what is being thought out. Another is how well the thought is formed. A poor thinker with good intent, will not be effective because flimsy or leaky thoughts, so to speak, will be created. Not all prayers are effective prayers. Bearing these things in mind we need to understand thinking more clearly.

In third heaven, the abstract subdivision of the world of thought, the three-fold spirit or Self, is an ideator, combining or creating ideas. From this perspective, transforming ideas into concrete thoughts is a matter of projection. Ideas are combined and projected through the lens of mind into concretion. However, that is not how most human thinking is done at this time in the evolutionary creation. At present, the Self has drawn into the concrete mind and does its thinking from there. It is the Self in the concrete mind that is the Thinker, the evacuator of concrete thought forms. Concrete thinking is not a sterile, mechanical process, though some legalistic minds would like to make it out as cut and dried. Concrete thinking is creative. It is not like a machine, or electronic device, producing tonal pitches. It is more like the human voice intoning with myriad inflections. There is one general attitude to concrete thinking that is responsible for the evacuation. The general attitude is an attitude of questioning. One might even say all concrete thinking is questioning. In questioning the thinker sucks out thought stuff, so to speak, to produce a thought form to hold the truth. This is true of all forms of concrete

thought activity. An artist sketching or drawing is silently asking, “is this the right line?”; a scientist is asking, “is this the solution to the problem?”; a parent is asking how to educate a child. All are questioning, all are creating thought forms to contain insight.

As said earlier, prayer is a special kind of thinking, and it is special in several ways. One way is intensity. An effective prayer is urgent, the prayer is asking with great intensity. The whole being is put into the prayer; thoughts, feelings, everything. Wanting someone suffering to be healed is urgent. Another way that prayer is special, is focus. Effective prayers are focused on specific ends. One doesn't successfully pray, “let there be healing in general.” One prays specifically to succeed. The focus of prayer, whether it is asking for something, or whether one is asking for worshipful connection, is focused on the heart or center of divinity. Whereas a detective working on the solution of a mystery, or a painter selecting the perfect hue is not focused on the Universal Spirit. Prayer is also special, in that the person praying believes the prayer can and will be answered. Some non-believers have become believers by praying in desperation and having their prayers answered. This is important, because one is not handicapping one's self with doubt, which is one of the limitations of skeptical thinking. “And all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.” Believing is found in other kinds of thinking, but it is not always as integral and essential as it is in prayer.

The examples of praying given above are specific, and they usually involve something urgent. Some people only pray in emergencies or crises, and at no other time. Such prayers can be effective if the “special” contingencies are met. However, prayers are more likely to succeed if the person praying is skilled through practice. This means establishing and building a prayer life.

Max Heindel strongly recommended developing a prayer and devotion life, and he gave tips for doing so. Spiritual aspiration is the profession of our lives, so a devotional life must be part of it. In developing a prayer life, the watchwords are like the old hymn, “Nearer my God to Thee.” Developing a prayer life isn't easy. In the Rosicrucian philosophy we are admonished to live lives of work and prayer. As far as this writer can tell, prayer is work, very hard work, very slow work. Even getting started is difficult.

All spiritual exercises are heuristic, self-educational. Spiritual exercises are

the highest form of learning by doing. It is important to keep in mind that, when turning inward, everything is important, and everything is educational. Everything serves the end of spiritual exercises. If one turns inward in prayer and finds the traffic outside annoying, the irritation is meaningful. It is likely a sign of success. One's consciousness has been raised enough to be more aware of the environment. Then one may exercise one's divine freedom in an act of choice. One is free to choose to focus on the traffic noise or on the Object of prayer. Freedom. Freedom from the onset.

Not all of the distraction in prayer comes from the external environment, most of it arises from within. Psychologists call it resistance. Spiritual aspirants find that it comes from the lower nature, the pseudo-self in the desire body. The consciousness of this false ego is limited, compared to the true Self, but it is still formidable nonetheless. In its cunning, it knows that its liberty to direct the personality willy-nilly to its own ends, will be over if it is tamed and directed by the true Self. It does not want a prayer life to be established. If one tries to establish a daily prayer session without fail, it is remarkable how many excuses arise to distract one. One may feel tired, or other things might seem more important, or any number of things are thrown up as plausible excuses. One must assert one's will to be free in one's own being.

One of the objectives of developing a prayer life is self-intimacy. In some respects, self-intimacy is not much different from intimacy with another. There are definite similarities. One of them is that it takes time to develop intimacy. A prayer life is not developed overnight; it may take years of self-application to become inwardly intimate. Consistency is another similarity. One does not form intimate friendships by infrequent interactions, and only when it is pleasant and convenient, one must share with a prospective friend regularly, through "thick and thin," as the idiom says. The great pianist, Paderewski, once said: "If I miss one day of practice, I notice it. If I miss two days of practice, the critics notice it. If I miss three days of practice, the audience notices it." It is like that with prayer. The spiritual will to pray is as gentle as it is firm. Harsh discipline is not likely to reach the subtle spiritual worlds. Some mystics have likened a prayer life to courting a loved one that one never wants to miss or be without.

Developing self-intimacy can be like the early stages of a marriage. During courtship everything is sweetness and love. However, when one marries and

must be with someone every day and in all circumstances, not everything is pleasant. Neither is everything pleasant in a prayer life, especially in the early stages. As with the traffic noise, success is not what one expected it to be. We must remember that all thought forms live, so all prayers are answered in the life of the prayer, which often exceeds our personal life. Even the feeble prayer of a tyro brings light into the inner being, if one is sensitive enough to see it. When our inner being is illumined, things stand out in the light of spiritual consciousness. Some of these things are not pretty. Some of them are glaringly intolerable and must be either transformed or eradicated by retrospection or some other spiritual means, because one can no longer live with what one sees in one's self. Developing a prayer life is character building, and spiritual becoming. One would expect no less in addressing divinity.

It isn't all bad. Most of it is good, almost unbelievably good. Sometimes too good. This writer knows of cases of people addicted to the joys of prayer such that they neglect worldly responsibilities. That is clearly fanaticism, which will eventually have its consequences. A progressive, sustained prayer life is not fanatical. When true to the conscience, it builds the most positive aspects of character. But character building is slow, even with excellent tools like retrospection and prayer. It might take several rebirths before this writer feels comfortable with his progress in a prayer life. People who have been successful in developing a prayer life report there are a progression of stages in prayer. Perhaps none has done so better than St. Teresa of Ávila. Surprisingly, though her horoscope is predominated by signifiers in fire signs, especially, and air signs, she writes about stages of prayer in four stages of water. Her description of stages of prayer is magnificently written with the direct simplicity of one who makes appeals to Divinity without frills or complications that would distract. One learns to anticipate a never-ending succession of stages, each better than its precedents.

Appeals to divinity sometimes present a problem to newcomers to a prayer life, especially for questioning Rosicrucian aspirants. During the past fifty-some years in which this writer has been working on a prayer life and trying to help others do the same, one question has arisen much more often than any other. To whom does one pray? Rosicrucian students are taught that their innermost being, the Self, is a divine being. It is our center. The same focus in the macrocosmic scope of our solar, creative manifestation is called God. Max Heindel tells us that the being we call God is the Source and goal

or end of everything in our creation. Then, there is the Supreme Being on the first or highest cosmic plane, the ultimate creative being. Finally, there is the Absolute, sometimes referred to as the One by Max Heindel. The Absolute is also sometimes referred to as the Unspeakable, i.e., everything that is, and is not — being and nonbeing, and even something that could be neither being nor non-being. It is even beyond conception as a being. To whom does one address one's prayers? The answer is that it might not matter. The Bible tells us that to know God (Divinity), one must believe God is. The Bible also tells us God is a spirit and must be worshipped in spirit and in truth. One does not address spirit, or a spirit, as one addresses a person. Meister Eckhart said, "Some people want to see God with their eyes as they see a cow" The central quality and character of spiritual being is central to itself at whatever level. The centering is what counts. If one is focusing on whatever level, one is not centering. If one is addressing a friend, one focuses on the friend or the communication will not go well. The friend, in person, has a specific location, spirit does not. The center of spirit is everywhere. "The ways of God are strange to the ways of men." It is the centering intent of prayer that matters. To the degree that one addresses the Center, is one in prayer. This, too, is one of those open-ended things about prayer, one continuously improves at centering and penetrating more deeply. The same idea applies to distance as well as direction. If one considers the object of prayer as distant, it will be distant. One focuses on the heart of God irrespective of distance or direction. "Nearer my God to Thee," is more than a religious sentiment.

There are many more important things about prayer which are not germane to answering our initial question. This much does provide an answer to, "Why do people pray to saints?" There is an open-ended scale of prayers. It stretches from those who pray to totems to those praying in spirit to whatever degree of centering on divinity. Those who pray to saints are on the more concrete end of that scale. They need a concrete object on which to center. Hopefully, the saints will lead them to praying more toward the Center of Being. Our actions in prayers, as examples, might also help.

Books

When this writer was a young man, he loved to go to the movies. Sometimes he would take in one or two films per week. Now, in his dotage, he sees one or two per year, at most. He was an unusual movie lover. Things that impressed most viewers, like stars, or cinematography, were not so important. The story was the all. If a film had a “mythology” that spoke to him, it was a good film. There were exceptions. Occasionally, one or two lines of dialog would set his mind spinning for months or even years. One such instance is the origin of the theme of this essay. It occurred in *Lawrence of Arabia*.

The film, *Lawrence of Arabia*, was highly controversial. When the movie came out, it was banned in almost all mid-eastern countries except Egypt, because of its portrayal of Arabs. None of that is relevant to this essay. T.E. Lawrence was a cartographer, self-styled adventurer, and British agent—a prime, rugged, individualist. During the First World War, the Ottoman Turks controlled most of the mid-east, and were allied with the Germans. Lawrence led a band of Arabs, formerly held as prisoners by the Turks. Their task was to destroy the Turk’s capacity to wage war. They were enormously successful. Most of their campaign is not in the film, and most of it is not germane to this essay. The film focuses on the proposed, surprise attack on Aqaba. The only way surprise was possible was if the attack came from the desert. This meant crossing the Nefud desert, a desert so inhospitable that even the Bedouins considered it impassible. They crossed at night when the heat was less extreme. As they crossed, one man, who served one of the chieftains, fell off his camel unnoticed. When they reached water, his absence was noticed. Lawrence said he would go back for him. All of the chieftains strongly advised against it saying, “It was written”. Lawrence was insistent. He went back alone, on foot, during the heat of the day. When he found the man, he carried him back, still during the heat of the day. When he returned, he was hailed as a mighty hero by all. Later in the camp there was a dispute and the man Lawrence saved, killed another man. The chieftains came to Lawrence and told him he had a big problem. According to Arabian tradition, murder demands revenge. The Koran states vengeance is a duty. They told him the revenge would demand a reciprocal revenge from the other tribe, and so on, and soon he would have no army. The only solution would be if an outsider, Lawrence, fulfilled the revenge. So, Lawrence had to take the man he saved with great heroism, to the other side of a butte to shoot him. When he re-

turned, they again hailed him as a hero, and with sympathy, they said “It was written.” “It was written.” These three words have stuck in this writer’s mind for at least forty years.

Why would someone say, “It was written”? In Islamic culture everything happens by the will of Allah, with no exceptions, and Allah keeps close tabs on the world. In some Barbary Coast cultures it is rumored that sorcerers can get away with dastardly deeds because, when bad things happen, it is because of the will of Allah. Judaism and Christianity are not without their own beliefs about the finality of writing. There is the story of the “handwriting on the wall” foretelling the downfall of Belshazzar, as told in the book of Daniel. Then there are the books in the Revelation of St. John:

“And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and the books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books.”

In another place it is written: “I will never blot out the name of that person from the book of life but will acknowledge that name before my Father and his angels.” Finality.

The books in Revelation are allegorical. Some represent the memory of nature as found in various spiritual worlds. The finality is not allegorical. What is done, is done. We can transmute the essence and energy bound up in deeds, but not the deeds themselves. The essence of our deeds is built into the soul body to eventually be spiritualized. When we have built the soul body sufficiently strong enough to meet our Lord “in the air”, we have met the requisite condition for continuation in the evolutionary creation, some call it salvation. It can’t be taken from us. Finality.

There is a psychological hardening in writing. When something is written, we tend to think it is done. This writer has known artists and writers who have destroyed past works because of their cramping effect on new creation. A retrospective of past creations can be helpful, but not if it encumbers the present. In our post mortem retrospection, we dissolve our spent bodies, and if we don’t, they come back in the next rebirth to bother and bind us. If we think something is done, or over, or finished, it inhibits progress in that direction. This writer resisted formal writing, in favor of speaking, for

many years because he was concerned that writing would stop the flow of progressive thinking. He wrote, but would not do formal writing, because of its finality. It took a greater faith in the source of epigenesis within, to take up writing. The image of a brook freezing over but still having fresh water flowing beneath the ice, was helpful to come to a change of heart about writing. When we think something is done, we move on to other things. Diversity is fine but not if it diverts one from a vital stream which has more to offer. There is petrifying vanity in the common phrase, “been there, done that.”

There is also hardening in reading. The act of putting the words together in one’s consciousness tends to fix them in one’s consciousness. Sometimes we put things together that we wish we hadn’t. In the extreme, there is the tendency to think, that because something is written, it is true. Literalism is one of the worst forms of materialism. It is easy to be carried along on the stream of consciousness of the writer. Sometimes one is too far downstream before one realizes where one is headed. Sometimes one doesn’t realize it at all, and is stuck with an erroneous belief based on an erroneous mental construction. Reading requires as much self-conscious self-observation as writing.

The problems presented by writing are compounded and augmented when writing is compiled into a book. A book is more of a presence than sheets of writing. The formal format of a typeset and printed book commands respect. A book is authoritative, which word contains the word author in it. If someone writes a book, the content is given more credence because of it being in book form. Books are records, sometimes official records. When we want to recognize an achievement, we say, “book it”. Businesses keep “books” as financial records. When someone is an expert or maven, we say they “wrote the book” on the subject.

All of these qualities about books are magnified in central, religious books. Every religion has at least one. For Jews and Christians, it is the Bible, for Muslims it is the Koran, and other religions have their own books. Central religious books have magnified authority because they are deemed the word of God, even though the messengers who wrote them were imperfect humans, like us. Internal contradictions, dated information about the world, symbolic instead of straightforward presentation, none of these things detract from the authority of scripture. Religious literalism is more prone to fanaticism, and other dangers, than simple literalism — ‘God is on my side’.

No one dares to challenge the Bible, as a given group interprets it, with any hope of remaining in the fold. One must read the Bible with circumspection, and always look for the truth hidden within and behind the surface presentation, or the danger of hardening is great.

Writing is foreign and unnatural. We have a special organ, the larynx, for speaking, but there is no special organ for writing. Written words are usually not like the things they represent. This is true, even when writing is in oriental pictographs, such as Chinese. It is possible to live a natural, healthy life while illiterate. Some great people who changed the world, chose to not write. Socrates, who through his great power of mind influenced western culture significantly, never wrote. Ammonius Saccus, one of the founders of neo-Platonism, which produced prolific writers, is said to have taught orally and wrote nothing. Christ, as portrayed in the Gospels, wrote but a few words in the dust.

Writing is relatively new to human culture. Limitation in space allows only a few broad statements in written language, to arrive at the desired philosophical ideas. Some written languages, such as mathematics and cartography, require no knowledge of a specific culture, or an oral language, and they can be abstract or concrete. Some primitive, oral languages were, or are, almost complete ostensive, or deictic, and without grammar. Such languages only point at concrete things without abstract ideas. For instance, there is lemon grass color or fig leaf color, but no abstraction of greenness. Oral or deictic expression need not be primitive. It is the heart of some sophisticated poetry.

Written languages have had their own evolution, a subject too vast and complex for a brief essay on mysticism. Most began in some pictorial form, like Egyptian hieroglyphs or Chinese pictographs. The pictures represent actions, things, or relationships which oral utterings also represent. Both vocal formations and pictures eventually became concretized into letters and words. Abstract relationships became a grammar or logic. In all of this, there are many variants. It is all very complex.

As is often the case, Christian Mysticism offers a long-range description of matters like this. It is a description that clarifies the matter, and shows the purpose of it. In *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* we are told, from clairvoyant studies, that we humans did not have voice until the Lemurian Epoch

when we were recapitulating the animal-like stage of the Moon Period. We could make sounds but not words. Words came to us after the separation of the sexes, and the division of the creative nucleus into the larynx, on one end of the spine, and the genitals on the other. Also, some of the forms became either male or female, to allow for cooperative continuance in the physical world, while the complex organism was being formed in individual bodies, with the other part of the creative energy. Some of the portion of the creative energy that was developing the body was directed upward to build the larynx, and also built the brain and nervous system. As the brain developed, the spirit was able to begin to enter the dense physical body through the mind, which is the higher spiritual counterpart of the brain. As this came about, we became capable of forming words. This development began during the early part of the Atlantean Epoch. Those early words were words of power that could influence things in the world around us. We were natural magicians, and we were still pure and innocent, because the effects of our selfishness which had caused our fall had not taken hold and developed yet. Cursing came later. Though we could influence the world around us, we could not yet see it as we do now. We saw its inward representations in our inner being as soul pictures. External sense perception came later, in the Atlantean Epoch. As the Atlantean Epoch proceeded, our vehicles became aligned, the Spirit drew into them and developed them, and we gradually became outward. Eventually, by the end of the Atlantean Epoch, the Spirit became indwelling, self-conscious, and capable of clear perception of the without.

In this evolutionary progression a number of important things were, and are, happening simultaneously. It is important to note them, even if it means some repetition. Involuntary, internal, spiritual vision was waning, while external sense perception was waxing. The dense physical body was developing magnificently, especially the nervous system. The mind, and the brain it works through, were developing rapidly. The spirit was becoming indwelling, and it was awakening, through its interactions with the external world. It was becoming conscious through the harvesting of Conscious Soul generated in these interactions. Since the individual spirit is formed in the abstract, subdivision of the world of thought, our powers of abstraction and ideation were awakening and developing. We were becoming capable of universalizing from experience.

Some other simultaneous developments were not so good, or so pleasant. The

effects of selfish disobedience, that precipitated our fall too deeply into matter, were coming into their own. They were building momentum, so to speak. They were being played out in our arc into chemical matter. They were hardening the world to such an extent that there was a danger of progress coming to a halt, save for the sacrifice of Christ. We were hardening ourselves and the world through desire. We created a world that was not intended in the divine plan. We removed ourselves from direct, divine, guidance from the spiritual hierarchies. In our earthly consciousness, we became separate from each other because of our spiritual blindness to inner connections and spiritual unity. We could do cruel, unnatural things to each other. We also developed an abstract, materialistic consciousness. This consciousness has become integral to our language, especially to our written language that developed out of this unnatural state.

Not everything about these developments was, or is, bad. We have accepted our condition, and have applied our divine creativity to conquer the world, even though our intent has been selfish. For example, in science and technology, we have delved deeply into the material world with almost incredible detail. In our interactions with chemical matter, we have developed Conscious Soul, and consequent consciousness. Even though the consciousness is materialistically oriented, it is still consciousness, and consciousness is one of our evolutionary goals. Spirit, in its consciousness, will not be denied. We *will* turn the corner back into the inner worlds, to the home of the Spirit. Even materialistic science seems to be approaching inner reality by the day. In our actions, as we fulfill our duties, we are building our soul bodies. Reawakening clairvoyance and awareness of the inner worlds is inevitable.

In this journey, we are blessed to have the guidance of the Rosicrucian philosophy. The Rosicrucian philosophy teaches that the path of the evolutionary creation is a spiral into, and out of matter. When coming out of matter, we pass through the same states of being that we passed through while going into matter. However, the perspective is different and we are different. We are more evolved beings on the way out of matter, and we are more conscious beings. On our way into matter, we had to sacrifice some things due to the greater limitations deeper in matter. In chemical matter we are most limited and it is here that

we learn fundamental lessons of simple, objective being. Max Heindel wrote in several places that, when we regain the things we have sacrificed on the down-swing, we regain them at a higher level. They are better than what we sacrificed.

All of the above applies to language, oral and written. We have lost the fabulous memory we possessed in the Lemurian and early Atlantean epochs. In its place we have written annals available to everyone. We can analyze the past with reason. In doing this we can abstract moral principles that apply to things beyond our limited personal experience. By writing the results of experiments, anyone can read and determine for themselves, whether something is objectively true, and we can generalize knowledge. We can even extend our perception through photography and other means of recording. We can scrutinize and analyze recordings in superlative detail. We have an almost ultimate book that is the internet, with all of the information, true and untrue, that it contains. All of these things are important.

In the Rosicrucian philosophy we are admonished to perceive things clearly and precisely with great detail. However, the way we are doing this now, though progressive and helpful, is still external and indirect. Scientists no longer do much with direct perception. Instead, devices do the perceptive work. Physicists have photomultiplier tubes sensitive to single photons. Scientists are doing proportionately less direct, intuitive thinking. Instead, they do brute force computerized analysis of massive amounts of data. Sometimes it is called “needle in a haystack” analysis. Doing things this way may be good for our evolution with regard to helping the mineral kingdom by building these devices, but is it good for our individual, evolutionary development? Maybe, but only if we are also developing directly.

We have grown significantly through writing, and all of the other indirect activities, but they are still indirect. These indirect things are products of the consciousness of a fallen humanity. When we fell, we began to know death. The deeper we have progressed into our fall into materialism, the more deathly our consciousness has become. As science sees it, in the second law of thermodynamics, everything is entropic; all energy is dying and going into chaos. However, death, in itself, is not bad, but not living is. Christ came to give us life: “I came that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.” The spiritual life is direct. One doesn’t pray indirectly,

and one doesn't want to meet the Teacher indirectly. It is only when one addresses an archetype directly, that it sings its truth. Forms will continue to lose their useful value and dissolve, but life will continue onward.

All of the indirect and deathly things will pass away. That includes materialism, books and this essay (which its author is beginning to think may be a good thing). In the Rosicrucian philosophy, we learn that death is an important time. In the natural, unwinding panorama, when the archetype has run out at death, everything is re-experienced. It is important that we give full attention to the panorama. It is important because, if possible, nothing must be lost. Nothing. Our life here is precious. An entire past evolution, and hundreds, if not thousands, of years of preparation have been put into it. We do not want to waste experience. Our moral and spiritual future depend on how much we get out of our experience.

As we evolve, the panorama can be more than personal experience. Our experience is formed from the stuff and principles of nature. With skill and intent, we can be capable of harvesting the evolution of nature as it unfolds in the world through our lives. After all, we, as nature forces, built it into the world between lives.

Max Heindel repeatedly speaks of the advantage of efficiency in the life of spiritual aspiration. One of the places he mentions it is in regard to the retrospection exercise. With retrospection, we don't have to wait until death; we can remember, and take advantage of our life experiences now. With retrospection, one can harvest more than one's personal experiences. One can retrospect nature for the Creator. For most of us, this writer included, doing this is still only a dream. Provided we do the work to realize them, dreams are not bad things.

Some of the things that apply to personal death, apply also to the cultural death of our evolutionary deviation. Nothing must be lost. Writing and books may die, but not the consciousness and the talents developed through them. The memory we develop through the retrospection exercise, should eventually exceed the memory of the Lemurian and early Atlantean Epochs. Moreover, it will be voluntary and, even more, objective. All of the objectivity of written records will be available without writing, and it will be living. It will be incorporated, along with advances in communication learned through all

means of communicating, into a new ability. The result will be a new form of pictorial communication which is a return of the pictorial communication of the Lemurian Epoch regained at a much higher level. Max Heindel calls it “Jupiter Period objective picture consciousness” capable of being “impressed on the minds of others”. This is something we can aspire to, even with our current, feeble communication skills. It is motivation for us to work through our present tasks and trials, to something more live and free.

Because of the nature of some of the material in this essay, there was no small amount of anguish experienced in composing it—this write dislikes spouting doctrine, even to get to living principles. At its conclusion its writer can look back in relief and say, “It was written.”

Where It Is Most Needed

The first part of the *Rosicrucian Fellowship Healing Service* is an inspirational reading. Its purpose is to rouse intense feeling in the participants. Intense feeling will take prayers deep into the spiritual worlds, where they can draw on Life Spirit, the source of all healing. The reading also brings the participants to a common focus on the white rose in the center of the Rosicrucian emblem. The service is a means to produce a thought form to receive and hold the healing force, which is then gathered from the inner worlds by the Invisible Helpers. After the reading, there is a long, deep prayer session. When the prayer session is finished, the reader covers the emblem and says: “We will now leave the liberated healing force with Christ and the Invisible Helpers to be used where it is most needed.”

Spiritual healing is a large and deep subject, worthy of volumes, too much for one short essay. Even big endeavors have small beginnings. It has been said that the journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step. This essay is a baby step that may be faltering. It will focus on the final five words of the Healing Service, “where it is most needed”.

Plato, who Max Heindel told us was an Initiate, said much about healing. Some of what he said on the subject, that is relevant to our topic, is in the dialog named *The Charmides*, a dialog about temperance:

Charmides, a young nobleman, has been having headaches upon awakening in the morning. He has been told that Socrates has a charm which will cure his headaches, so he comes to Socrates. Socrates tells him the charm will do more than cure the headache. He then proceeds to tell the lad what he has heard from eminent physicians. He says those physicians will not cure an ailment of the eyes, for example, without also curing the head. The head cannot be healed without healing the whole body, which cannot be healed without also healing the soul. The idea is that body and soul, the major components of the whole, must be in balance in themselves, and with each other, for the whole being to be healthy.

Plato taught holistic health thousands of years before the New Agers. Temperance was the means to bring body, soul and the whole being into balance. What temperance is, was never reached in the dialog, but that is irrelevant to our purposes. Plato’s view of healing is in rough agreement with the Rosicru-

cian philosophy, which also teaches that physical and spiritual healing are complementary for lasting cures, but more of that later.

In his late thirties, this writer came down with a serious case of pneumonia. When it persisted, further diagnosis found that he had a large, cancerous, bronchial tumor. It was a rare variety which has its origin when the lungs separate from the intestines in the embryo. At that time, intestinal stem cells sometimes go to the lungs where they produce a tumor. Cancer had been with him during his entire life, before it was discovered around age forty. Much to the chagrin of his physicians, he decided to do alternative therapy. He read a shelf of books on the subject, and settled on *Gerson's Therapy*. This choice agreed with the findings of Michael Lerner, PhD, in his excellent book, *Choices In Healing*, published by MIT Press at a later date than this writer's illness. The therapy was partially successful. The writer's body was regenerated to vigorous health. The therapy held the cancer at a standoff, but the tumor remained. The therapy might have been completely successful, if the patient had used natural pancreatic enzymes, which are used in most successful alternative therapies, to break down tumors. He refused to do that because he didn't want to live by taking the lives of animals. Eventually, surgery was necessary, but no other therapy was necessary because his health was otherwise excellent. In studying alternative therapy, he learned that malignant tumors are easier to eradicate than benign tumors. The reason for this is that the intelligence of the body, as a whole, knows what is more dangerous to it, and it goes after the source of danger in proportion to the degree of danger. Thus, the notion of treating the whole of the body, held by Plato and the Rosicrucian philosophy, proves true in practice. The intelligence in the body knows where healing is most needed.

The body does not have to be thought of as we normally think of it. The way we think of it is short-sighted. An evolutionary view of the body is much better for us. We usually think of it as a discrete thing of single use for one lifetime. Even students who believe in rebirth, see it as a form which is discarded at death. At best, successive bodies are seen as beads on a necklace of rebirth. Actually, the physical body is an evolutionary entity, a creation which passes through numerous stages and changes. The Rosicrucian philosophy tells us it began as a thought form in the Saturn Period, when our solar, creative manifestation was no more dense than a concrete thought. At that time we, were mineral-like, and our experience and service were to

provide substance for things formed by other creative beings, much as our current minerals do now. The physical body persisted and evolved through plant-like and animal-like stages in the Sun and Moon Periods respectively, until it became a human form in the present Earth Period. Even in the Earth Period it has passed through many changes. In the Polarian Epoch its form (but not its size) was more like a virus than the magnificent organism it is now. A good way to begin to have a better idea of it, is to conceive of it as analogous to one of those videos published by art museums, wherein a face in one famous painting morphs into the face of another famous painting, and so on. The chief difference is that the human form passes in and out, through the spiritual worlds, in different evolutionary periods as it morphs. All of the experiences of form, substance and other physical qualities, are recorded in the heart of it. Nothing is lost. Every experience of form is incorporated into it. Everything that is, and was, is part of it. Everything becomes the basis of form in new creative expressions within the divine scheme of creation. This “everything” includes the errors we have made along the way by breaking the laws of nature in the various worlds we evolve through. There is a kind of wisdom and cosmic logic in this form, and there is divine intelligence of the Spirit that created it and works through it. Due to the limits of matter, and of our creative abilities, we cannot, at this time, manifest everything into one physical body and one lifetime. One might say we have a backlog of material destiny. With the help of the Recording Angels, we work out what is most needed in a given rebirth according to the logic of the whole. Thus, each edition of the body, and its lifetime, has its own logic, and that logic is in harmony with the logic of the whole evolutionary body. Healing, if it to be true and lasting, must be in harmony with this logic, in large and small.

All of this seems very complicated. One feels that it will be a long time before one will be able to understand it enough to become a physical healer, perhaps several rebirths. That is true, if one is speaking about direct physical healing, like Christ, who reshaped bodies. Healing doesn't have to be complicated. Wondrous things have been done without complication. Healings have come about through simple prayer done according to the will of the Father.

Prayer is an act of magic. Magic is an act of utilizing divine creative forces which transcend the forces normally active in the physical world. Though the spiritual forces used in magic supersede the regular laws of physics, they are not lawless. Max Heindel tells us that the more access we have to higher spir-

itual powers, the more moral restrictions are placed on us. The moral onus is huge. Even in a simple prayer of healing for a friend, it is important that some form of “thy will be done” be part of the prayer. It is also important to not violate the will of the recipient of the prayer. Healing through Life Spirit is a form of grace that Christ offers us. Though offered, we are free to receive it or not. Everyone has that freedom, and it is not to be overridden.

One must exercise good judgment about the appropriateness of restrictions to prayer. If one becomes too restrictive, not much prayer would be done. It might be okay to pray for someone without their knowledge, provided there is a proviso in the prayer that they accept the prayer at some level of their being. There have been times in this writer’s life when he has been saved from making serious errors by receiving unrequested prayers which, in his desperation, he was open to receiving. The principle in this seems to be that the more direct and specific an act of magic, the more knowledge (especially moral and spiritual knowledge) the practitioner must have, and the more acceptance is important as a factor. The Invisible Helpers request weekly acceptance.

Prayer is a skill which must be used with respect, knowledge, and care. Tolstoy tells a Russian folk tale of a man doing a kindness to a stranger he meets on a path. The stranger was an angel in human form who tells him that, because of his kindness, it is granted to him that whatever he wants done, will be done, until sundown. The man continues on his way and encounters someone being beaten, which he wishes wasn’t so, and his wish is granted. He has other encounters along the way, in which he wishes that things that he saw, were different from what they were, and his wishes were granted. He feels good about his deeds. At sundown he meets the angel again. The angel takes him back along the way and reveals that every act that he changed was not for the better, as he thought it was, and that he had actually interfered with something good in the making. His blessing was not that his wishes were granted. It was that he learned that more complete knowledge of what was happening is more important than merely having wishes granted to change things on the basis of appearances. It is like that with spiritual healing. The more specific and direct an application of healing, the more one must know to ethically apply the healing force. Sometimes the best prayer is a prayer to help the patient to understand why he/she is suffering. It took this writer four years of suffering with cancer, and five years after the surgery, to un-

derstand why he had the cancer. To this day, some forty years later, he still receives insights into it. Astrology was helpful in coming to understanding, but not as important as facing himself. He had to admit to himself that there were some not nice things about himself that were behind the cancer. In most illnesses the patient doesn't know why the illness has come about until well after death, most likely in second or third heaven, when the experience is digested and assimilated. What is most needed can be as important as where it is most needed. Wisdom and insight are often more important than removing symptoms. Oliver Wendell Holmes has a wonderful line of poetry about this: "Weep not for those who bear the cross, but for those who bear the cross without the glory."

To understand healing, it is helpful to understand how illness comes about. Illness becomes manifest in the concrete worlds in the way that everything becomes manifest in the creation. It follows the same cosmological path that healing does, and the same laws of nature. Illness entered our human stream of evolution at the time of what is called "the fall". At that time our individualities were nascent, and weak, in self-consciousness. We were easily misguided. In fear and insecurity, born in the burgeoning awareness of the death of our dense physical bodies, we were led to believe that together, we could have immortality by using the creative force to generate new bodies at will. It was not a lie. It was a partial truth. The missing part of the whole was that, if the creative force was not used in harmony with the laws of the greater creation, we would introduce discord, and unintended consequences, in microcosm and macrocosm, into the creation, things such as hardening materialism, illness, and other woes. We cannot isolate our deeds. What happened at the fall, was that we, as Selves (there was no lower nature yet), chose to use the creative force before we knew how to use it harmoniously with the laws of nature. We were tempted, but we cannot blame the tempters, or the temptation, for our choices. All of this means that we, as creative spiritual beings, Selves, are skewed in our self-conceptions. We are not ill as Selves, which are spiritual beings, but we are in want of spiritual healing to correct the misconceptions we have about ourselves.

As creative beings, we manifest our creations in the concrete worlds. Our creations include our various bodies and our lives, much of which are created in concert with others. All manifestation in the concrete worlds begins with concrete thought. This is true even when the desire body purloins the

concrete mind to its own ends. At the will of the thinker, concrete thoughts become clothed in desire. Desires motivate action or life in the ethers. Actions precipitate forms and conditions in the chemical, physical world. This simple cosmological train of vertical causation is far-reaching in explaining illness and many other things. For example, selfish thoughts produce selfish desires, which produce selfish actions, which produce limiting physical conditions, such as disease. Though simple, many of these manifestations become amazingly complex, especially when they are developed over several lifetimes, as we try to avoid unpleasant consequences.

In the same way that the journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step, health begins in simple actions. The first step in spiritual, preventative medicine and healing, is thought control. The Rosicrucian philosophy teaches that the concrete mind is in the early stages of its development. It is still pliable, whereas the dense, physical body is our most mature vehicle and does not lend itself to immediate change. “Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?” With concerted effort, one can gain control of the concrete mind. That is what our concentration exercise is about. One can substitute positive thoughts for habitual negative thoughts. This requires one, in spirit, to be alert and aware of one’s thinking and thought patterns, so this is also a spiritual exercise in self-awareness. Doing this strengthens the thinker, the mind, and the archetype which, in turn, improves the quality of life, health and longevity. Thought control isn’t easy. Some of its benefits are immediate and others will take a while. It may take several lives to accomplish complete thought control. In any case, the goal is a worthy goal, and one of the better ways we can spend our energy.

Much of the Rosicrucian approach to health is prevention. Starting on the road to health by changing thinking is a top down approach. Top down methods often require time to be effective. It takes time for a thought to mature, and work through the higher worlds into the physical world. There are often circumstances when time is of the essence. If someone has suffered a severe wound and is bleeding profusely, or if someone has just suffered a stroke, it is no time to preach the virtues of changing one’s thinking. Emergency conditions require emergency action. Modern medicine has many excellent means to handle emergencies. Max Heindel points out that by changing one’s life by improving one’s diet, taking exercise, and developing positive attitudes, many illnesses and emergency conditions can be avoided. Even such a sim-

ple thing as curtailing overeating can decrease the likelihood of colds, and getting ample sunshine can do the same for the flu. Not all preventative practices are spiritually correct. Some methods of prevention in vogue in allopathy are not good, and many involve moral and social issues.

One of these issues involves the notion of overpopulation, which might not be an issue—“the Recording Angels are above mistakes”. Because of this, some pregnancies are considered undesirable, some are even considered merely inconvenient. It is now the law in the United States that abortion is legal. This writer is by no means pro abortion, but he does realize that abortion is a moral and spiritual issue that cannot be solved by laws for or against it. It is only by raising moral and spiritual consciousness that the issue of abortion can be resolved. Parturition is a natural process near the end of the causal train mentioned above. The Recording Angels are helping individuals to work out their destiny, and creative works, through this natural process. By the time of an abortion, a good deal of effort has been put into the intended birth by various spiritual beings. To abort is to thwart both destiny and natural processes, and it will, no doubt, have grave consequences. Some choose to go farther up the causal chain and use birth control. That is better, in that it avoids wasting energy and unwanted pregnancy, but it does nothing to redirect the creative energy, or fulfill destiny. It also does nothing to reform desire. Better is not best. The best is to go to the top of the causal chain and catch the impulse before it becomes a thought. In our times, most would consider this suggestion laughable. It might be, since so few are in control, or even want to be in control of their thinking. However, since we know better, it is our duty to address the issue of misuse of the creative force since it is so important. We must speak out even though we may not always be able to live up to the highest standard of conduct. If we don't try, it will never happen. Our portion of the creative force is the greatest power that we have. It is the force which creates, sustains, transforms and dissolves everything in the cosmos, and the cosmos itself. All healing, and other forms of magic, are accomplished through its agency. Once aroused the creative force, and the procreative desire, are almost impossible to deny. If it is transmuted, it is the intense feeling that propels successful healing prayers. We have had many lives of developing the habit of uninhibited, and untransmuted, sexual expression. Society and most medical and psychological authorities teach that a free, fluent sexual life is healthy. From these things, we can see that the way to a completely healthy future for humanity is an uphill struggle. Since the

creative force is central and fundamental to health and healing, this is centrally important. The Adversary, who harvests us for creative energy, and the experience generated by its misuse, knows this is important and does what it can to keep us in our deviant ways.

Most of modern medicine is bottom up, if even that. For many conditions, it merely manipulates apparent symptoms through pharmaceuticals. Often this merely shifts sufferings to “side effects”. This is done, even though the most basic courses in physiology teach balance, in the form of homeostasis, is necessary for the proper functioning of the human organism. The list of “side effects” on a label, or in a pharmaceutical advertisement, are terrifying. Due to materialism most physicians don’t know, or don’t believe, there is a top-down or spiritual approach to health and healing. When this writer mentioned his soul searching to find inner reason for his cancer, the physician told him to not do that, because it would only produce a burden of guilt. It didn’t. In fact, it relieved self-negation that had been with him most of his life.

Besides being bottom-up, modern medicine is a product of the “fall” in another way. We fell because we were made aware of the death of our physical bodies in such a way that we feared death. We took a wrong path to assuage our fear. Since then we have been preoccupied with death. Death has become the way that we deal with our problems. Our preoccupation with death is more than murder and warfare. If we have enemies to our crops, we kill the enemy — death. When the crop poisons are taken into our bodies they cause cancer. Then we try to kill the enemy that is cancer with more poisons like chemotherapy and radiation — death. We try to kill every other bacterium, fungus, or virus that we think threatens our health. It doesn’t work. It doesn’t work because it tries to protect life with deathly measures, and the life forms, which are the final causes of disease, mutate and evolve while we, at the same time, are not evolving. We want to evolve by strengthening our immune systems. We want to evolve by changing our attitudes to something pro life, something pro-evolutionary.

There is another thing we do, with regard to disease, that we do in fear. We try to block disease. We seem to think disease is something that merely happens, almost something random. An illness, especially a major illness likely to end in death, doesn’t just happen. Almost all of the important experiences

in life are destined. They are built into the archetypes of our lives and bodies as we prepare to come to rebirth. We build our archetypes with the help of the Recording Angels, “who are above mistakes”, as our healing service tells us. In illness we suffer. When we suffer, the effects of the suffering sinks into our inner being as soul material. Eventually, when the soul material from suffering is assimilated into the Spirit, the Spirit is awakened, learns from the experience, and makes corrections. Most of this learning and correction comes after death. Sometimes, learning and correcting takes more than one rebirth. Suffering is not an efficient means to soul growth, in the way that retrospection is, but it is sure and effective. This writer was improved in character from suffering his bout with cancer.

It is our misdeeds — most notably our errant thoughts and desires—that crystallize into diseases and limiting medical conditions. Emerson said, with wit and wisdom, that “a sick man is a sinner found out”. The consequences of our misdeeds are indubitable, unless we do something about them. As a first step, accepting one’s condition as a consequence of one’s past behavior, is spiritually healthy. Accepting the conditions presented to us by destiny must not be passive. We are divine beings, and it our duty to actively participate in our destinies with creative transmutation. Attempting to block the consequences is not transmuting. Learning the spiritual causes of one’s condition is the next step toward transmutation. If the individual in the sick bed, who cries out “why me?” would pray and listen inwardly for an answer to that question, improvement and evolutionary progress could begin immediately, instead of having to wait until after death.

In passing, it must be mentioned that it is perverse to seek out illness. To do so is a mild form of masochism in need of psychological healing. Acceptance, as part of regeneration, is different from invitation.

Prevention is far more efficient in soul growth, than struggling with the consequences of past misdeeds. Blocking illness is not prevention. Blocking only defers destiny, even though we, in our spiritual darkness have become quite skilled at blocking through material science and medicine. Blocking doesn’t transmute, and sometimes it has immediate, harmful side effects. It is grossly inefficient to defer destiny to another rebirth. In our spiritual darkness, the best prevention is to know and understand one’s character, and then to transmute the flaws into virtues, into something positive. Astrology and ret-

rospection are excellent tools to do this.

The goal of all healing methods is to render disease extinct. Proponents of blocking believe that can be done one disease, or family of diseases, at a time as they arise. This philosophy is *ex post facto*, after the disease has arisen. Max Heindel tells us something which demonstrates that this philosophy might not work:

“But man is a creator by means of his thoughts, and the evil thoughts, the thoughts of fear and hatred, do take form and in the course of centuries they crystallize into what we know as bacilli. The bacilli of infectious disease are particularly the embodiments of fear and hate, and therefore they are also vanquished by the opposite force, courage.”

“Bacilli” includes viruses and prions as well as bacteria. There are 320,000 known viruses that infect mammals, at the time of this writing. Blocking one microbe, or a family of microbes, may not protect us from the next one we are prone to create. Changing our thinking gets at the root of the problem. Fear exacerbates it. If there were to be a blocking method that would provide the same soul growth that would come from living out the ripe destiny, it would probably be a good thing. However, that doesn’t exist anymore than there is a pill to give courage to resist disease.

In ignorance of rebirth, and the principle of cause and consequence, fear has become institutionalized. Most nations and states have laws to mandate blocking procedures, especially for the most vulnerable, infants and little children. These laws cannot be avoided without eschewing “civilization”. This being true, the best parents can do to protect vulnerable little bodies, is to defer as long as possible, to allow the newborn organism to develop strength to withstand the shock of the process.

The developers, producers, deliverers and proponents of blocking are not bad people. It is likely they will not suffer a horrible destiny. Their intent is good. They are doing as well as they can with what they know. That they don’t know better is our fault for not providing better spiritual education.

In this, as in all things, we must weigh our options. The spiritual life is about sacrifice. Suppose an elderly aspirant has an important work to carry to com-

pletion in the final years of life. In such a case, using a blocking method in the face of a real and imminent threat, might be the judicious sacrifice to make. This writer has such a friend, of high regard, who has done so, and this writer considers it noble. In this world of limitations there are often no absolutes. We must always exercise good judgment.

Earlier in this essay it was stated that creative materialization follows a cosmological path. Our lives and bodies are creative materializations. Our lives and bodies begin with the Self, the Thinker, and follow the path of thoughts to desires to the ethers and, finally to physical forms. Before we come to birth, the Spirit creates an archetype of our lives, and the various bodies we need to live them. In this preparation, cooperation is required. Because we are only beginners at creating, we need help. Help is given by the Recording Angels who understand the workings of destiny, which we do not. For example, we may not understand what, from our destiny from past rebirths, is ripe for transformation in this rebirth. We also need help because our individualities have been misguided, which is what precipitated our fall. In our weakness we would shrink and shirk.

Cooperation and assistance are necessary at every step of the cosmological path. In the world of thought, where we build the archetype, we need assistance because we are far from being perfect thinkers. We also need to cooperate because we do not live in isolation. Our individual archetypes must mesh with the archetypes of others, humans and even other kinds of beings. Even the stuff of the worlds and the bodies we form in those worlds, must be used with cooperation. Error is possible at every step along the way.

In creating the archetype the contents of the seed atom of each of our bodies is taken into account, and the archetype includes their contents. This means that each of our vehicles will be built according to how we have lived in them in the past, plus a little new creative advancement, which varies in quantity from individual to individual. According to past deeds and omissions, an individual might have a good mind and a self-centered orientation in the desire body, for example. The variety and the details are almost unlimited as we see in those around us, no two are alike. When the archetype is complete and ready, it is set spinning, so to speak, by the will to live. It is activated when conditions in the various worlds are such that the purpose of the life can be fulfilled—sometimes individuals are born ahead of the times, and sometimes

individuals are born behind the times. In this, it is important to note, that the possibility of illness is built into our lives and bodies. We accept those negative possibilities if we haven't learned from our past lives, and continue to err, as we have in the past. *Illness comes from within, not from without.* If we do not have the seeds of a disease within us, we will not contract that disease no matter how contagious it might be. Destiny is perfectly fair, if we can see clearly and deeply enough into it. It should be added, that all of us are sufficiently similar, in some respects, to contract a contagion of epidemic proportions. It is obviously unwise to act as though one is invulnerable to a contagious disease unless one knows without doubt that one is invulnerable—few are. In passing, it seems necessary to note that, if one rouses fear, or some other inwardly debilitating state, in another, that individual might activate the possibility which would not otherwise be activated. We are our “brother's keepers”.

Spiritual healing follows the same cosmological path as coming to rebirth and manifesting a disease. It begins with a thought form. In the Rosicrucian Healing Service participants build a thought form through intense, feelingful prayer. The Rosicrucian philosophy teaches us that thought forms are vacuums. The healing thought form is a vacuum to receive and hold Life Spirit. All healing comes from Life Spirit. Life Spirit is the source of the Self, and all of its creative manifestations. The nature and character of Life Spirit is all-encompassing, and beyond our limited language. Nonetheless, Max Heindel has done a superb job of giving us some idea of Life Spirit in its attributes. He tells us the three attributes of Life Spirit are: life, light, and love. Each of these attributes seems to fit perfectly into a stage of the cosmological path of concrete manifestation.

The Life in Life Spirit means more than vitality. Vitality is found in the reflective projection of Life Spirit as the etheric subdivision of the physical world. The word that comes to mind when contemplating Life Spirit is “purpose”. If divinity is anything in its creation, it is purposeful. A life of purpose is an undeniable life. In its expression, even the vitality of life in the ethers seems impossible to thwart. In our nascent individualities, we fell because we were deflected from the cosmic purpose of the creation. We thought selfishly about our mortality. If an individual finds purpose in life, that individual becomes unstoppable. Imbuing the Self with purpose from Life Spirit is a first step to complete spiritual healing.

When an individual has a keen sense of truth, we say that individual is enlightened. The mind is formed from, and by, the light of truth, and its purpose is to give form to that light. The concrete mind is ruled astrologically by Mercury, who also rules phosphorous. The word phosphorous means “light bearer”. The more clearly the Spirit functions in the concrete mind, the more it can experience and express the light of truth, and the more true will be its thinking. Enlightened thinking is a second step toward complete spiritual health. “As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he.”

One is always hesitant to speak or write about love, because of the awareness of one’s inadequacy at being a vessel for it. It is painful to recognize this inadequacy. It is a sweet pain because of its purifying and redemptive qualities, but it is still painful. It takes courage to love. On the other hand, love gives courage. However, we must love, especially if we want to heal, and be healed. Healing restores wholeness. Life Spirit is whole in every sense of the word. It is beautiful how the wholeness of Life Spirit is manifest in creation. Its life is manifest in selfhood, with purpose; its light is manifest in the concrete mind, in clear thought; and its love is manifest in the desire world, where it is most needed. The love of Life Spirit is the octave of love in the desire world. Love through attraction permeates everything in the desire world, even the nasty stuff. An influx of Life Spirit love into the desire world, rectifies everything in it. The Life Spirit love of Christ significantly and permanently changed the desire body of the earth, which made spiritual aspiration more available. Accepting the love of Life Spirit in grace, clears our attachments to our desires in what is called the forgiveness of sins. “Go and sin no more.” The healing power of Life Spirit is obvious, even to sinful eyes.

Few have done the work to evolve the ability to directly access Life Spirit. Christ-Jesus could, at will. Most who do reach Life Spirit, do so in response to urgent need, and it is done through extreme appeals. Even in Rosicrucian Healing prayer meetings, where there is a procedure designed to access Life Spirit, it doesn’t happen often. Rarely does a prayer session end with all participants having tears streaming down their cheeks. Our prayers are effective anyway, but they are not as potent as our hearts would have them be. We draw dampness, when we want a gushing stream. Fortunately, taking our inadequacies to heart, in the face of dire suffering, spurs us to strive more ardently, so eventually we will succeed. We have a promise that we will suc-

ceed, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater...”.

Few have done the work to directly receive Life Spirit, either as a healer or a patient. The experience of seeing Christ in Life Spirit even temporarily blinded Saul physically, and he was a strong soul. Even those around him were struck speechless. The experience of Life Spirit is not to be understood from this as something terrible, because actually it is wonderful. It is also something subtle and powerful. Many would miss the experience, if presented with it, because of its subtlety, and because of their focus on worldly things. In others the effect might be explosive due to the contamination in their souls. In most, it would be wondrous, but also wasted, because of their inability to use it. This is why obedience is essential in patients seeking to receive spiritual healing. We don't pour molten gold on the ground, we make a mold to hold it and display its rare beauty. Life Spirit is more precious than gold. Life Spirit is love-wisdom, and it is whole, so it knows where it is most needed.

Complete spiritual healing to wholeness is our ultimate goal, but it is a distant goal, for both patients and those who would be healers. This goal is not reached in one leap. Waiting and idling will certainly not bring us to it. We must do what we can, when we can. There is plenty of unnecessary suffering in the world which we can assuage according to our abilities. Some of the suffering is urgent. As said earlier, if someone is bleeding profusely, we don't preach about Life Spirit, we apply a tourniquet where it is most needed. Some form of healing can be of avail at any step of the cosmological path from the spirit to the dense physical body.

Soul searching in extreme pain, or other suffering, is difficult. Relieving this extremity might be the tourniquet most needed. Drugs might do that, but it doesn't have to be a drug, and it is better if it isn't. Pain killing drugs are often inefficient to this end, because they cloud the consciousness. There are other means.

Life Spirit does not only follow the path of cosmological manifestation. It can be transduced into its reflective projection, the ethers. This is one of the goals of the Rosicrucian Healing Service. This goal is to produce an etheric panacea to be applied with great effectiveness, where it is most needed. With it, conditions can change with remarkable results quite quickly. This kind

of healing is also not an everyday occurrence. The reasons why it isn't, are almost too repetitious for this essay: few are doing the work (and it is hard work) of producing the panacea, few are pure enough, and soulful enough, to handle it; and there are few patients who are open enough to believe in receiving it, and of them, few are persistent and obedient enough to be vessels for it.

All is not lost for want of soulful and pure healers to handle the panacea. There are alternatives which might not be as thorough in healing, but are still effective in relieving suffering. There is one alternative that most people can fit themselves to perform. It is etheric healing which is also called magnetic healing. At one time it was taught at the headquarters of the Rosicrucian Fellowship. A magnetic healer is someone who has a robust, etheric, vital body, especially rich in life ether. One can enrich the life ether component of the vital body with a diet rich in raw, vital foods. More can be done with raw, fresh-pressed vegetable juices, taken immediately out of the juicer before the ethers dissipate. Max Heindel used raw milk for this purpose. Raw milk is richest in life ether immediately upon leaving the animal. A magnetic healer must be sensitive to etheric flows in his/her body and be able to control them.

Magnetic healing is a two step process. The first step is to remove the sluggish ether, called miasma, causing a blockage, or pain and suffering. It is helpful to have etheric clairvoyance to locate the miasma, but it isn't mandatory, if one has sufficient sensitivity. The healer must take care to not draw the miasma too deeply into his/her own vital body, lest the condition be taken on. When the heavy ether is removed it is important that it is either disintegrated in fire or flushed away in water so that it doesn't return to the patient or someone else. The effect is immediate. This writer has been writhing on the floor in pain from cramps at one moment, and free a moment later, when having the offending ether lifted off by a proficient magnetic healer. Unfortunately, it took this writer many years to learn the inner cause of his cramps. The second step is optional. It depends on the needs of the patient and the strength of the vital body of the agent. It is a matter of judgment. If the vital body of the patient is weak, and the vital body of the healer is strong, the healer can give the patient a charge of ether from his/her vital body. The healer must be as careful about giving as he/she is about drawing off. If too much of an etheric flux is given, the healer can be exhausted and vulnerable. An overly needy patient can unconsciously draw too much of the etheric flow

for the good of the healer. Healers are usually compassionate souls who are vulnerable to having this happen. This is another reason why healers must be sensitive, self-conscious, and controlled.

Many aspirants doubt their ability to do even a little healing of any kind. It is true that some people do have more of a capacity to heal than others. They likely started in a previous rebirth. Most people should be able to do a little healing. If in no other way, they can pray. One never knows one's ability, if one doesn't try. Some start by drawing a headache off of a loved one. This writer has a friend who began in her youth, with sensing and relieving the pains of the pets she loved. Now is almost always a good time to start something new for the benefit of others.

Sometimes "where it is most needed" means in the desire body. Many need relief from the pressure of unhealthy desire patterns, sometimes called complexes. Spiritual counseling and psychotherapy can help. This kind of healing is especially difficult because the lower nature, the false ego, which has its home in the desire body, from whence it controls life more than is good for the individual. Often this lower nature doesn't want the desire body to be purged and transformed to the service of the Self, because it would be deprived of its tyranny. Working from the inner worlds, Invisible Helpers are more successful in coping with the lower nature of the patient, because of the healing harmonies pervading the desire world, and because the dense physical body, which is the prize, is not immediately at stake. However, sometime the work has to be done in the body in full waking consciousness to be complete. Astrology is extremely helpful in this kind of healing. With astrology, the desire nexus can be accurately located, despite the devious tactics of the lower nature. Astrology can also indicate positive character attributes, as alternatives to negative behavior. One of the best things about astrology is that it indicates times when help will be most effective. Timing is all-important in all forms of healing.

With or without astrology, this kind of soul healing is often unpleasant for the healer. When an individual is at the point when illness becomes healing (they are two sides of the same coin), things are being worked out, literally. Some of what is being worked out may have begun as bad thoughts several rebirths ago. Often there has been an internal struggle. By the time that a behavior has become something that requires healing, when it is ripe, it has

had time to grow, fester, mutate and even take shape in the aura, it is usually unpleasant. It is analogous to sweating out nasty stuff in a febrile physical condition, it stinks. When “where it is most needed” is in the desire body, the personality is likely unpleasant, to say the least. It is easy for the agent to be repulsed, attacked, or drawn into conflict as a projection of an inner enemy. Soul healing is not easy or pleasant. Some practitioners find it helpful to pray long and deeply for patients. It is hard to dislike someone for whom you have prayed with all of your heart. Insights about what to do often come when connecting with someone in prayer.

Soul healing has been mentioned, in passing, merely to awaken interest in the possibility. It is too large of a topic for a short essay, which might already be too long. Too much fuel can smother a fire. Fortunately, if one’s heart is in the right place, there is intuition. All knowledge about healing is only to serve intuition. The intuition not only knows what is most needed, it knows where it is most needed.

Now We Know in Part

“Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein.”

This writer had a friend who traveled the world over to see how children played. He wrote and published his findings, but scholarship was not his intent. He did what he did for the simple reason that he was fascinated by children’s play. One thing he learned was that children’s games were similar everywhere, even when there were no cultural connections. There were unique games in every society, but they were not the majority. Something similar might be said about children’s stories. It even applies to the stories of the childhood of humanity, myths. Max Heindel tells us that myths were given to early humanity to inculcate things of great spiritual importance into our awakening consciousness.

Comparative mythologists find striking similarities in many myths of different societies, even when the story lines are quite odd. Seeking the reason for the similarities has kept scholars occupied for several centuries. There is not general agreement about the reason for the similarities. There are even heated debates about the matter. This phenomenon is no problem for mystics. Mystics know we are of one common Universal Spirit. The spiritual truth is the same for all. The differences are cultural differences, not spiritual differences. Differing cultures are vehicles of unfoldment for individuals with varying evolutionary needs. The spirit is the same; the vehicles to bring out its infinite potential facets are not.

As Rosicrucian aspirants, we have been given the retrospection exercise as a tool to attain spiritual objectivity. In performing this exercise, we are told to judge ourselves accurately, impartially, and objectively. To do that, we try to step outside of our personal, subjective perspective, because it is likely to bias, excuses, and self-justification, instead of plain truth. On this subject Max Heindel was fond of quoting Bobby Burns: “O wad some Pow’r the giftie gie us, to see ourselves as others see us.” This practice of externalization and objectification can be successfully applied to larger things, such as Christianity. We can often see and understand things about Christianity from perspectives outside of Christian literature. Mythology often serves that purpose

quite well.

Resurrection is important to Christians. It is something we want to better understand. In mythology there are many myths of resurrection, and often, many variants. Greek mythology alone has three major resurrection stories: the myth of Uranus, the myth of Dionysus, and the myth of Zagreus. The myth of Zagreus is the shortest and simplest, so we will use it for an economy of words. We will further abbreviate the story to suit our need.

Zagreus was the son of Zeus, the chief of the Greek deities, by Persephone, Zeus' daughter by Demeter, his sister. Immediately we find ourselves in a world of complex spiritual relationships, replete with meaning. Hera, the wife and sister of Zeus, hears of this union, and its fruit. In jealousy she commands some Titans to destroy the child. The Titans disguise themselves by powdering their entire bodies with gypsum. They sneak up on the child and distract him with playthings: a pine cone, a tuft of wool, a mirror, golden apples and others (all representing things about initiation to this day). They have to be careful, because even as a child he could destroy them because he is a god. In his distraction, they pounce on him. He resists by transforming himself into a series of fierce animals. When they finally pin him down in his natural state, they tear his body into pieces which they commence to eat as divine food. During the feast, the goddess Athena swoops in and takes the heart. She encases the heart in a gypsum statue into which she breathes the breath of life. When the statue comes to life, it gains its immortality and, in resurrection, ascends to his father Zeus.

This story, even in brief, is rich in spiritual meaning. It is worth reading in full, and pondering. This simplified statement is sufficient to our ends, so we can move on to our next resurrection story from ancient Egypt. Ancient Egypt was already an old society in classical times. Due to its age, there are many, many variants of its main resurrection myth, the myth of Isis and Osiris. We will use the Greek version by Plutarch who, in his time, held the chair in Plato's academy. We do this because Plutarch was an initiate and his version is loaded with hints about the mysteries. We will again prune the story to suit our needs.

Geb and Nut, father earth and mother sky, unite. They have five children in one batch: Osiris, Isis, Nephthys, Set and Horus the Elder. Osiris and Isis are

husband and wife, as well as brother and sister. In fact, they coalesce and conceive while still in the womb. As they are born, Isis gives birth to their son Horus the Younger. Osiris, the first born, becomes king of Egypt. Set, the god of disorder, marries his sister Nephtys. He becomes enraged when Osiris sires a child by her. He wants revenge. He proclaims that he has built a magical coffin that will give power to whomever it fits. Everyone in the kingdom tries it, but no one fits. When Osiris tries, it fits perfectly. At the moment Osiris gets into the coffin, 72 confederates of Set slam the lead-lined coffin shut and seal it. The coffin is then launched into the Nile. It floats off and eventually makes its way to Byblos where a tamarisk tree grows around it to become his tomb. Eventually, the king of Byblos hews the tree down to serve as a pillar for his new palace. Isis learns of the location of her husband's coffin. She arrives to take the ark for herself and leaves the tree-trunk for the king. She endeavors to revive Osiris by magic. Just as she is about to succeed, she is distracted, and Set steals the coffin. He cuts the body of Osiris into fourteen parts. These he distributes around Egypt, except for the penis which he throws into the river Nile. Isis journeys throughout Egypt to find and collect the pieces in twelve days. She cannot find the penis because the fish have eaten it. She assembles the pieces, magically generates a penis, and restores him to life. His earthly resurrected life is short. He dies and enters the underworld where, resurrected, he becomes king and judge of the dead.

The mythology of the Jews is peculiar in that it is not given out as myth, but as history. The Jews were strictly monotheistic. They were forbidden to worship many or false gods. This did not prevent them from assimilating foreign culture in their captivities in Babylon and Egypt. Hebrew numerology can be traced to the Chaldean Book of Numbers, and some astro-mythology was taken from Egypt. The ancient Jews write of interactions with divine hierarchies, like angels and archangels, but they do not seem to have a lineage of gods. Instead, they had a history of patriarchal succession, which did take on foreign influence, especially from Egypt. For example, the Atum, of Atum-Ra, became Adam and Set became Seth, which gives a very different view of the mythical first family, which view comes from the Egyptian children of fire, rather than from the Bible, written by the darlings of Jehovah, the children of water. The stories absorbed from other cultures, which are written in the Bible as history, receive different treatment in the Bible, but that is a matter of religious politics better suited to a different essay than this. Even astrology is built into the succession of patriarchs. In the Old Testament we read,

“Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel ... I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven” Most readers mistakenly think “as the stars of heaven” means quantity. It really means quality, quality in character. This is made clear in the prophecies of Israel. The character of Israel’s children, given in his prophecies, clearly corresponds to the signs of the zodiac. The ancient Jews were an astrological people. Flavius Josephus (a Jew, a Roman citizen, and a historian) lived around the time of Jesus. He wrote that when the twelve tribes encamped, they did so in a formation, under astrological banners. The patriarch was not ripped or cut into pieces, but was divided into tribes of progeny.

Astrology, itself, has its own divisions of the night sky into parts. Even those with a superficial knowledge of astrology are aware of the grand, astrological human of the heavens. It is a figure of a human arched into a circle with the toes touching the head, superimposed on the zodiac, though some mystics might claim that the zodiac is superimposed on the heavenly human. In any case, the head is in Aries, the area of the neck is in Taurus and so on. Even in its most crude and simple form, this representation is helpful to learning the inner cause of illness. For example, one can follow the course of the symptoms of the common cold as they pass from the head to the throat and then to the lungs successively while the astrological significator of the illness, often the Moon, is passing through Aries, Taurus and Gemini, or their opposites, Libra, Scorpio, and Sagittarius.

When one is healed of a serious condition, one is said to have been made whole. This correctly implies that in illness, one has deviated from wholeness. It is the need to be whole that is behind an illness, though the symptoms and the specific, separative, causal sin, or deviation from wholeness, may be manifest in one part of the body represented by one part of the zodiac. It is a healthy wholeness that must be restored or resurrected. This is true in the macrocosm and microcosm, simultaneously. The whole of humanity must be united and resurrected as one. If even one, a god in the making, is left out, the feeling of incompleteness would be analogous, on a small scale, to the feeling one has in assembling a jigsaw puzzle only to find one piece missing. Each individual is essential to the perfected whole. “What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost, until he find it?” Thoughts of personal salvation are often selfish

and are, thereby, counter to salvation. The attitude which indicates fitness to continue on, might be a willingness to stand back that someone else might continue on. “Greater love hath no man than he lay down his life for his friends” has meaning beyond personal martyrdom. The grand, zodiacal human stands for all of humanity as well as the individual. One might even think that all of humanity, as a whole, is ill. Emerson said, “A sick man is a sinner found out.” We are all sinners, individually and collectively. We need to see ourselves, individually and collectively, as a healthy whole to fulfill the resurrection.

One would think seeing something in whole is a simple and easy matter. It is, and it isn't. In our fall into materialism, it almost always isn't. In our bodies we cannot perceive a 360° panorama. Botanists don't always agree on how to differentiate one plant species from another. Some think the essential difference is in the leaves, others think in the flower. Is it the seed from which it springs? the sprout?, the stem?, the leaves?, the flower?, the fruit?, or the new seed? It is the whole cycle and perhaps more, because the plant species, itself, evolves. Similarly, conventional Christians have argued about the resurrection of the physical body, which is what they think will happen, even though scripture says otherwise. Is one resurrected as one was at death? If so, heaven would be occupied by mostly sick, old people. Some think it is as one was in the prime of life (at least those who reach the prime of life), even though one is wiser later in life. Children are beautifully open-minded but too immature to appreciate the splendor of the higher worlds. Science has complicated the matter of physical resurrection. There is the problem of the atoms. All of us have atoms that have been in the physical bodies of others. Who gets the shared atoms at the resurrection? In Revelation, the biblical literalists believe 144,000 will be saved. That might be the limit of people who can claim their atoms without dispute. Clearly, our physical bodies are not resurrected and, hopefully, all can participate in the resurrection as a whole.

We, who believe in successive rebirths, are not free from this type of dilemma either. What is an individual? It could be said that one is the entire life cycle from third heaven to third heaven, just as a plant is a cycle from seed to seed. The question then becomes “which rebirth?” or “all rebirths?” In the larger picture, we are more than our manifestations, just as God is more than God's manifestations.

Astrologers face similar problems. In assembling and synthesizing the parts of a horoscope, there is the hope of understanding the individual as a whole. It doesn't work because surprises arise from the unseen, spiritual individuality, the spiritual whole behind the horoscope. Studying all previous horoscopes might help, but it doesn't solve the fundamental problem.

Eclecticism and assembling disparate parts to simulate a whole, can help by stimulating intuition but, by itself, is insufficient and can be misleading. Understanding wholes is impossible for consciousness focused in parts, because wholes are in spirit. We need something spiritual to understand wholes. Intuition is a good start. An intuition is from a spiritual whole that doesn't require something outside of itself to be true.

Some parts of the Bible are good for stimulating intuition, as well as providing insight into wholes and resurrection. First Corinthians 13:12 (pluralized) reads "...now we know in part, but then we shall know even also as we are known." Clearly, when we are known in spirit, we are known in whole. In the transcendent spiritual worlds there are no parts, only wholes. First Corinthians 15:22 tells us, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive." Verses 42 - 45 elucidate and provide further insight: "So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown into corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body.... And so it is written, the first Adam was made a living soul; the last man Adam was made a quickening spirit." These verses make it clear that there are two Adams, the first Adam and the last Adam. What is not so clear, and what needs further elucidation, is that there are two first Adams. Cabalistically, there is the heavenly, first Adam called Adam-Kadmus, and sometimes Adam Primus. Then there is the earthly, first Adam, usually referred to as Adam-Adami, the human patriarch. Correspondingly, we shall see there are two last Adams.

The Rosicrucian philosophy helps us to understand this. In its Christian mysticism, we learn that each of us is a spiritual entity, a spiritual being. In the time of Max Heindel, the word used for that spiritual being was the Ego. That word, using the capital E, is still applicable, but with the rise of psychology, the word ego has taken on other, not so spiritual, meanings. In our times, Self is probably a better and more accurate word. In Christian Mysticism, we learn that the Self, or Ego, is a threefold spiritual being. This

means that three states of spirit unite to form an individual being, a spiritual entity. The combining is not an assemblage; it is a “linking” of awakening, and individualizing states of spirit. The Divine Spirit is the ever invisible will to be. It is. Being in this usage is both active and passive, but not overt. Out of the will to be, comes overt, lively manifest being. This state of being is called Life Spirit. Since it came into manifest being from Divine Spirit without any external agency, it is sometimes called the “alone begotten” or the “begotten alone” — which is often misunderstood as the “only begotten”. It is singular, but to refer to it only in that way, is to miss an essential element of its character, its birth from and within Divine Spirit. It is also known as the Logos, the Word, and the Son. Christ is the personification of Life Spirit. As we are looking at it, it is the original Adam, the heavenly first Adam. It is the first Adam because all of the individual Selves are born in, and from, it. In this sequence of transcendental, creative logic, the Theogony, the will to be gives birth to manifest being which gives birth a being, actually many beings. That individual being is called a Human Spirit. It is not alone or singular. Once one individual being is conceived, there is no limit to possible conceptions—we are all spiritual children of the heavenly first Adam. This Human Spirit is the Self, the Ego, the Individuality. It is this Individuality, which is a spiritual whole, which manifests repeatedly in many forms and environments to bring out many of the infinite, possible facets of the Universal Spirit in the divine creation.

These many manifestations occur in an orderly, evolutionary creation based on the principle of analogy. This evolutionary creation is reflectively projective. This means spiritual, creative forms and activities are projected reflectively into material forms and activities. These reflective activities are roughly coetaneous, but not simultaneous because material experience precedes spiritual awakening and linking. The spiritual creative work is not ours alone to begin with, because we are still mostly unconscious. We are assisted by great, divine beings. The will of Divine Spirit is awakened through experiencing and sustaining material forms in a mineral-like condition during the first, great creative period. The lively, bright, overt Life Spirit, which is born of the Divine Spirit, is awakened through experiencing its reflection in a form vitalizing the material forms of the first period, in a plant-like condition during the second great creative period. The individual Selves, or Human Spirits, are formed within and linked to Life Spirit through experiencing their reflections in a form of motivation of the previously plant-like forms of

the second period, in animal-like forms during the third great, creative period. In each period the becoming spiritual beings draw more closely to their material creations, and the combined material forms reach toward their creative source. With each period the Universal Spirit, in which all of this is happening, immerses Itself more deeply into matter, and then withdraws. This is done in seven periods, each containing seven steps repeated seven times. The periods, and the steps within them, are symmetric: three descending into matter; three rising out of matter; and one pivoting in the center. The first and seventh period, or step, are in the same spiritual world, as are the second and sixth, and so on. All of this is accomplished through simple principles reflected repeatedly on themselves, in cycles within cycles within cycles.... All of this occurs in duration almost beyond human comprehension. We are now in the middle of fourth period, the deepest, and the turn-around period. In this fashion, each of us came to have an individual threefold spirit reflected in interpenetrating, threefold bodies (or vehicles of consciousness) in matter. The crowning achievement to bring us to where we are now, came relatively recently in terms of evolutionary time. It was to manifest a concrete mind out of concrete thought stuff. The aim was for the threefold spirit to enter its threefold bodies through the concrete mind. Coming into its bodies was to awaken self-consciousness through experience. Another goal was to spiritualize matter by alchemizing it in the bodies. This entering and awakening was occurring as we, and the earth, were concretizing within the solar system. This concretization produced a necessity heretofore unknown in our creation. In hard, chemical matter, we could not spontaneously generate new physical bodies to make improvements, as we could previously, when we were in higher, more subtle and malleable states of being. In earlier epochs, we auto-generated new bodies and were bisexual. Now we had to cooperate, which opened a new kind of consciousness — cooperation, voluntarily working with another to accomplish what cannot be accomplished alone. We had to produce two different types of physical forms, one male and one female, to work together to generate new physical bodies for others. This is all about others, others objectified outside of our personal being. This meant that part of our creative power was to be used in procreation, and part was to be used to evolve physically, so as to creatively experience and change the outer, physical world. The first of us to further the creative evolution in this way is biblically called Adam. Thus, we have the first heavenly Adam, the source of the individual Selves, and the first earthly Adam, the pro-generator and patriarch of human, physical lineage.

The time of the separation of the sexual vehicles, the time of Adam, was a critical time. We were vulnerable for several reasons. We were entering into the period of the densest materialization, farthest from the spirit, so to speak. Bringing consciousness into this hardened condition is difficult, something we realize daily. Divided sexual vehicles and their limitations were new to us. Cooperative, co-procreation with someone outside of us, personally, was also new to us. We didn't even know the existence of someone external except in extreme sensation such as coition—"And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived"—our eyes were not open yet. We had only inner soul images. As we came more deeply into matter, and our consciousness was focused more outwardly into matter, our inner, spiritual consciousness dimmed. Losing divine awareness, we were becoming insecure at the same time we were becoming self-conscious. Increasingly, our physical existence became more important to us. Thus, when it was suggested to us that we could ensure immortality by exercising the procreative function at will, we followed the suggestion. Who placed the suggestion is not important to this essay, that we followed it, is. Following that suggestion was an act of using one of the most important gifts we have received, freedom. Freedom is attained by degrees. An early degree of freedom is freedom of choice. Citizens in the "free" world are free because they can choose or elect their government. Creation is a deeper degree of freedom than merely choosing between the already existing options. When we took the creative force into our hands, it was statement of freedom. Creation is a divine activity. Because there is unity in spirit, divinity does not fight itself—"God is one." Divinity cooperates lovingly. Therefore, when we stated our creative freedom, other divine beings respected our choice. This meant that the divine, creative hierarchies, who directed all of our evolutionary experiences until this point, had to back off, and only influence indirectly as they do astrologically—"the stars impel, they do not compel," for example. This was, and would seem, a divine benefice except for one thing. The price of freedom is responsibility. Once one introduces an act of creation, one is responsible for the consequences. Creative love is beyond the law—"the end of the law is love"—but its expressions are not. The one thing that made our act a tragedy, instead of a thorough benefice, is that it was done in ignorance. We were unaware that when an act is out of harmony with the rest of the creation, it would have calamitous consequences. We not only acted in ignorance, we acted selfishly out of insecurity. We wanted immortality because we were afraid of losing our bodies. Thus, we turned our

spiritual gift of freedom into a curse of ourselves, and inharmony for the rest of the creation. The sin of the first, earthly, Adam led to the sin of Cain, and to all of the sins and suffering from selfish use of the creative force, the sex and violence, that pervade the world we know today.

In the grand creative scheme, the positions of the first and last Adams are analogous to the first and last creative periods or the first and last steps in those periods. The first and last heavenly Adams are on the cusp, so to speak, between Life Spirit and Human Spirit. The first and last earthly Adams are on the cusp between the ethers and the chemicals. Thus, we see that the pairs of Adams are separate in location, as well as time.

Important things occurred in the interval between the first Adams and the last Adams. One is that we were gaining experience, spiritually blind experience, because our spiritual eyes were closing as our material eyes were opening. There was soul growth but not enough to keep pace with the increasing magnitude and frequency of our sins and their consequences. One of the consequences of our fall was to harden ourselves and the earth so much that progress was slowing. Not all, but many were falling behind, enough to jeopardize any progress at all. Something had to be done.

What was done for our sake, was also a compound act of freedom. The greater part of the compound act was the voluntary offering of Christ, the heavenly Adam, (who represents the macrocosmic Life Spirit) to incarnate in order to bring the grace of the love of the Life Spirit to those who would receive it. The other part was for Jesus, the second earthly Adam, to offer his etheric and chemical bodies to Christ, who could not generate these bodies himself, due to lack of evolutionary experience in the physical world. “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends” applies to the voluntary sacrifices of both of the heavenly and earthly Adams.

The work of the second Adams is different from the work of the first Adams. The work of the first heavenly Adam was individuation of separate Human Spirits, which occurred long before the fall of humanity into earthly matter. The work of the first earthly Adam was pro-generation of physical forms for our sojourn through dense, chemical matter. The primary work of the second earthly Adam, Jesus, is to direct our attention to the development of the etheric, soul body. The etheric soul body is the “golden wedding garment”

necessary for the divine, alchemical wedding of the individuality, the “bride from heaven” and the personality. The etheric, soul body is to be the vehicle of consciousness after the dissolution of the chemical earth and the corresponding chemical human body. Without the “wedding garment,” continuance in the evolutionary creation spoken of in Matthew 22:11–13 is impossible.

The works of the second, heavenly Adam, Christ, are enough to occupy many volumes, too much for a few paragraphs of a single, short essay. One work, relevant to this essay was the establishment of a new kind of religion, not merely a new religious sect, but a new kind of religion. It is called the religion of the Son. All previous religions, between the first and second Adams, were religions of Jehovah, the Holy Spirit.

Jehovah is the macrocosmic Self, in the Godhead, whose home is in the abstract subdivision of the world of thought, just as our Selves are. One of the goals of our evolutionary creation is waking, objective, creative self-consciousness. All self-consciousness, in microcosm and macrocosm, is born of The Holy Spirit, even the self-consciousness of the higher states of spirit by reflection. In humanity, self-consciousness is brought about as the spirit enters its vehicles and awakens, through experience in them. Entering into the dense physical body is most important, because in it, conscious soul—necessary for consciousness—is produced through interactions with the resistant, chemical world. Thus, one can see the importance of generation and improvement of bodies (including the generations and descendants of Adam) to spiritual evolution. Jehovah is the lord of generation. Part of the work of Jehovah, in the time between the first and last earthly Adams, was to tear apart a previously unified humanity into discrete personalities. This was accomplished through generation of progressively smaller groupings: nations, races, clans, families, individuals. Accompanying this differentiation was a change of the focus of consciousness. One was less able to identify with a nation, a family and so on. One had to become more self-reliant. One was turned inward onto one’s Self, which led to self-awakening. Self-awakening in its highest estate is called a baptism of the Holy Spirit, a waking, conscious, realization of one’s divinity. Realization of one’s divinity brings with it divine capacities and responsibilities. Among the responsibilities is the need to love, respect, and work together with others, just as other divine beings respected us when we unwittingly asserted our divinity in the time of the first, earthly

Adam. Among the divine capacities that come with self-awakening to divinity is greater freedom. Together, enhanced freedom and responsibility are the basis of the new kind of religion, the religion of Christ, the Son.

The religion of Jehovah, through the first earthly Adam, was a religion of benign separation. The separation wasn't always easy or pleasant. In the first, earthly Adam we were one, but not by choice. We didn't know anything different. The divine Hierarchies led us around willy-nilly for our own good. In Christ, we are again one, but we are one in freedom. As self-knowing, free individuals, we *chose* to reunite *in* Christ. It is always easier to do things in freedom than it is to do things in coercion. "For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." Even the divine responsibility to love and respect, does not have the onus of responsibility, as it does now in our egocentricity. When one loves, one cannot help but to love and respect. "For I, Paul, prisoner of Christ..." might just as well be stated "For I, Paul, prisoner of love."

Just as there were two first Adams and two falls into individuality and matter, there are two second Adams and two resurrections. One is the resurrection from chemical matter into the ethers, in microcosm and macrocosm, through loving, self-forgetting service. The other is passing from the separative individuality of the Human Spirit into the unifying love of Life Spirit.

It is an intellectual joy to see the underlying spiritual unity in comparative mythology. To see that unity in scripture and astrology, is even more gratifying. To see how all of this is tied together and explained by Rosicrucian philosophy derived from careful, clairvoyant investigation, should be soul satisfying. It isn't. The reason it isn't, is that it doesn't fully live in us yet. We haven't followed the life of Christ-Jesus, and we will not be satisfied until we do.

In the Rosicrucian philosophy it is clearly stated many times, in many ways, how we prepare ourselves for the earthly resurrection. We prepare ourselves by living lives of "loving, self-forgetting service." When we forget ourselves, we can remember Christ—"this do in remembrance of me." When we do things from the goodness of our hearts, for the Christ's sake, we attract the soul material to build the "golden wedding garment," and we add to the new etheric globe, our home when this chemical one dissolves. We even change our hearts physically. When we do our spiritual exercises, we assimilate the

material into our soul bodies and we organize them. In doing this, when the Lord says “follow me,” we will be ready.

When we build and organize our soul bodies, it is easier for Christ to speak to us through intuition, and the way becomes easier. Understanding and living ourselves into the heavenly resurrection in Christ, the second, heavenly Adam, is not so easy. How are we born in Christ? When we apply the principle of analogy to a statement of the biblical Christ, it points us in the right direction. In John 14 Christ says, “Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me.” By analogy, we are in Christ and Christ is in us. Our Selves are born from Life Spirit. This is another way of stating how higher worlds subtend and interpenetrate lower worlds, as we learn from *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*. The Self, located in Human Spirit, or the abstract subdivision of the world of thought, is within and interpenetrated by Life Spirit, the realm of Christ. Thus, if we penetrate the innermost essence of our selfhood, we meet Life Spirit. It is inescapable. Perhaps different words can make understanding, this difficult to experience idea, easier. Human Spirits, Selves, are born from Life Spirit. In other words, our Selves are born out of *selfness* which is Life Spirit, which is the body of Christ. That selfness is the same for all of us. It is the love of the love-wisdom principle of the second attribute of the godhead. The Rosicrucian philosophy has a word for doing this. It is called contemplation. In contemplation one holds an object in one’s attention until it dissolves and one directly encounters the life, within and behind, that object. If the object of attention is one’s Self, one encounters the Life of Life Spirit. This is not something easy to accomplish but it is a “pearl of great price” worthy of any amount of effort. The attempt itself, can sustain our aspiration for as long as we wish.

There is another way to resurrection in Christ, which is easier, love. When we love someone, we realize there is something in them that is also in us. If this was not true, we could not share the mutual love that we do. The mutual love which we share, is called altruism. Altruism is the human experience of the love of Christ, the love of the Life Spirit, in any, or every, other human. The only definition of a Christian given by Christ in the Gospels is found in John 13:35: “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.” In the times of the first, earthly Adam, when we came together, we first knew someone outside of us. In our times, the times of the second Adam, when we love someone, we realize that within that form outside of us,

is a spirit within, with which we are connected by love. This could be called “spiritual knowledge,” replacing carnal knowledge. Ultimately, love is love, and all love is of the Life Spirit.

From the stories of Zagreus, Osiris and Adam we learn of a unity in innocence divided to some end by evil. We also learn of a promise of resurrection into a new, divine world. From the Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception and the Bible, we learn how this resurrection is accomplished. These two books are complementary. Each brings out new meanings in the other. Matthew 5:6 elucidates more precisely the attitude necessary for resurrection: “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.” The Book of Revelation tells us we must not be “lukewarm.” Our hunger for love, and its righteousness, must be intense and ravenous, like that of the Titans. Thus, when we inwardly seek reunion by Holy Communion, the words, “Take eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me,” have a deeper and more spiritually intimate meaning to us.

The Shepherd's Voice

When this writer was a boy, he had many dreams. Not the kind one has when sleeping, the kinds a boy has about what he would like to be when he grows up. They were vainglorious, but in a childish way. His father would tell him he had “big nails in his head.” To this day, he does not know exactly what that means, and an internet search doesn't find a meaning either. One of the things he wanted to be was a magician, a prestidigitator or an illusionist. He didn't know it then, but what he really wanted to be was a real magician, a thaumaturgist. That realization didn't come until later in life, when he discovered mysticism. As he progressed in mystical aspiration, there were other realizations on this matter. One was how far he was from anything like thaumaturgy. Another was that he didn't like illusion. There is allure in illusions, especially about one's self, but the vanity in illusions is empty. It leaves one hungering for more, until one is soul-starved and spiritually desolate. This is something, to which almost every addict under the illusion of drugs, can attest.

An illusion is a form of a lie, an untruth, something pretending to be something it isn't. As we progress in truth-seeking, lies, in any form, become increasingly repugnant to us. Discerning truth from untruth, is important to us. Blasphemy is another form of untruth. *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* tells us misuse of our portion of the divine creative force is a sin against the Holy Ghost. St. Matthew's Gospel finds sin against the Holy Ghost, in expressions at the other end of the spine, also. In Matthew 12:31 Christ says: “Wherefore I say unto you all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.” Refraining from blasphemy against anything sacred, such as truth, is extremely important to us. John 8:32 gives us the positive side of this matter: “And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

One of the best, literary discussions of truth and freedom and illusion, is in *The Grand Inquisitor*. *The Grand Inquisitor* is a story within a story, in *The Brothers Karamazov* by Fyodor Dostoyevsky. In the story, Jesus comes to pay a visit to the people of Seville, sometime in the fifteenth century, during the raging inquisition. As he walks the streets, he sees people suffering. Being who he is, he starts performing healings and other miracles, including a resurrection. People are proclaiming him as the returned Christ. At the mo-

ment he is doing the resurrection, the Cardinal, an old man who is the Grand Inquisitor, happens by. He takes in what is happening. He then points his finger, the auto-da-fe, at Jesus accusing him of heresy. Jesus is then arrested and imprisoned, to be burned at the stake as a heretic of the Church, on the following day. The crowd, which was cheering him moments before, is silent. They are cowed by ecclesiastical authority, lest they be next.

During the night the Inquisitor comes to the cell of Jesus. A long conversation ensues. It is one-sided because Jesus says not a word. The Cardinal tells Jesus that he knows who he is. He goes on to say it has taken fifteen centuries of struggle to vanquish the freedom he gave, but the Church has succeeded. The people laid it humbly as the feet of the Church. He claims the Church did it to give them happiness. He tells Jesus that he should have turned stones to bread for then he would have unending gratitude from the people. They would be happy. "Nothing has ever been more insupportable for a man, and a human society, than freedom." The people have been convinced that they are too "weak, vicious, and rebellious" to be free. The Inquisitor goes on to say, "But only one who can appease their conscience can take over their freedom." The people will accept lies, false doctrines, or whatever, to have their conscience appeased. "We will allow them to sin, they are weak and helpless, and they will love us because we allow them to sin...we shall tell them that every sin will be expiated...we shall take it upon ourselves...they will adore us as their saviors who have taken on their sins." It requires will to be free and think for one's self. It requires courage to face the consequences on one's sins.

When the Inquisitor had finished, he waited for a long time for a reply. He longed for Jesus to say something, even if it was "bitter and terrible." The only response from Jesus was to place a kiss on the mouth of the old Cardinal. The old Cardinal opened the door to his cell giving him his liberty, telling him never to return, and it is implied that he would only bring more tribulation to a futile situation. "The Prisoner went away." As to the old Cardinal: "The kiss glows in his heart, but the old man adheres to his ideas."

We are not living in the fifteenth century; we are in the twenty-first. We are not living in an ecclesiastical society; we are living in a secular society. Nonetheless, the thesis of Ivan Karamazov, who told the story of the Grand Inquisitor, holds true. We seem to love illusion more than truth. In the United

States approximately 50 billion dollars per year are spent on cosmetics to give an illusion of beauty. Huge amounts are spent on clothing more fashionable than functional, to the same end. Movie attendees prefer films with special effects—illusions—more than thoughtful story lines or character development. Approximately 220 billion dollars per year are spent on antidepressant medications, to say nothing of tranquilizers and other anti-anxiety drugs—the Inquisitor’s “happiness” in a pill. We seem to prefer enslavement to our habits and desires over spontaneous, living statements of freedom. The list goes on and on.

A materialistic view of the world is widely accepted, but we do not have the monolithic dogma of the Church in Ivan’s story. Instead we have propaganda which is more flexible to attaining the same end. Billions of dollars are spent on advertising in political campaigns to persuade voters to elect candidates. The advertisements are often based more on establishing the desirability of the preferred candidate and fear of the opponent, than on issues and feasible policies. As time goes on, the propaganda is targeted to appeal more precisely to any desired sector of society. Enormous amounts of resources are spent in finding what interests individuals, and how that information can be used to advantage. Every Google search is recorded and the accumulation is studied statistically and psychologically with artificial intelligence— all to control the freedom of the people. There is much more that could be said along these lines, but saying even a little is often saying too much, because readers take it seriously, believe it, and lose heart.

There is danger in writing about these things but the danger is not from an inquisitor. The danger is that these things are factual. Facts are different from truth. Facts are true but they are not the greater Truth. The danger is that some will focus only on the bare facts and not look for the greater Truth. As mystical aspirants, we are interested in the greater Truth that will “make us free.” With mere factuality there is some likelihood that even truth seekers will accept this condition as the true way of things. Some might even want to launch campaigns of counter propaganda. It has happened before that freedom has been attacked in the name of freedom. Knowingly doing such a thing constitutes a greater sin than mere acceptance. Max Heindel tells us the destiny of knowingly transgressing is more severe than merely transgressing. If we do not counter these things, what do we do?

One thing we can do is to see and strengthen the true and the good. In earnestly performing our prayers and other exercises, we become skilled thinkers. Skilled thinkers, when holding the true and the good in mind, become like radio stations transmitting into the psychic environment. Doing this is not aggressive. An Adept does not project thoughts into the aura of another to communicate, as a hypnotist, because doing that is a form of psychological assault. An Adept holds a thought which radiates, and those who can resonate to that pitch, receive it. If this is how we chose to strengthen truth and freedom, what are the things we want to transmit?

One thing we want to do is to hold a positive attitude. For many years this writer kept and shared a one panel cartoon from a newspaper:

Life Scoreboard

Inning	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Final
Material Pessimists	0	3	1	0	0	2	1	0	1	0
Spiritual Optimists	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

Max Heindel was almost unbelievably positive about optimism. He loved Pollyanna, even though worldly-wise cynics sneer at it. Thoroughgoing positivity has effects whether one believes in it or not. One wonders how Max Heindel, with all of his sensitivity to suffering in the world, could sustain such positivity.

One simple answer is that it comes from knowing the greater Truth. One greater truth is found in Christian Mysticism and another set of facts, coetaneous with the darker facts mentioned above. It is the fact that most people do good things willingly. They perform their work as well as they can; they raise their children conscientiously; they help others when they can; and so on. The effect of these small, prosaic deeds for others is to attract soul material into the higher ethers of their soul bodies. Even those who do their duty under the illusion of propaganda, or a threat of some kind, attract soul material, despite the intent of those who would control them. This latter method is not the most efficient kind of soul growth but it is soul growth and its ef-

facts are permanent. Moreover, soul growth is a mounting activity—the more one has, the more one wants—which is the symmetrically, reflective positive of the hunger of the addict of illusion, except that it is free. Even those who would not, serve Christ. “If God be for us, who can be against us.” With more soul growth there is more intuition. Intuition speaks for itself. It does not need reinforcement. As people experience truth in intuition, as they hear “the Shepherd’s voice”, no amount of illusion or propaganda can sway them from its Truth.

Did Jesus Write This Book?

Did Jesus Write This Book? is a book by Dr. Charles F. Potter. The book referred to in this provocative title is not Dr. Potter's book. It is *The Book Of The Secrets Of Enoch*, that is the subject of this interest-attracting title. The "Secrets" is apocryphal. Early Christianity had many scriptures from various sects and sources. Too many. There were squabbles and much dissension among the numerous, early church fathers and Christian cults. What was to become the Christian Church, wanted unity and standardization. Councils were convened by the Church fathers to determine what was to be the official Christian doctrine. The councils were contentious, to say the least. Eventually, among other things, it was decided that fourteen books were deemed official, though later, the New Testament came to the twenty-seven it has today in the Catholic Bible. All other books were called apocryphal, and most came to be ignored, except by a few scholars from time to time. It was even considered heretical to refer to the apocrypha during some eras. Standardization was helpful for the establishment and growth of Christianity. Unification, and the power that comes with it, is enhanced when everyone in a congregation is worshipping in the same way. Nonetheless, doctrinal unification is nowhere near as complete and powerful, as when the unification is in spirit, not form.

Important things about Jesus and Christianity were lost, or put into hibernation, with the standardization of Christianity. Some of the apocrypha gave the viewpoint of the children of fire, instead of the viewpoint in the Bible that we now have, which is mostly from the children of water. General interest in the apocrypha dramatically increased with the discovery of the "Dead Sea Scrolls" (the Qumran manuscripts), and the Chenoboskin manuscripts of the Nag Hammadi library. Dr. Potter became fascinated with *The Book Of The Secrets of Enoch*, which is older than the New Testament, because this book seems to tie together most of the Apocrypha, and the accepted scriptures. He spent most of his theological career researching this book and other pseudepigrapha. He was convinced, as were other scholars, that Jesus was connected with the Qumran community of Nazarene Essenes, as was John the Baptist. He eventually came to believe that it was possible, and even likely, that Jesus contributed to this book. His view was marginalized by other authorities. This may have been because it was theologically volatile. Only a search of the Memory of Nature could give a definitive determination of

this issue, and few theologians are capable of that. Besides, it is likely moot anyway. Scriptures are touchstones, an excellent lingua franca, and a source of inspiration for us, but as a practical sourcebook for how to proceed on the path for modern spiritual seekers, *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*, and other similar books are more suitable. We want to be near the living Christ to proceed safely and scientifically today.

Today there are a few contemporary books in circulation purported to have been written by Jesus. The methods for accomplishing this feat vary. In some cases it is by automatic writing, in others by mediumship, channeling, over-shadowing, and other similar practices. All of these means involve submission to a being outside of the agent, which makes the spiritual ethics of the activity questionable. Since this is a sensitive topic for many, clarification is required. First, to be clear, this essay is not about the internal dialog between the higher Self and the personal ego. The internal dialog is a method used by Thomas á Kempis, and other mystics, to share insights gained in prayer or meditation. Such a dialog is evidence of high and holy, spiritual unfoldment. It is not the purpose of this essay to disparage the information given by spiritualism, or the people who use the information, though its validity is called questionable. There are many people who claim to benefit from the information provided by these means, though spirituality is much more about life than it is about information. This essay is about the larger, long-run, philosophical picture of spiritual ethics, and how the means harmonize with ends. It is more about principles than pragmatism.

Different people adopt different views about means and ends. To many, the ends are more important than the means, which are only adopted to attain the ends. Hence there is the old saw: “the ends justify the means.” Others believe the means are all-important. For them, if one is careful and correct about the means, the ends will take care of themselves. Many books, lofty and prosaic, have been written about these two philosophies. In true spiritual things, both the means and the ends are important. This is so because spiritual things are whole—the ends are within the means, and the means are part of the ends. Christian mystical aspirants “live the life” while they seek union with Christ. This outlook is true in large, and in small, though it most often helps to look at things in the larger perspective—the big picture—lest we lose perspective in the petty things of our little lives.

The big picture for Rosicrucian aspirants is found in the scheme of the evolutionary creation, in which we are exceedingly fortunate to participate. The creation to us, is in two major stages, involution and evolution. Involution is the time of the materialization of spirit, and evolution is for the spiritualization of matter. During involution the threefold spirit, the Self, is linked together and activated, while coetaneously, indirectly building vehicles of consciousness (bodies), by reflective projection. Involution becomes evolution in humans, when the spirit enters its bodies, and awakes to self-consciousness. During evolution the Self unfolds divine potential by spiritualizing matter through creativity. Most of the spiritualization takes place in the bodies in an activity called epigenesis. We also participate in the spiritualization of the world around us with our creativity. During involution we were creatures. Our body building was directed by divine beings (creative hierarchies from without) and our spiritual being was linked, and brought to activity by even higher creative hierarchies. A healthy involutory attitude was to receive, respond, and adapt, to the myriad conditions we were brought through. We were brought to us experiences to we bring out many of the infinite possible facets of spirit. Recalcitrance produced straggling. Receptivity and responsiveness are involutory watchwords.

Our humanity is just past the central, turning point of the evolutionary creation. Most of us are self-conscious, though many are only dimly so—it is a slow process. We were not doing so well, because we lost sight of the big picture when our inner vision dimmed, and finally closed, in most of humanity. The loss, which was unintended, came about when we insecurely chose material experience over insight, in a quest for physical immortality. We were more than struggling. We were in danger of bringing the process to a halt for ourselves. We needed a boost. The boost was given in the extraordinary sacrifice of Christ becoming one of us, and bringing many things to us, most of which are beyond the scope of this essay. Among these things, Christ initialized an entirely new type of religion, the religion of the Son. This new, unifying religion takes us out of undo self-centeredness (egoism) by sacrificing the Self for the sake of the other, and the all, in altruistic love.

So it is, that we find ourselves in the early stages of the ascent to divinity in a process called spiritual evolution. Evolution is a mirror image of involution, across the axis of the turning point—the first will be last, the second will be second last and so on. Evolution entails dematerialization by spiritualiza-

tion through soul development, where involution was about materialization. During involution we were led from without, during evolution our guidance comes from within, through a voluntary reestablishment of inner vision. The attitude of evolution is strikingly different from the attitude of involution. Self-reliance and creativity are watchwords of evolution. The gift of Christ does not counter this attitude, it strengthens it. In the Gospels we have admonitions like “Be ye therefor perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.” This is no mean task, and it is not likely to be accomplished by passivity. Even the attitude of Christ toward his intimate disciples, who were to carry out the beginnings of his work after he left, is an attitude of self-reliance and positivity: “Henceforth I call you not servants ... but I have called you friends....”

As Rosicrucian aspirants, we are admonished to live the life of Christ. This is not to be taken literally, such as wearing robes and sandals. The saints, such as Thomas á Kempis, did marvelously in this, by living out the spirit and the principles of the Gospel Christ, in their everyday lives. Living the life, means to do it as Thomas á Kempis did. The life of the Gospel Christ is an abstract pattern, an initiatory formula, for healthy evolutionary development. From mathematics we know that abstract things are exact in a way, that material measurements and estimations are not. When we attune ourselves to the life of Christ, we know it without a doubt, like proving a theorem. We know we are in sync with the evolutionary arc, of which the life of Christ is an example.

There seem to be other ways. For example, by performing retrospection and other Rosicrucian exercises, one can make great spiritual progress seemingly without the Gospel Christ. However, the perception that comes with progress in spiritual exercises, leads to the living Christ. The living Christ is a spiritual fact. The place of Christ, and the religion of the Son, are cosmic realities, even if the given names for them are different. The life of Christ is not a barren abstraction. It is a rich spiritual reality. The cosmos, in which we are lucky to live, is spiritually alive in every respect. Everything in it has character, authentic, living character. In recognizing this and living by it, there is true progress.

How does this relate to the contemporary books purported to be written by Jesus or Christ? Automatic writing, mediumship, channeling, overshadowing, and similar practices are not based on positive control and self-reliance.

They are based on passivity. They depend on direct external influence outside of the agent, not on the Christ within. The part of the agent is to assume a psychologically passive state. They are definitely not the same as having a mouth-closed conversation telepathically, such as Max Heindel had with the Teacher. We are told clearly, several times, that the candidate must self-consciously rise to the pitch necessary to match, in sympathetic vibration, the pitch of the Teacher, to have such a communication. Positive, visionary communications are always in an elevated state. In light of the character of evolution, versus that of involution, the claim that Jesus would communicate through psychic passivity, cannot be in accordance with the principles of the scheme of the creation. Christ is the most positive being to have taken human form. The notion that a positive being, teaching positive living, would take advantage someone of a passive disposition is preposterous. One cannot sacrifice principle to strengthen principle.

What do movements based on such communications mean in the greater scheme of things? We can begin to answer this question with an understanding of the relative scope of things. The moment Christ left the body of Jesus via the flowing blood is precise. The earth seemed to go dark to the senses, when juxtaposed with the spiritual light released in that moment. The turnaround from involution to evolution in humanity is not as precise on the same scale. It requires millennia. Some have not involved sufficiently yet to have awakened self-consciousness. Many have some degree of involuntary clairvoyance. All have spiritual needs but of differing kinds. All spiritual needs are met in one way or another. All experience is valuable. In spiritual nature, as in material nature, nothing is wasted. Different religions serve different spiritual needs. Thus, though some rely on passive means to contact the spiritual worlds, does not mean they are false, or sinister, or anything evil. It merely means they are not yet in perfect synchronization with the principles of the evolutionary creation. This writer has friends who apply to outlooks like these. They are fine people. There is no doubt about their sincerity. There is no doubt about their love. There is no doubt about their spiritual future. It only means that theirs is likely to be a more circuitous route, surging when time is of the essence.

What is a healthy stance toward these activities? Max Heindel advised avoiding passive and spiritualistic practices lest, being sensitive, one become caught up in them. St. John said “try the spirits whether they are of God.” St.

Paul says “Prove all things.” Understanding the place of these practices in the grand scheme of things, is not to condone them. It is merely to see them for what they are. It would seem best to neither commend nor condemn, but to strengthen the good when it is found.

Did Jesus write this essay? No, but its writer, while confident about its content, is not free from either commendation or condemnation.

AI

There exists a tradition that Jesus never laughed, but wept often. Historians, theologians, and others, have long debated this tradition. Currently, it seems that most do not accept this belief. It is argued that Jesus must have had a sense of humor as well as an enormous compassion for the immense suffering of the world, because he was human. This writer *does* believe this tradition. His belief is based on spiritual psychology. One of the main reasons we laugh is that unhealthy tension has been relieved. Unhealthy, internal tension arises from internal ambivalence, or insecurity. Laughter is then, an expression of internal healing by relieving unhealthy tension. There are even schools of thought that believe one can laugh one's self into enlightenment. One resolves an ambivalence, or sees through an insecurity, and tension is relieved, and one laughs. Laughter relaxes one even more, and enables one to see through, or resolve, other insecurities and ambivalences, leading to more laughter, and so on until one is inwardly clear and one is enlightened. Enlightenment is not that easy, or there would be more enlightened individuals. Jesus was surely enlightened. During the three-year ministry of Christ-Jesus, Christ was the light of enlightenment. He had no insecurities or ambivalences. There was no unhealthy, internal tension to be relieved and, hence, no laughter.

Most of us, as aspirants, are nowhere near the attainment of Jesus. We sin and err, and are ignorant of many important things. Our inner dialog is often more argument than communion between the higher Self and the personal ego. We contradict our higher values, which leads to tensions, of which we are often unaware. We need to relax, see things clearly, and resolve them. The instructions for the retrospection exercise tell us to relax before beginning its performance. Laughter is a healthy way to begin to relax.

This writer tries to laugh every day. He usually finds plenty to laugh at in the absurdity of some of his notions and actions. However, sometimes self-awareness does not come easily. In those cases he seeks humor outside of himself to prime the pump of laughter. When he does so, he usually goes to YouTube on the internet. It is a rich source for things to laugh at. There are funny animal videos, old cartoons, classic comedy like the Marx Brothers, and comedians of all sorts. This writer is especially fond of wit that exposes one to the silliness of common misconceptions. For example, one wag says

“anyplace is within walking distance if you have enough time” another, when he is shown a photo by a friend and told “this is a photo of me when I was younger” responds by saying “Dude!, every photo is a photo of you when you were younger.”

YouTube, which is owned by Google, derives income from advertisements. The more YouTube views there are, the more enticing it is to potential advertisers. Thus, YouTube does what it can to lure one into viewing more videos. It is called “click baiting.” One of the ways it does this is by suggesting other videos one might want to view, after the current video. Most of the suggestions are not random. They are based on what one has viewed previously. Every action takes on YouTube or Google is collected by Google to be studied to benefit Google. There are other entities, governmental and private, that also collect data on a scale almost beyond belief. All phone calls are recorded or scanned. It goes beyond that. Edward Snowden tells of sitting at his desk at the NSA, and turning on the camera on the computer of someone in Indonesia, who is under suspicion, and watching the man teaching his son things on the computer. There are immense storehouses of intimate data.

Data, by itself, is not valuable. If we see someone running towards us, that perception is data. To be valuable, data must be interpreted. We want to determine whether the runner is charging at us with malice, or if it is only a jogger. Data in large data warehouses is interpreted by Artificial Intelligence, AI.

Artificial Intelligence is distinguished from natural intelligence as found in humans and animals. AI is used to perform tasks normally performed by humans, but on a larger scale than humans, alone, are capable of. AI can be used in mechanical activities such as vacuuming one’s living space. Driving an automobile safely has not yet been accomplished satisfactorily. AI can be used to work out complex mathematical problems. Chess programs are now far stronger than human players, and AI can map out complex molecules in minutes, a task which would take months for humans. The more advanced uses for AI are for finding patterns in immense data sets, and learning them. Currently the patterns are interpreted according to algorithms designed by humans. Some AI programs are now capable of making decisions about new, unprogrammed patterns, and interpreting them according to past successes. One of the main goals of computer scientists is to teach AI to learn in

the way humans learn. When that happens, the concern is, that AI will outstrip humans and take over. The current time line for that possibility is estimated to be around 2050. Many intelligent scientists are concerned about this possibility. The late Stephen Hawking, for one, voiced this concern. One wonders whether mystical aspirants would be wise to be concerned about our evolutionary future with AI.

AI already affects the personal liberty of many people. China leads the world in applied in AI. It has facial recognition data for every one of its approximately 1.4 billion citizens. If someone in China chooses to do something as trivial as jaywalking, that individual would likely be subject to public shaming or worse. Within seconds of the violation of the law, the person might look up and see his/her name and face on a large LED billboard as an offender of society. The government of China is on the verge of knowing the exact location of each of its citizens at any given moment. With whom any given citizen associates is also known. If an individual has a cell phone, the government can know what the individual has been talking about.

Ominous as this seems, mystics do not need to be overly concerned. Why? Because AI has no future. Having no future means that data, and its analysis, is always of the past, in the same way that every photo is a photo of one when one was younger. AI can find new patterns but those patterns are in data from the past. Only to the degree that we are bound by our habits, would we be subject to control by AI. In this respect, future scenarios derived from AI, are like the failed scenarios of most science fiction. This is because most science fiction, futures are exaggerated extrapolations of the present and past, which do not anticipate new things. The future is new. To not be victims of the past, whether by habit or by social control, we need to recognize what is new, and live by it. As one wit said it, "the stone age did not end for want of stones, it ended because it was superseded by a new outlook." This means we need to live creative lives in large and small. The Lord who sat on the throne in the book of Revelation said "Behold, I make all things new." Even the little things of daily life, can be looked at anew, and when we do that, life is always new and wonderful. It is not meant by this, that we obsess about the minutiae of life. Rather, it means that we live in an attitude of anticipation and expectancy of new things, of intuitions which AI does not have. Even without consideration of AI, we need to do that anyway, as aspiring Christians: "For yourselves know perfectly the day of the Lord cometh as a thief in the night."

The goal of AI is to replicate in software how humans learn. Ultimately, this cannot be done successfully because we only know something its true by intuition. A mathematician, after completing the proof of a theorem, will say something like “we can see this is intuitively true.” The Truth Knower, the spirit, knows by intuition. One cannot put intuition into software or a machine. Perhaps in the Vulcan period, we may be able to bring self-conscious intuition into our creations, but that is a long way off, and we will be divine beings by then.

Most current thinking about AI is inverted. In inversion one sees things upside-down or backwards. This kind of inversion is a corollary of materialism, which is an inversion by thinking everything comes out of matter, rather than issuing from spirit. In materialistic, evolutionary thinking, consciousness is a product of cumulative, collective, material experience. Thus something as insightful as poetry, is the froth of biological grinding, in a blind evolution groping its way through matter. Moreover, according to materialism, improvement is adapting to material conditions accomplished through random mutations. According to Richard Dawkins, the current champion of materialistic evolution, purpose in evolution is a meaningless illusion, a superstition. With regard to AI and the future, this means something lesser can create something greater than itself. It is not difficult for spiritual aspirants to be caught in this illusion. It is easy to get caught, because we do get better. We do aspire to something beyond our current state, something more spiritual. The important truth is, that we were spiritual to begin with. We are passing through this complex, evolutionary creation to develop potential that was in us before the beginning. That purpose is also in the future. It is in the divine intent of the Universal Spirit, the Creator. There is even purpose in the potential that lies asleep in matter. An artist will often intuitively know what he/she wants to say, but cannot say it until it is clarified by interaction with the paints. In the interaction the potential of the painter is realized by realizing the potential of the colors in the paints. Evolutionary progress is a joint activity between spirit and matter, but spirit leads the way.

A counterfeiter produces a perfect \$22 bill. He goes out into the hinterlands to find rubes to whom he hopes to pass his fakes. He enters a crossroads general store and gives one of the bills to the storekeeper and asks “do you have change for this?” The storekeeper looks at it and says “sure, do you want two

eleven or three sixes and a four?” A counterfeit is only potentially valuable if there is an authentic original. The existence of something counterfeit, or illusionary, or pathological, argues for the existence of something genuine. A lie depends on truth for its existence. This is also true of tension. Much of the tension relieved in laughter is unhealthy. We have produced a chronic state of unhealthy tension, between the higher Self and the lower nature, that is sometimes called neurosis. We are healed when it is exposed and we can laugh in relief. When we seek to heal our souls, we want to be careful to not “throw out the baby with the bath water.” Some tension is necessary. Nay, some tension is divinely benign.

In the 1960s there was a facetious rumor that if one played certain Beatles recordings backwards, one would receive secret messages that led to rewards from the Beatles. This prompted one wit to ask “what do you get if you play country music backwards?” The answer was “you get your wife back, your job back, and you get out of jail.” The next question was “what do you get if you play New Age music backwards?” This time the answer was “New Age music.” Good music requires tension, which some New Age music does not have; it is only a collection of sonorous sounds. Tension is necessary for the construction and function of our physical bodies. Without tension they would cease to hold together and function properly. If one laughs too much, one relaxes too much and urinates involuntarily. True tension, and its relief, is necessary to all creative work, in order to be able to realize it. Without tension, it remains an idle fantasy. Even in the simplest creations there is a joy in realizing them. One can say the happy words “I did it!” Some believe this applies to the creation itself. There is an ancient Chinese belief that the primordial, creative word was a laugh, the ultimate consummatum est.

Have you laughed today?

Identification

When this writer was coming into his youth, he wanted to be a basketball player. There is nothing unusual about that, except that his entire experience with basketball consisted of attending one semi-professional basketball game with his father; nothing more. He set up a hoop in the barn and practiced sporadically. About a year later, the family left the farm and moved to a small town. The move coincided with his first year of high school. He tried out for the high school basketball team. Because he was awkward and uncoordinated, he was one of the first to be cut from the squad. That did not damp his enthusiasm. He became a manager, someone who polishes the balls and takes care of the equipment. His interest in basketball has continued to the present. He does not know if the interest was because of the excitement of that first game, or because of the companionship of his father, or something else, but it has been part of his life, for better or worse.

For the “worse” part, there was a downside to this interest, with regard to spiritual growth. It was in identifying with specific players, or teams or even a city. Identification is a detriment to spiritual growth.

The verb “to identify” has two definitions. According to the unabridged Webster dictionary, one meaning is “to establish the identity of”. This meaning has a long history in mysticism and the occult. For example, the Pythagoreans believed, as many schools of magic do, that one has an advantage, if one knows the name of someone. A name is not accidental. To know the name of someone, which is to identify them, is to know something about them. This kind of “knowing” is not trivial. With this knowledge, one has some useable knowledge about the person. The names of some gods, which give access to their power, have always been kept secret. King Solomon had such knowledge and used it. Some say the name of Christ is exoteric, and that the real name is not trusted to the profane. In the Gospel of St. John, Christ says “If ye ask anything in *my name*, I will do it.” This kind of asking is more than just saying words, and knowing the name means more than merely knowing to call someone Chuck, or Janice, or Jesus. “And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.” Most often, we do not believe enough. The power of one’s name has been mostly lost, but not completely. The power in the reputation of one’s name is shallow. Signing one’s name to a bank loan is not quite so shallow. Faust signing his name in blood to the

contract with Mephistopheles was a deep ceding of the essential power of the spirit.

The main variant of the other definition of “to identify” is: “to link in an inseparable fashion : make correlative with something.” Correlative in this definition means “a bound reciprocal relationship.” Identifying with someone means having a give-and-take relationship with them. This says nothing about the fairness, and quality of what is given and taken.

Most complementary relationships are reciprocal, but usually do not involve identification. Interdependence in complementary relationships is healthy. “No man is an island of itself... .” We all need each other. In generations before ours, marriages were more complementary than they are at present. They were also more partitioned. There were things one partner did, and other things were done by the other partner. It worked. Families were raised, and children matured socially. Complementary specialization was efficient. It allowed free time and energy for other things beyond the family.

There are other forms of complementary relationships with specialization that are successful, such as realtors forming complementary partnerships with accountants. However, not all aspects of interdependence and specialization are desirable. Specialization, in the face of major changes, leaves one vulnerable. When this writer’s mother died, his father was left vulnerable. The vulnerability was more than emotional. It was in prosaic, practical, things. He had to learn to prepare his own food. He never learned to do his laundry, not because he was incapable, but because he had developed an attitude about himself that he was incapable of learning to do laundry. He had developed an attitude of dependency rather than an attitude of voluntary interdependency. In biological evolution specialists are often dependent symbiotically on fragile environments. When major changes, such as a cataclysm, occur, most specializing species are gone forever. It is the generalists that can adapt and survive.

Self-reliance is key to general spiritual evolution. Max Heindel did advise us to adopt one spiritual path for efficiency, but not to become specialists. There is special emphasis on self-reliance in the Rosicrucian path. Dependence is anathema to self-reliance. It is not meant that we eschew complementary relationships, it is meant that we maintain self-conscious self-reliance within

them. We do not want to identify with a partner of any kind, as our “other half,” as is so often done.

Partnerships, of any kind, are horizontal relationships. Which means that they are between individuals on the same level. The more deleterious identifications and dependencies, are found in vertical relationships. Vertical relationships are with those above or below us, in one way or another.

Intentional identification with someone generally inferior is almost always unfortunate. Many intelligent, and well brought up, teenagers smoke because they identify with others who are not so smart or well-behaved, because they are “cool”, unlike the socially inept identifier. Almost everyone regrets such an identification later. Identifying with basketball players who are amazingly talented physically, but seriously backward mentally, socially and morally, is not so smart either. Compensating for a specific deficiency by identifying with someone adept in the area of deficiency, but who is generally wanting, is almost always regrettable. Losing one’s identity to a cause has similar consequences. One’s identity is ceded to the crowd. Self-reliance. One might not attain excellence, or even proficiency, in an area of weakness, but that does not mean one should not work in that direction. If we don’t apply ourselves, we will never develop proficiency.

We are trying to develop spiritually. Spiritual development can only come in general, balanced, character development. It is dangerous to seek advancement in spiritual faculties if one has serious moral deficiencies. In this regard, it might be likened to inflating a balloon. As the pressure increases, if there is a weak spot, a bulge will develop that will eventually pop. The difference with spiritual development is that the balloon is capable of selective self-strengthening. Max Heindel used to refer to this as “building moral muscle.” Those who have pledged themselves to work with a true spiritual Teacher, an Elder Brother who works with the Recording Angels, are presented with exactly the right life experiences to strengthen where there is weakness. One doesn’t fail a trial, one gets better where one was weak.

Vertical relationships, in part or in whole, present problems different from those of horizontal relationships. As with horizontal relationships, the problems are a mix, some are benign, and some not so good. Having people to look up to, can be extremely helpful to improvement of any kind. Parents do this

service to their children without even intending to. It is called “role modeling.” If one reveres and follows the example of someone worthy of reverence, both parties are blessed in the relationship. Many mystics have advanced by aspiring to emulate, in their own way, worthies who have preceded them. A Venerable is someone at the first step of beatification for aspiring Catholic mystics. Seeing someone live out things we can only aspire to, is extremely encouraging. “If they can do it, why can’t I?”

We call veneration gone wrong, “hero worship.” It is clearly vertical identification. To participate in hero worship is to personalize something, which is more effective to our benefit, if it is kept impersonal. Instead of sharing a common aspiration with someone on a higher level, hero worship produces a personality cult, a static relationship. “That person will always be better than me.” Vertical aspiration is dynamic, vertical status is not. It is best to look up with aspiration. If one does not, one’s growth is stymied. Musicians are often influenced by those who came before them. If they play in the style or technique of those they admire, they improve but only to a limit. If Ray Charles had remained a Nat King Cole impersonator, he would never have developed his genius. Eventually imitators hit a ceiling. They cannot come into their own until they throw off the straitjacket of their idolization. Self-reliance.

Identification, whether horizontal or vertical, is eventually almost always limiting, or even weakening. It is so because we are giving up, or giving over, something of our essential being, our individuality, to someone or something else. We are crippling, or handicapping, ourselves from attaining the very thing we are aspiring to. It would seem wisest for modern spiritual aspirants to completely refrain from all identification, with one exception, Christ.

Identification with Christ in Life Spirit, is different from human identification. The selfness of Life Spirit is the source of all Selves. When one identifies with Christ, one is not giving away one’s individuality, as one does in ordinary human identification. One is finding the purpose of one’s Self in a way that cannot be found in one’s Self alone. One is freed from solipsism without losing something of one’s essential being, as one does in an unhealthy self-sacrifice. Instead, one gains intimate, spiritual union with everyone, in sharing the common Self of Life Spirit. One develops an indissoluble bond of divine, altruistic, love.

Aspiring to be a Christian is not an easy task, for those of us with a worldly attitude. Christians, of all types, are admonished to give themselves and everything they do, or possess, to Christ. We are told to do things “for the Christ’s sake.” When we do this successfully, we see things from the more universal perspective of Life Spirit, and we are cleansed of individual bias. There is no performance anxiety. We are freed from seeking reward. We are freed from sin. To the degree we are successful, do we see that what we have given up was relatively worthless. In doing this, or even trying to do this, our lives might seem no different in outward appearance, it is inwardly that we are changed. In identifying with Christ our lives and selves are returned to us with unbelievable richness. “And I will pray to the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, ... which is the Holy Ghost whom the Father will send in my name... . The Comforter is the Self. Self-reliance.

In this mundane world we often do not have access to those with whom we would identify. With Christ we always do. “I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.” Thus, as with St. Paul, when he was struggling with “a thorn in the flesh,” we can have inward consolation in Christ, and hear: “My grace is sufficient for thee.”

The Incarnation Mystery

The Rosicrucian path of spiritual aspiration is a path of character building. We seek to develop spiritual powers to aid and serve humanity through healing, education, and other beneficent endeavors. Character building is essential, because it is dangerous to unfold higher powers without the highest standards of moral character. This sounds lofty and august, with even a potential to pretension. Pretension is unnecessary. Some of the best precepts can be expressed in simple, everyday language. There are several precepts this writer uses as reminders in circumstances where he is prone to err. One of them is “What you do, is what you become.”

Though simple, this principle is helpful to understanding difficult things which are briefly stated, but not thoroughly elucidated, in *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* and other writings of Max Heindel. He was only one man, he couldn't say everything. Besides, he tells us he intentionally omitted saying some things, and encouraged us to find them out for ourselves, self-reliance. Some of these things are from the distant past, vague, and hoary, but they still affect us today.

One of these things this writer finds mysterious and intriguing, seems to have occurred in the Lemurian Epoch, in this revolution of the Earth Period. It is about how, when the solar system was forming, the earth congealed out of the ethers as a molten chemical ball. Simultaneously, our humanity was also condensing out of the ethers. The entrance into dense, chemical matter necessitated something, heretofore unknown, in our involutory pilgrimage,. It was gender differentiation. In the more rare, higher worlds, auto-generation, and almost perpetual maintenance of bodies, was possible. Auto-generation was not possible here on Earth for us in our, then more lowly, state of evolution—we are told spiritual adepts can do so now. We had to divide our energies, and the forms they express through, to create new forms cooperatively. This is not hard to believe, since we see it in the historical tableau of the remnant evolutionary forms in the plants and animals of today. Some species are gendered and some are not. The division was not a matter of cleaving in two, our human forms, as facetiously suggested by someone in the *Symposium* by Plato, nor do we have an “another half” in the world with whom we can unite and become whole, as the fallacious doctrine of soul mates posits. It was a redirection of more of the etheric energy, that

forms the body, to one etheric pole or the other. Thus two types of bodies developed extremely slowly on a geological scale of time. The timing is something which is easily misunderstood because it is stated in a few sentences in *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*. The reality is that it occurred over many millions of years. even though things can be changed more quickly in rarer states of being, like the ethers, and even more so in the higher worlds. Here in the chemicals changes are glacially slow. The cooling of the earth to its present state—it is still molten not too far beneath the surface—also took place on a geological or astronomical time scale. Fascinating as these ,not completely explained, phenomena are, they are not the matter which this writer finds intriguing.

During those many millions of years something else had to have happened. Something that Max Heindel also did not elucidate thoroughly. It is something this writer finds more difficult to understand. It is that another division seems to have come about coetaneously, and in parallel, with the separation of the sexes. It is a division in character. Two distinct temperaments developed in humanity. This separation is different from the separation of the sexes, in one key factor, it is permanent. One can be reborn in a body of either gender, but if one is a child of fire, or a child of water, one has that temperament in every rebirth. What is difficult for this writer to understand, is the root of this character differentiation. Max Heindel gave us a mytho-history according to the Masonic myth, as it relates to the Garden of Eden story. His rendition agrees with early writings on the subject, such as the Nag Hamma-di Library. Neither source addresses one key point. What was it that caused some to become firelings, and others to become waterlings? This temperament differentiation, which is permanent, had to have developed over eons of time, just as the separation of the sexes did. It is a long term example of “what you do, is what you become.” The temptation of the Lucifers was not a single occurrence, as one might erroneously assume from the Bible story. It continued over eons, just as the cooling of the earth did, and does today. The prevalence of sex and violence in the world today, is evidence of their continued presence—the Lucifers milk us for as much as they can. It is the initial origin that is difficult to understand. This writer finds it difficult to believe that some Virgin Spirits are fundamentally different from others. It is also difficult to accept the notion that the differentiation was random. One could push the problem back to the Moon Period, when we were animal-like, and the Lucifers and Angels, were the humanity of the Moon Period. They

were also, prospectively, the mentors of the children of fire and the children of water, respectively. Perhaps some of us were pets of one, and others of the other. Even if one accepts such this hypothesis, it doesn't evade the problem, the how and why of the separation. As of this writing, it remains a mystery to this writer. Being a fireling, an unsolved mystery bothers him; it is an unmet challenge.

This is an essay about mysteries, one mystery in particular. Different people view mysteries differently. Not surprisingly, so do the children of fire and the children of water. Discussing this difference brings us to another of those character building precepts in prosaic language. It is, "what you are is what you see." Each of us sees things differently, because each of us is different. We are different, because of having had different experiences, through which we have developed character, "what you have done." There are some attitudes that are common to groups who share a common background of evolutionary experience. Different attitudes do not necessarily mean one group is right, and the other wrong. We are all equal in the eyes of God. The fact is, that the children of fire and the children of water see, and treat, mysteries differently.

The children of water are more apt to approach things with feeling. It is not that they are incapable of thinking or questioning, it is just that they feel first, and foremost. The more profound the mystery, the deeper their feeling. If the mystery is a spiritual mystery, their inclination is to worship. Sometimes, in extremity, their view is, that to solve a mystery is to destroy its holiness. If institutionalized, there is a tendency to make solving a mystery heretical. The nature of Christ-Jesus, (simply Christ to the waterlings of the Roman Catholic Church) is a perfect example. The belief that the nature of Christ is singular, either completely human or completely divine, is the Monophysite heresy. The belief that the nature of Christ is dual, part human and part divine (the Rosicrucian view), is the Nestorian heresy. To the knowledge of this writer, there has been no belief of the nature of Christ being more than dual, but if there were, it would likely be a heresy also. Thus, one cannot believe Christ as being either single or dual, without being a heretic. In short, one cannot believe anything, without being a heretic. A mystery is not to be solved. The function of a mystery is inspire holiness, and rouse feelings of sacredness. If one believes enough, the mystery will be revealed. They act with reverence.

The children of fire see a mystery as something to be solved, with practical application if possible. Firelings burn inwardly with interest, when confronted with an unknown. The Mysteries were designed for children of fire. In the Mysteries, solving a mystery means, being able to live out the meaning of the Mystery, not merely to think it through. The Mysteries are steps of initiation, steps of apotheosis. *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* addresses fundamental life Mysteries: What are we?, Where did we come from?, Where are we going?, and so on. It gives clear answers to those questions, and the answers are practical. Moreover, the answers are corroborated, a thing a candidate is challenged to do also. Self-reliance. The answers given to us, appeal to our intuition. They do not solve these mysteries, but they clearly tell us how we can solve them. To do that the answers must be lived out, and we are told how we can do that. In the modern Christian Mysteries, first and foremost, we are told to develop love from the heart. We are to balance fire and water in ourselves. We are to become watery mystics, as well as fiery occultists, in the imitation of Christ-Jesus, the complete human. The reason Max Heindel could communicate as clearly as he did with us, is that he was successful in this endeavor. He became a complete human. When he addressed a mystery, it was with reverence, not mere intellection.

The Incarnation Mystery is one of the mysteries he addressed. The three year ministry of Christ-Jesus is the most important period in the history of humanity. The inception of that ministry, is called the Incarnation Mystery. It is also the inception of an entirely new kind of religion, among other things. "As a twig is bent, so grows the tree" is a wise, old adage. The start of things is central, in determining their course and outcome. In spiritual things, especially, the inception must be consistent with the ends and the purpose. One doesn't expect grain, if one has sown weeds. If we want to attune ourselves to, and serve, Christ, it is important to thoroughly understand the Incarnation Mystery.

Before we can delve into this inception, it is important to understand what is involved in it, and a little of its purpose. This brings us back to the time of the separation of the sexes and the Garden of Eden Story. As the earth was forming, our evolution on it, made the separation of the sexes necessary. The manner in which that separation was accomplished, was not as was divinely intended. In the Genesis story, Eve was tempted by a serpent (the way Lu-

cifer appeared to her inner vision.) In order to be tempted, that to which we are tempted, must be desirable. According to *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*, as we were coming into our dense, physical bodies, in the chemical world, our inner vision waned while our sense perception was opening—“and their eyes were opened, and they knew they were naked.” When we began to peer into the outer, material world, we began to see discrete things, with discrete beginnings and ends, which is different from the way things appear in the inner worlds. Among other things, we began to see others losing their bodies in what we call death. At the same time we were gaining outer vision, we began losing our inner vision, which was part of our connection with the Divine. We were beginning to wane in faith. In this there was the possibility of insecurity. The tempters, the Lucifer Spirits, wanted to use us to gain experience here in the chemicals, something they couldn’t do themselves. They directed our attention to the possibility of insecurity, and played on it. In our new found insecurity, they led us to believe that by using sex, we could generate new bodies for others in cooperation with others—the seed of altruism was planted then—and we could work around death. What they told us was true, but it was not the whole truth. The whole truth included the fact that the generative activity had to be used in harmony with cosmic laws, or it would introduce discord in us, and in the cosmos, which it has. As is often the case with misbehavior, one thing led to another, and soon we had a panoply of sins, including terribly destructive magic—we learned how to destroy forms as well as generate them. Insecurity is ruled by Saturn, but it is not the only thing ruled by Saturn. There is also selfishness. Our first sin was disobedient misuse of the creative force, but the motive behind it was selfish, we wanted immortality. Selfish desire is hardening, and the creative force is is potent. Though subtle, it is potent, as any magician who uses it can vouch. It is the force that creates, sustains, transforms and dissolves the creation. Our selfishness had dire consequences, immediate and long term, over eons. We hardened ourselves and the earth, to such an extent, that there was danger of bringing our participation in the creation, to a halt, to say nothing of what it would have done for other participants in the creation. Something had to be done.

Anything done to heal us, and the earth, had to be done in harmony with with the laws of the Universal Spirit, which permeates everything in the evolutionary creation. Though “closer than hands and feet”, as Max Heindel loved to say, it does not work directly. It works in states of being, called “worlds”

in the Rosicrucian philosophy, through divine creative beings, called Hierarchies. The worlds, and everything in them, are alive. There is nothing dead in the creation. This life, in varying grades of consciousness, has spiritual character. There are beings within beings, within beings, ..., within the One; each with its own nature and function. The chain of life stretches from the least elemental, or particle, to the One. The One, in our creation, is clothed in a threefold spirit consisting of Divine Spirit, Life Spirit and Human Spirit. Each of these states of being, has its own set of qualities. One set of qualities is, in simple: will, love-wisdom, and activity, respectively. These states of being (which are beings themselves) have personifications, to represent them. The personifications are the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, also respectively. Together they are called the Godhead. They act in harmony as one. It is one of these personifications that is germane to the Incarnation.

The cosmos, in which we are extremely fortunate to participate, is an elaborate, evolutionary, creation. It is far too elaborate for a brief essay. This writer is assuming that readers of this essay are, at least modestly familiar, with the workings of the evolutionary creation. If you are not, please read *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*, part two. The following is as brief as this writer can state it. The creation takes place in “periods” in time, “globes” in space and “revolutions” of consciousness through the periods and globes. The whole of the creation is manifest in “worlds” of the one substance, graded along the spirit-matter pole. All is manifest in the time-space pole of potential. There are seven periods. During each, seven globes are manifested by spirit, passing into and out of matter: three descending globes, three ascending, and the deepest is half descending and half ascending. The periods, themselves, follow this pattern of analogously descending into and ascending out of matter. In each of the periods there are seven revolutions of consciousness through the seven globes in an analogous pattern. Thus, the fourth revolution, in the fourth globe, in the fourth period, is the deepest that the creation descends into matter. It is our present location in the creation. Even in this abbreviated statement, the variety of conditions is amazing.

Waves of Virgin Spirits participate in the evolutionary creation. They are phased off. We humans began in the first period; our current animals, began in the second period; and so on. There are seven stages of development: mineral-like, plant-like, animal-like, human-like, angel-like, archangel-like, and Lords of Mind-like. There are beings in the stages beyond our current human

stage. Beings in those advanced stages, such as our current angels, began in a previous creative manifestation. There are other, still higher, creative hierarchies that participate, or have participated, in the creation in different ways. Considering all of these things is enough to challenge almost any human mind. All in all, “what you do is what you become” has almost unlimited expressions.

The “doing” has options—that is what freedom is about. In the human stage, when involution is completed, and self-consciousness is awakened as a culmination of involutory experience. Since the Self, that is awakened, is divine—it is also a threefold spirit in the “image of God”—it has divine creative freedom. Also, since it is divine, it usually works harmoniously within the divine plan. In the Lemurian epoch our humanity elected unwittingly to act inharmoniously. Our premature, and half ignorant, acts caused us to fall more deeply into matter, harden the matter, and lag from the intended evolutionary pace—we have been out of step, and behind the beat, so to speak. The fact that it is possible to lag, also means that it is possible to exceed the intended rate of development, and soften instead of hardening. Thus, during the human stage of any life wave, when creativity is awakened, one can work ahead in evolutionary progress. Exceeding in the work of the creation is called following the path of initiation; it is the express route.

The verb “to initiate” means to start. With regard to the Mysteries, it means to start the upward path of evolution after the grand turnaround at the end of involution. An initiate is someone who has taken the first step on that path. Initiation is not ceremonial, and the steps are not arbitrary. The steps are based on the structure of the evolutionary creation. The structure that is designed to bring us from deep unconsciousness to divine, creative, self-consciousness. Experience in the revolutions of consciousness through the periods and globes, and their many subdivisions, have inculcated in us, the qualities necessary to become creative beings. We have been carefully brought through the necessary experiences to cultivate potential powers by divine beings, co-creators, who have gone before us. In the Rosicrucian philosophy they are called creative hierarchies. With each initiation, specific states of consciousness are reached, and one awakens specific creative powers. The first nine initiations are called the lesser Mysteries. They bring one to the consciousness to be reached by non initiated humanity at the end of the current period, when our humanity will have gone as far as it can while still

remaining humans, and not being demigods. The greater Mysteries are the four great initiations that take the initiate through the three periods beyond the current Earth period, to reach the goal of the creation. Someone who has passed through all of the initiations is called a “Highest Initiate.” A Highest Initiate lays aside the lowest three vehicles to be able to function three steps deeper in the spiritual worlds in order to serve in a more far reaching capacity. The lowest functioning vehicle of a Highest Initiate is in the same realm as the highest functioning vehicle of the normal humans of the life wave. For the Lords of Mind that vehicle is Divine Spirit, for Archangels it is Life Spirit, for the Angels it is abstract thought, and for our humanity it is concrete thought. A Highest Initiate shares its higher consciousness with the normal life wave members, through that common consciousness. The individual among the Highest Initiate class who has served the creation most, and who most represents the intent for its life wave, is called *the* Highest Initiate.

Among other things, *the* Highest Initiated represents the quality of the common shared vehicle of its life wave to the Godhead, and becomes the personification of that quality, in the Godhead, empowered to speak for It. The Highest Initiate of the current Lords of mind represents the will of the Godhead in Divine Spirit, and is called the Father. The Highest Initiate of the current Archangels represents the love-wisdom of the Godhead of Life Spirit, and is called the Son, or Christ. The Highest Initiate of the current Angels represents the activity quality of the Godhead in Abstract Thought, and is called the Holy Ghost, or Jehovah.

“What you are is what you see.” Christ, the Son, representing the second attribute of the Godhead, saw our tragic situation as something to be redeemed. A singular Highest Initiate always acts within character. The character of Life Spirit is to love. In the fullness of that divine love, Christ offered to “preserve” our life wave by being its “savior.” Coming from Life Spirit, it was not an act of ego, because Life Spirit is beyond ego, in altruism. In the altruism of Life Spirit, loving is done for the sake of love. As St . John’s Gospel states it in perfect simplicity, “and grace for grace.”

Christ offered to come to us, to save us from ourselves, i.e., to get beyond our petty selves, and out of egoism, with its devastating effects. Christ was to bring to us the most purposeful Life of Life Spirit, and also a great charge of the highest kind of love in the desire world, by means of the most perfect

desire body of his life wave, whose specialty was the desire body, just as our specialty is the dense, physical body. This meant Christ had to take up functioning in the desire world, which he had sacrificed to become a Highest Initiate. A major sacrifice, and another mystery beyond the scope of this essay. Sacrifice is in the nature of a Highest Initiate, especially of a Highest Initiate of the archangelic life wave. Thus, there was no problem in the willingness to do this.

There were problems in the accomplishment of this sacrifice, such as “how to do it?,” how being one of those basic questions of the Mysteries. Christ could not just appear to us as an Archangel. Few would have had the clairvoyance to see Christ, and those who could didn’t likely need a savior anyway because of their state of advancement. Besides, to appear to us as an archangel, would be to influence us from without. Influence from without is involutionary, this had to be evolutionary. Christ had to influence from within us. This meant he had to become one of us.

There are mysteries and sacrifices in how Christ became one of us. We have peculiar ways of defining ourselves, and accepting someone as one of us. One self definition for centuries has been “man is rational.” Another has been “man is mortal.” During the three year ministry of Christ-Jesus, the being of Christ, and the gifts of Christ, were not completely accepted by us. The way we accept someone as one of us, lies in the second definition, “man is mortal.” To accept Christ-Jesus as one of us, we had to kill the body of Jesus (as though killing Christ), and it had to be by the letting of blood to release the vital body directly from to blood, to avoid earthbound attachment for Christ. “What we do is what we become.” This is what we have become. In the desire for immortality, we have made death a necessity. At first glance, this sounds too grim and cynical to be an act of grace. It isn’t. It is actually a sublime acceptance of divine Life, and its wisdom, which we didn’t accept in the Lemurian epoch. At the fall, we tried to avoid death. One cannot redeem what one has been trying to avoid. There is much more about the Crucifixion Mystery, such as the great gift of divine love infused into the desire world as Christ was released from the body of Jesus, but most of it is beyond the scope of this essay, which is about the Incarnation Mystery. The Incarnation Mystery is about how Christ came to incarnate and function as Christ-Jesus.

There are differing views on the Incarnation and its profundity. Some of them

come from outside of Christianity, and those views offer objectivity. Plotinus, the great Neoplatonist mystic, experienced momentary awakenings in Life Spirit several times. When Christians approached him, and explained the Incarnation and three year ministry of Christ-Jesus, he didn't believe it. To him it was inconceivable that any human body could withstand continuous experience of Life Spirit for three years. Max Heindel tells us how the Essenes had to work on the physical body of Jesus to keep it from disintegrating, which it did within three days after the crucifixion. Another, T. Subba Row, a clairvoyant associate of Mme. Blavatsky, claimed that Jesus was the only complete, avatar, incarnation of Vishnu in human form, Vishnu being the counterpart of the Son in the Hindu Trinity.

There is scriptural evidence of the profundity of the Incarnation before, during, and at the end, of the three years ministry. St. Luke tells us John, the Baptizer, was the cousin of Jesus, who knew of the coming of Jesus while still in his mother's womb. The Gospel of St. John tells us John, the Baptizer, hailed the arrival of Jesus say "Behold the Lamb of God." Moments later: I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. *And I knew him not.*" In both Mathew's and Mark's Gospels the people were "astonished" at his works and questioned whether this was the son of Mary and Joseph that they knew. When Jesus appeared to the intimate disciples after the resurrection, they didn't recognize him, and he had to coax them into recognition. Clearly, there was something profoundly different during the incarnation period.

The exact means of the incarnation of Christ into the body of Jesus, is not recorded anywhere this writer knows of. It is often passed over and most do not delve into it, they assume they know it. Since it is so important as an initiatory and pivotal moment, it is worth of careful consideration, even if the investigation may prove fruitless. In this, there seem to be problems, mysteries if you like, for both Christ and Jesus.

"What you do is what you become" can be negated and remain informative. It then becomes something like "what you don't do, you can't become." Christ, and the other archangels, went through the human-like stage of evolution in the Sun Period. In that period the evolutionary creation was not more dense than the desire world. Their densest vehicles were composed of desire stuff. The etheric subdivision of the physical world was not manifest until the

Moon Period, and the chemical subdivision was not manifest until the current Earth Period. Christ, and the other Archangels, could not do anything in worlds that they hadn't experienced. Thus Christ did not have an etheric vital body or a dense physical body, nor the means to generate them. To incarnate he had to borrow what he didn't have.

Not every vital body and physical body would have been suitable for Christ to borrow. It required a strong physical and vital body combination, to withstand the intense spiritual vibrations of Christ. Strength does not mean muscle strength. It means a body constituted, organized for and accustomed to bearing the force of the highest spiritual expressions. The constitution of the dense physical body had to be pliable to higher forces. Max Heindel tells us great force, which has built up from past experience, is released in initiation. That force is called soul power in the Rosicrucian philosophy. Soul power, and a strong vital body, are a consequence of service, of doing things for the sake of others, or the Universal Spirit. The organization of soul power in the vital body is accomplished by sustained spiritual practices. The recipient of the Christ could not be a tyro.

The individual chosen for this mission was Jesus. It was not a spur of the moment decision. The prophecies for the Messiah in the Old Testament indicate that it was planned for in the distant past. Some say the generations in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke are records of genetic preparations by the Essenes for the Incarnation. To the knowledge of this writer, it is nowhere recorded in the physical world who made the choice. Some scripture intimates that Jesus was the first Adam at the time of the fall, which would be one of those serendipitous masterstrokes of destiny, analogous in its symmetry, to the structure of the evolutionary creation. Other possibilities include the Recording Angels, agreement among spiritual adepts skilled in soul body building, or even Christ. This writer does not know and is, for the present, disinclined to speculate. He is content, for now, to know the choice was made, and that it was successful.

How the Incarnation was accomplished at the baptism by John is the main subject of this essay. It is important because it was the beginning of the all-important work of Christ here on Earth. "What we do is what we become," and how we do it is as important as what is done. Our acts must be consistent with our ends.

This is the description given in *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*:

At the time Christ entered the body of Jesus, the latter was a disciple of high degree, consequently his life spirit was well organized. Therefore, the lowest vehicle in which Christ, when He took the vital body and the dense body of Jesus, was thus furnished with a complete chain of vehicles bridging the gap between the World of Life Spirit and the dense Physical world.

This is the description given in St. John's Gospel:

The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me. And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from Heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but that one that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he that which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw and bare record that this is the Son of God.

This seems simple and clear. It is not, at least not to this writer. It is the mechanical problems (the problems concerning the silver cord and the seed atoms, for instance) that have much troubled this writer. It is, moreover, the problems of spiritual ethics that have been most troublesome. It is these issues that this essay is attempting to address.

Various theses have been put forward that pertain to these issues. One is that, at the baptism by John, the body of Jesus was "overshadowed" by Christ. This would not contradict the rendition in St. John's Gospel. It would contradict *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* which is based on many careful, clairvoyant investigations and corroborations by highly trained and skilled investigators. It would also elude the purpose of the incarnation, which was to bring grace directly into our world through a being who had directly experienced this world as one of us. This view would make the Incarnation and Crucifixion a sham. Some proponents of this view don't even believe in the Crucifixion was real, but that the body of Jesus was spirited away at Calvary.

Another thesis is that the “taking” of the body of Jesus was only partial and impermanent. This would mean that Jesus would still be in his body, which would mean that the ministry of three years was accomplished by mediumship. Ironically, if true, this would mean that Jesus could not become a member of the Rosicrucian Fellowship, which disallows mediumship for membership. With this view Christ-Jesus casting out the legion of demons would be self-contradictory hypocrisy. Christ brought us an impulse to evolutionary, not involutionary, activity. During involution we were controlled from without by other beings; during evolution we control ourselves from within. The work of Christ could not have been initiated by an act contrary to its purpose.

Others maintain that the “taking” was complete, and continued until the crucifixion. In mysticism there is a word for this. It is called possession. Taking the body, the product of a long careful evolution, is an extremely serious breach of spiritual ethics. If true, the fact that the surrender of the body was voluntary doesn’t change the fact of the action. Submitting to hypnotism doesn’t make hypnotism less abominable. Neither does the fact that the possessor would have been Christ, erase the fact that the act would have been a possession. If true, “all that came before me are thieves and robbers” would have been spoken by another of the same ilk.

Some, who hold this view, have quite an elaborate description and explanation. One claims there were two Jesus children with different evolutionary backgrounds, and different directions of character development. The Essenes community at Qumran of which Jesus and John, the Baptizer, were members, and which was near the baptismal site, did believe in two Messiahs, one from the line of David, and one from the line of Melchizedek. This writer does not know what is referenced in this theory, though it is likely that the former Messiah is human, and the latter divine. This claim of two Jesus children, further states that when one of the children died in youth, his higher vehicles were amalgamated with those of the other to make a super vehicle capable of withstanding the high vibrations of Christ. This writer does not know if such a thing is possible. Stock car racers have been known to use the superior chassis of one vehicle and the stronger engine of another to make a super race car, but tailor made, live human vehicles seem to be a much different matter. Nothing is said about the seed atoms and silver cord is mentioned in this view either. Moreover, in this view Christ took not only

the dense and vital bodies of the composite Jesus, but also the desire body. It seems incomprehensible to this writer why Christ would take the desire body of Jesus, when his own was vastly superior, the best in our creative manifestation. One of the gifts of Christ was to charge the desire body of the earth with the desire body that was the highest product of the Sun Period. Perhaps the term “astral body” used by this author, meant something other than the desire body. In any case, this view does not answer the ethical objections of possession either.

Macabre, or morbid, are words that describe another potential solution to the Incarnation Mystery. This hypothesis avers that the transference of the dense and vital bodies from Jesus to Christ occurred at the exact moment that would have been the death of Jesus. It is too farfetched to believe that the body of Jesus would die of “natural causes” at such an early age. Even if one does believe this, the body would certainly would not be a fit vehicle to serve for Christ. This leaves two choices, suicide and murder, or something like murder, such as involuntary manslaughter. The incarnation of a being who came to give “life more abundant” could not rightly come through a vehicle of suicide. To consider the other alternative, one must understand baptism as something more than a symbolic rite. *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* tells us that in a near drowning, the Ego leaves its body and, in so doing, sees the etheric panorama, as one does in death. The effect of this occurrence is that the vital body becomes stratified, just as it does with retrospection. With a stratified vital body, one is a sensitive, someone more drawn to spiritual things than the average person with an unstratified vital body. This writer has known two people who had near drowning experiences. One of them could not keep from listening when this writer spoke about spiritual things, even when what was stated was counter to his beliefs. In the 1970s, there was a New Age faddish movement called Rebirthing. Its founder had a rebirthing experience in his bath tub. It involved sustained immersion. The theory was that a prolonged immersion experience changed one’s breathing which, in turn, opened memory, and allowed one to correct errors from the past with ease, and thus improve one’s psychological health. Something like that, in a controlled and spiritually knowledgable way, seems to have been what baptism was about, a controlled near-drowning experience. Before the time of Christ, one had to be born into a cast of sensitive priests to become a controlled sensitive. Christ opened the way for anyone to enter the path of initiation, and John, the Baptizer, was Christ’s foreshadower in more ways

than one. If the baptism by John was knowledgeable and carefully carried out, Jesus would have become a sensitive, if he wasn't already. As a sensitive, he would have been susceptible to possession, and the other ways of having his body "taken" by Christ, which have been elucidated and discarded above. If the immersion had been too long, the physical body would have died. This presents no good alternatives. Surely the Incarnation, which had been planned for centuries, could not have been accomplished by an accident on the part of John. An intentional over-extended immersion is also unthinkable—we do not want to speak of John, the Drowner, as the facilitator of the work of Christ. In short, there do not seem to be any ethical solutions in harmony with the purpose of the Incarnation.

A more imperfect and unclear form of this essay was published in two parts several years ago. The preceding was most of the first part. The remainder of the first part was a request for feedback. There was plenty of feedback, because the inflammatory presentation was intended to provoke interest and thought. It was as though this writer had struck a wasp's nest—something he has done in his garden. To be fair and thorough, addressing some of the responses to the ethical problems seems to be in order.

Most of the responses were of the form "Its alright when higher beings do it." This is exactly what we hated so much when we were children, and our parents told us to act in a certain way, while they didn't. The Gospel Christ said: Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. It is preposterous to think that the author of the new law of love, would abandon the highest spiritual ethics, or act inconsistently. "What you do, is what you become."

One response surprised this writer. It was, in effect, "mysteries don't have to be solved." It was a perfect example of the view of the children of water. In its way, that is satisfactory for the children of water, but not for the children of fire.

Other responses were about information. One was "too much information without understanding is not good for the soul." This is the view of the children of water in another guise. In its contentment, such an attitude ignores

the fact that understanding is the very thing we are seeking. Another was “we don’t have enough information.” This writer agrees with this view, especially with regard to the seed atoms and the silver cord. However, when it comes to the spiritual ethics of the Incarnation, we do seem to have enough information. It would seem that all that is still required is the pondering that leads to intuition. Even speculation is acceptable if it opens the way to intuition. A tentative hypothesis, such as what follows, is a cautious form of speculation.

Myth is sometimes a good way for mystical aspirants to work their way into spiritual truth. In ancient Greek mythology there were the Graeae, the grey ones. They were sisters who served Athena when she had to be a “sudden destroyer”. Their names were Enyo (warlike), Deino (terrible) and Pempredo (wasp or alarm.) Beside being fates of doom, they possessed great wisdom, like that of Athena. They were revered throughout Greece. Their worship was so prevalent that some scholars think they are the source of the name Greece from Graecia. They had fair faces, long swan-like necks, and grey hair from birth. Some of their beauty was peculiar. They had one eye and one tooth between them. If one of them wanted to see, she had to have the eye passed to her. If someone snatched the eye, when it was being passed, they were without vision. The hero Perseus did so, and held it ransom for wisdom. To a reader this raises an interesting question, “to whom did the eye belong?” “None of them” and “all of the” would be equally true answers.

At this point one might ask “how can this possibly relate to the Incarnation Mystery?” It does, but to see how, we must return to the subject of initiation. The path of initiation is a practice of sacrifice. When one becomes an initiate one sacrifices normal life for a life of service. One’s consciousness is expanded, and one does experience supernal glories, but one also becomes acutely aware of suffering, that an open heart cannot ignore. Service. When one becomes a Highest Initiate, one sacrifices the use of one’s lowest three vehicles. This is done to be able to reach deeper into the spiritual worlds, from, whence one can draw on a power not available without this sacrifice. This means one sacrifices normal camaraderie with the cohorts of one’s life wave, friends from the beginning of the creation. What then is the sacrifice when one becomes *the* Highest Initiate. Since, when one becomes the Highest Initiate, one becomes a personification of an attribute of the Godhead,

one would think that every vestige of personality would be sacrificed in order to serve with divine, unbiased objectivity. In this, the members of the Godhead share the works of the One with perfect impartiality.

The works of the members of the Godhead, with regard to humanity, are both constant and intermittent. The powers of will, love-wisdom and activity are constant in our lives. The functions of generation, preservation and dissolution of the Godhead are intermittent. The passing of activity from one Person of the Godhead to another (which is analogous to the passing of the eye of the Graeae) is beautifully described in the *Winter Solstice Service* of the Rosicrucian Fellowship. Another place in the Rosicrucian philosophy tells us that there was a previous religion of the Son, in Melchizedek, this was succeeded by the religions of Jehovah, the race religions. Currently, the light (the eye) is being passed from Jehovah back to Christ, the Son. The individuation, which is the work of Jehovah, has not yet been completed in everyone, and the altruism of Christ has not yet been firmly established in the hearts of all. In this transition our humanity is vulnerable, just as the Graeae were vulnerable when passing the eye. Some cling tenaciously to the separative religions of Jehovah, others are carrying individuation deep into separative individualism. Both groups are in peril, but extremely few will be able to resist the love of Christ forever.

But what about the tooth?

Just as the eye represents light, or consciousness, the tooth represents the hard part of the whole being. In humans it is the dense physical body. Suppose that at the baptism by John, Jesus assumed the status of the Highest Initiate of our life wave. The Godhead would then become a divine tetrad instead of the triad of the past—something that was to happen, whether at the baptism by John, or not. Max Heindel tells us Jesus is the leader of humanity, in any case. The assumption of Jesus to the Godhead at Incarnation time is likely. If this were true, all of the vehicles of Jesus would belong to the tetrad, and not exclusively to any one of the tetrad, including himself. Thus Christ could take the dense and vital bodies which previously belonged to Jesus, without a breach of spiritual ethics. It would also be a unique activity which no one outside of the Godhead could copy, since there is only one that is the Highest Initiate in any life wave.

Is this the answer to the Incarnation Mystery? It is the only answer that this writer can find that is in complete conformity with spiritual ethics. Nonetheless, this writer is not certain that it is the answer. However, he is content to ponder the mystery, and to continue to serve and to seek until he can know for certain. We will only know when we live the higher life well enough to develop the faculty to see for ourselves.

But what about the seed atoms and the silver cord? That is a different part of the mystery for a different essay, perhaps, by a different writer.

The Invisible Man

Science fiction is an oxymoron. Science is about facts, and fiction is a simulation of fact, at best. Both seek meaning but, ironically, fiction sometimes seems to disclose more significant meaning than science. With a few exceptions, this writer is not a fan of science fiction. Philip K. Dick is one exception. He probes fundamental, existential, questions excellently. Bulwer-Lytton, beside writing the monumental occult novels, *Zanoni* and *A Strange Story*, also wrote an interesting science fiction novella called *The Coming Race*. Max Heindel liked this book so much that he titled one of the *Rosicrucian Christianity Lectures* after it, The story describes future, subterranean, humans, the Vril-ya. Each of them has the power of Vril. With this power, anyone can destroy the body of anyone else, even a child can wipe out an entire city. Due to this power, there is a general peace, because everyone must respect everyone else. It is a vision of the future that the NRA would love, except for the fact that the Vril-ya civilization has high moral standards which are not consistent with those of many in the NRA. *The Coming Race* book does not solve the Manachean problem of how to deal with evil in the future, which is mentioned in the *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*. In the future, as seen by the Manacheans, evil people will be openly evil, and good people will be so good that they will not harm them or deny them freedom—a difficult problem, indeed. Nonetheless, *The Coming Race* is futuristic and it describes many believable human advancements and new values.

Many science fiction writers do not do well at describing the future. They do not anticipate new, unprecedented things. Instead, they offer exaggerated, extrapolations of the present, as the future. H. G. Wells wrote science fiction novels of this ilk. His most famous novel is *The Time Machine*, a term he coined for all time. In it, the protagonist builds a machine for traveling into the past or the future. The “time traveler” goes to a distant future (802,701 A.D.) where he finds dystopian conditions. He has all sorts of adventures—Wells was more of an adventure writer than a science fiction writer—and escapes to a even more distant future (approximately 36 million years ahead) where there are even more dismal conditions because industry, and flawed humanity, have made Earth conditions inhospitable for most living things. He keeps leaping forward until a time when Earth has frozen over and there is no life. He returns home in time to relate the adventure at a dinner party. The book was intended to warn humanity about the dangers of misused in-

dustry and technology, its success is questionable.

It is another Wells novel that is the departure point for this essay, *The Invisible Man*. This story begins when a curiously over-dressed man arrives by carriage at a boarding house in a remote British village. He wears gloves and even a scarf so his face cannot be seen. He pays in advance and takes a suite of rooms for weeks ahead. In his considerable luggage there are trunks of scientific equipment and chemicals. He is never seen but he can be heard working with the equipment. He has his meals left for him at the door, and he doesn't go out. It turns out that he is invisible. He has discovered a means, using chemistry and physics, to reflect light around his body, rendering it invisible to the eye. As of this writing, this feat has proven to be impossible to do in this chemical world, though the Defense Department has been trying for many years. Physical invisibility is possible using the ethers. There is the famous case, reported by Philostratus, of Apollonius of Tyana, the neo-Pythagorean, a man who has been mistakenly thought to be the AntiChrist. At nearly 80 years of age, Apollonius traveled to Rome to confront the Emperor Domitian about his mistreatment of the people. He was immediately arrested and charged with sorcery, even though he lived by the highest of Pythagorean moral standards. The Emperor wanted to see him personally, because he was treated with such awe and reverence by the populace. He was removed from his dungeon and was brought before the Emperor for questioning. After questioning, during which he gave only lofty answers, the Emperor tells Apollonius that he is to be detained for more questioning. Apollonius expresses his regrets at not being able to remain. He faces the Emperor, draws his cloak around him, and says "You can detain my body but not my soul and, I will add, not even my body." Whereupon he disappears in a flash of light. This was done before several witnesses. An hour later he was seen among his friends outside of the city. Of course, this is questioned by skeptical scholars. Modern initiates say it is possible.

The reason for the continuing research of the invisible man, is that he has not yet learned to reverse his invisibility. He is desperate. He is running out of money and there are rumors about him. Though an otherwise decent man, he has to resort to crime to stay alive. He ventures out from time to time, naked of course, and begins stealing. His problems mount, and soon rumor has it that he is invisible. The town is up in arms. A manhunt begins. By the effects of his actions, his location can be determined, and, eventually, he is trapped

in a cul-de-sac where he is killed. After death his body becomes visible.

This is an essay about the advantage and power of invisibility. Though it was certainly not intended by the author, the story of *The Invisible Man* is a partial analog for a situation every mystical aspirant must face. All of us must confront, and struggle with, an invisible adversary. As well as being invisible, our adversary is within, making it doubly difficult for beings whose consciousness is focussed almost exclusively without. The inner adversary has an enormous advantage in being invisible.

There are parallels between the Invisible Man and the inner adversary. At one time the inner adversary was a friend and benefactor. It was created to protect us when the hierarchies could no longer, ethically do so. It is still benign to some extent. At first, it was law abiding, like the Invisible Man, before he became desperate. Our problems began with the “fall.” We fell when, we put the divine creative force (which is expressed in sexual intercourse) into use to procreate, before we knew how to use it in harmony with the laws of nature. By doing this, we introduced discord into the cosmos. Our action was a declaration of divinity, because the sexual energy is a divine, creative, energy. All creation, including procreation, is an act of freedom, a greater freedom than the freedom of choice. Freedom is a matter of the highest spiritual ethics. For example, the Invisible Helpers will never use the divine creative force to heal without permission, because the freedom of the patient is a major consideration. After the fall, the divine hierarchies could no longer directly, and completely, control our evolutionary experiences. They could only work with permission, and they had to do so indirectly. The application of astrological influences—the stars impel but do not compel—are a good example of indirect application. We had taken bold action, but we were still ignorant, weak, and vulnerable. We needed help but it was not immediately possible to receive it until, through experience, we developed a division of the desire body between its higher and lower parts—the “knowledge of good and evil.” A “lower will” or “animal soul” was developed, with divine help, in the higher part of the stratified desire body. Its function was to protect the concrete personality until the threefold spirit, the true Self, could enter its vehicles, and control them from within. The “animal soul” did its job splendidly. Though benign, it could be violent when necessary, but when it was, it was with the impersonal innocence we see in animal violence today. Over time the animal soul “coalesced” with the mind. It was also purloined by the same beings

that tempted us at the fall. Through its coalescence with the concrete mind, it took on a reflection of the Self. It became a pseudo-self or lower ego, with which we now struggle—the lower voice in the inner argument. The pseudo-self cannot think, which is a divine prerogative of the true Self, but it has a sly cunning. In that cunning it knows that it has an advantage in invisibility. It has set up shop for itself, and it is a marvelous imitator. If we hear the “still small voice” using exactly the same words twice, the second instance might be a counterfeit, suggesting something nefarious. To grow spiritually, we must become sensitive to, and discriminating of, progressively more subtle differences between good and evil.

One of our duties in the evolutionary creation is to completely enter all of our vehicles of consciousness, and serve by spiritualizing matter through them, i.e., by compounding soul out of experience. To do this, we must overcome the pseudo-self, which has its own agenda. We must tame it. It must become obedient, which we were not, at the time of the fall. It is to become a junior partner in a divine, inner, dialog. The taming is not easy. Over time, the function of the pseudo-self has evolved to become an outright adversary of the true Self. Max Heindel called it a “worth adversary” which it certainly is. It requires firm, steady, and consistent, self-application to be brought, and kept, under control, and transformed. We must do more than only talk or write about the inner struggle, we must act. If we do not act, we run the risk of inflating the strength of the inner adversary with our empty thoughts and words.

Most of us have been aware of the advantage in invisibility since childhood, when we tried to strike a piñata, or played Blind Man’s Buff. When the blindfold came off, everything was clear and simple; living the spiritual life, with or without clairvoyance, is not so simple. The advantage of the inner adversary isn’t only because it cannot be seen. Much of its advantage lies in our unconsciousness. Our sphere of consciousness is small. We forget some things, and are not aware of others, even though we can see them. Some of the forgetting is intentional. We don’t want to remember some things, especially if they are unpleasant things about our attitudes and behavior. This psychological resistance of the inner adversary, is one of the reasons retrospection can be so difficult. Under the influence of the pseudo-self that projects into our sphere of consciousness, we like to think of ourselves as fine people, even though there is no evidence to support this self-conceit. Some of our thoughts and

desires indicate that we are not as nice as we pretend to be. We seem to want to live by the old adage “out of sight, out of mind.” If we want to expand our consciousness, as we say we do, we must bring to consciousness many things we have stuffed away into unconsciousness. Enlarging the sphere of consciousness means we must face ourselves in both our higher and lower natures—both exist in the inner worlds we ardently seek to enter. It is not as simple as taking off a blindfold. There is resistance. Much of the resistance is subtle, which means we must become subtle. Subtle things have more power than gross things.

Soul growth is a matter of slow, arduous self-application, but if we really want it, we can attain it. The words “really want it”, are important; soul growth is not for the half-hearted. We must “really want” the truth about our thoughts and desires. We need to see them for what they are, in our retrospections. They will not present themselves to us unless we command them . The inner adversary might even chose sleep, over being exposed and losing its advantage in retrospection. If we don’t expose and transform these thoughts and desires, they will be glossed over and forgotten until they influence us again. They will not die. Our thoughts and desires are our creations. They are formed, and their forms are elementals that live on. They must be transformed. Trying to destroy them proves to be futile, and only creates new ones.

We have excellent tools to accomplish this transformation process. They are the spiritual exercises given to us by Max Heindel from the Elder Brothers. Retrospection is an especially good instrument for transformation and redemption. If we are sincere about retrospection, we recall more than the events of the day. We call back things we tried to bury, sometimes even things from the distant past.

The effects of retrospection are not always experienced during the performance of the exercise. Retrospection shakes things loose that are in need of redemption, and they come to consciousness at other times. Sometimes they pop up unexpectedly. They almost always appear when the egotistical lower nature lets its guard down, i.e., when psychological, self-protective vigilance is lowered. For example, one may be trying to pray, or trying to solve a delicate issue, when unredeemed thoughts come to consciousness. They distract us. The distraction has a quality similar to the temptation which fostered the

very thing we are trying to redeem. There is then, a tendency to be annoyed, especially if one is trying to keep one's consciousness in lofty prayer. Following the tendency to annoyance is a mistake. Instead of being annoyed, we should be grateful, because we are being presented with the things most ripe for transmutation.

If we are sincere and persistent in retrospection, things about ourselves become clearer. If we work really hard, the clarity becomes clairvoyance—the word clairvoyance literally means clear seeing. With clairvoyance, it would seem the advantage of invisibility would be removed, it isn't. Max Heindel tells us, for instance, that if we could see the effects of our thoughts in the desire world, we would soon change our thinking. While that is true, it is not the whole truth. In fact, clairvoyance might increase our problems for a while. The desire world is rife with illusion, more elusive than the illusions (like optical illusions) of the outer world. We are told even puny elementals can make themselves appear as menacing ogres to neophytes. This is an example of another level of invisibility behind the forms of the desire world which now invisible to us.

In Greek mythology when heroes needed prophetic information, they often sought help from Proteus, a sea and river god. Being the first born of Poseidon, the Greek Neptune, he had magical powers. He was wily, elusive and disinclined to surrender prophetic wisdom, as might be expected from a child of Neptune. Those who would benefit from him were advised to catch him during his afternoon nap. Taking him in hand was only the beginning of the quest. While holding him, he would be transforming himself to escape the hero's grip. He might appear as a poisonous serpent, and then as a violent animal, and sometimes even as fire, and so on. If the hero held him firmly and was not fooled by the illusions, he would be seen in his true nature, and was obliged to share what he could. This story is almost identical to advice given to neophyte clairvoyants. They are advised to disregard illusions and hold their attention on the object of their vision, until they come to its true inner meaning. The meaning is invisible even to the inner eye, and open only to the intuition. Intuitive insight is the difference between clairvoyance and spiritual sight. Benign invisibility.

There is more to invisibility, than mere advantage. There is power. As children of fire we were drawn to the mysteries in search of meaning. We wanted

to know the why of everything. If we are true to ourselves, we continue to so seek. We do not sink into the slumber of contentment with our current knowledge. The invisibility of the unknown, has a powerful effect on our curiosity. The mystery novel industry takes in more than 700 million dollars per year. Moreover, few indeed, are those who can resist the drawing power of a secret. The unknown is “the eternal feminine which draws us on high”, with which Goethe ends his masterpiece, *Faust*.

The power of invisibility is more than an attractive power. There is also a commanding power. From both spiritual and material science we learn that the more subtle a force is, the more powerful it is. As one passes inward and upward through the spiritual worlds, each new world is more subtle and invisible, than its predecessor, and it is also more powerful. Things in the chemical world are driven by the energy in the ethers. The ethers are motivated and activated from the desire world, thought can control desire, and so on. Ultimately, we eventually reach Divine Spirit and its personification in the Father. Both the Bible, and Rosicrucian philosophy, teach that “no man hath seen God (the Father) at any time.” Nonetheless, the ultimate power of creation and dissolution is in the hands of the Divine Spirit and the Father. Trinitarian thinking is not exclusive to Judeo-Christian thinking. It was known to ancient Greek mystics also. They even saw qualities of the creation in the godhead, with its attributes of truth, beauty and goodness. Truth was the property of the Third in the trinity, just as it is in Christ’s description in John 16:13. Beauty was of the second attribute, the love-wisdom of Life Spirit. Goodness was the property of the first attribute. We are promised that if we align our microcosmic threefold spirit, with that of the macrocosm, the Godhead, all of its power is available to us. “Ask whatsoever ye shall in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.” There are no limits in that promise except our ability to ask. Nowadays, these promises have become perverted into profanities such “for the Christ’s sake” or “for goodness sake” which are execrations. However, these perversions don’t take away anything from the power of these promises, any more than Proteus changing his appearance into a serpent, changes his character. Invisible power is there for the asking, in His name.

Consciousness

Paradox is a source of endless fascination for this writer. It demolishes any intellectual conceit he may harbor. The notion that an idea and its opposite can both be true, is challenge enough to one's mind; but that both have a common root, leaves the mind in awe.

At first, one feels that it is the juxtaposition of opposites, that is the source of fascination. As one continues to ponder paradox, one realizes it is really the all-pervading unity in which paradoxical opposites share their origin, that captivates and beggars the mind. It is beyond the mind. It is beyond the self. In the parlance of Rosicrucian philosophy, it is the pure, unconditioned truth of Life Spirit. The fascination of Life Spirit mystifies one, in the most positive sense of the word mystification. It is where opposites meet.

People mostly encounter paradox in philosophical logic, or mathematics. Such paradoxes are the deepest paradoxes. They reside in the region of germinal ideas of form, in the abstract subdivision of the world of thought. The region that abuts Life Spirit, so to speak. Actually, some form paradox can be found in all states of being, from abstract thought to chemical matter.

Paradox is also found in all areas of human endeavor. Analytical psychologists have their enantiodromia, a principle whereby extreme emphasis in one principle in one's psyche, begets manifestation of its opposite principle. It is an example of symmetry issuing from Life Spirit—the beautiful, in the triad of truth, beauty and goodness. Astrology is rife with paradox. For example, a quality and its opposite can be found in the same sign, and a person's strong point is often also the weakest point. Ironically, as these words are being written, this writer is pondering two, almost identical horoscopes (minutes and a few miles apart) whose natives are undergoing identical, active, astrological influences with opposite consequences. One is experiencing insomnia, the other narcolepsy. Paradox.

In our lives of spiritual aspiration, we also encounter paradox. It is important to us, because it is about our lives. Repetition provides a good example. Aspirants of the Rosicrucian Fellowship are admonished to practice repetitive prayer, using the Rosicrucian Student's Prayer. The purpose of this activity is to build, organize and structure the soul body portion of the vital body. The

fluidic nature of the ethers composing the vital body is subject to the rhythms of wave mechanics. Cyclical self-application in repetition, shapes the vital body. We see this in how habits are formed. Cycles are the primary engine for manifestation, development, and perfection in the divine creative scheme. There are cycles within cycles, within cycles, seemingly to infinity.

One problem with repetitive prayer, as it applies to soul growth, involves paradox. On one hand, if we are not intent in its performance, it becomes rote and mechanical. Doing that, it decreases conscious awareness in an exercise meant to increase it. On the other hand, if we are deeply intentional in its performance, it not only has a building and organizing effect, it produces a mounting inward spiritual surge of awareness. Paradox.

Linear, non cyclical, repetition has its own paradox. Probably all of us have suffered through conversations with someone who repeats him/her self, to no purpose, with a dulling effect. Linear repetition, in the hands of someone who uses it wisely, is powerful. If someone, who is wise and knowing, uses repetition, it is prudent to take notice. If that someone is Max Heindel, it is almost mandatory and incumbent on Rosicrucian aspirants to pay attention.

Max Heindel has said many things capable of changing one's life. Some of them have been repeated several times, and are worth of our complete attention. For this writer, one repeated statement stands above all others. Amazingly, this writer has never heard it spoken of by any Rosicrucian aspirants. In *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* it is stated clearly: "... all consciousness in the Physical World is the result of the constant war between the desire and vital bodies." Since the evolution of consciousness is one of the primary ends of our evolutionary creation, this statement well worth further investigation.

Before we set out to study this statement, it seems prudent to determine if it is at least superficially true. To do this we have internal evidence from the *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*, and we have anecdotal evidence from life experiences. From the former we have the fact that the desire body is incessantly active, just as our consciousness is active. From the latter, we know that, when we experience our deepest and most intense feelings, in the desire body, as in healing prayers for instance, we are most conscious. From both, we know that when the desire body leaves the dense physical body, because the vital body has no more energy to offer, we lose consciousness in sleep.

These pieces of evidence are minimal, and questionable, but they are enough to justify deeper investigation.

One way to work into ponderous issues is with simple questions. One such question might be “Why are the desire body and vital body at war?” This simple question takes us to the foundations of the cosmos. The Rosicrucian philosophy, based on many observations by many trained clairvoyants, teaches that the cosmos is composed of interpenetrating worlds. Each of the worlds has functions. One of the functions of the desire world is motivation. The etheric subdivision of the physical world has a function of vitalization, and so on. What is not so obvious, is that each world is checked and balanced, and compensated for, by the worlds adjacent to it. The desire world is checked by the world of thought above it, and cushioned by the etheric subdivision of the physical world below it. It can be accurately said, that each world has a character of its own, and that each world complements the worlds around it.

When an evolving entity has sufficient experience of a world, it can appropriate the material of that world into a form for personal use. We call those personal forms bodies, or vehicles of consciousness. We humans have chemical bodies, etheric bodies, desire bodies and concrete minds. As we evolve by practice and experience, we improve our bodies. Change is not a once for all time matter. It is a continuous, ongoing, evolutionary, process. Part of the process is overcoming the inherent nature of the world, from which the body is formed. Max Heindel tells us clearly that even in the chemical subdivision of the physical world, we must overpower the chemical substance in our food to assimilate it into our dense physical bodies. To the degree that we can overpower the substance of a world in our bodies, we can make it our own. Our experience with the vital body and the desire body are not as extensive as our experience with the dense physical body. Consequently, our control of the vital body and the desire body are not as complete as our control of our physical bodies. This means that the vital body, and the desire body, are more likely to express the character of the ethers and the desire world than we would like them to. For the purposes of this brief essay, the character of the ethers, and the desire world, with relation to our physical bodies, can be stated in one word for each. The character and function of the ethers can be summed up in the word, vegetation, and the function of desire can be summed up in the word, animation. Given no restraint or limitation, the vital body would vegetate without end. Similarly, the desire body would

animate ceaselessly. Sharing a common, composite organization, these elements must constantly be at war because of their very natures. We will not have peace until we have overcome all of our bodies, and brought them to work together.

Another simple question can also improve our understanding of this remarkable statement from Max Heindel. It is: “For what are the vital body and the desire body fighting?” The answer is both simple and deep. It is the dense, physical body, the chemical body, that is the prize. The physical body is the most perfected vehicle of consciousness we possess. Consciousness is what it is all about, in the evolutionary creation. The simple answer of the dense, physical body being the prize is true, but it isn’t completely satisfactory. We want to know why it is the prize, so we must dig deeper.

Why is the chemical body the prize? Again, there is a simple, answer, soul growth. Soul growth is a microcosmic part of a grand creative activity called the “spiritualization of matter” in the Rosicrucian philosophy. Within any state of matter is the potential of awakening new, spiritual consciousness. Soul growth, within the spiritualization of matter, is our means of accomplishing that end. Spiritualization of matter is not a single-step, binary, activity whereby one day something is matter, and the next day spirit. It is a long, slow, careful process. It takes eons. In this activity there is an intermediate stage, a spirit-matter stage, called soul. Soul is the product of an intimate interaction of spirit and matter. Some would say that soul is lived into being, rather than being a product of war. However, both seem to be true. When someone is soulful, that individual has an intimate understanding of the source of soul, from having lived with it.

The Self, the threefold spirit, is focused in the concrete mind at this time in our evolutionary journey. From there it functions in three states of matter (the desire world, the ethers, and the chemicals), and we produce three grades of soul material. From the Rosicrucian philosophy we learn that the soul produced by intimate interaction with the desire world is called emotional soul. Similarly, soul produced in the ethers is called intellectual soul, and soul produced in the chemicals is called conscious soul. From this we can begin to see why the dense physical body is the prize.

Clarification comes as we understand soul growth more completely. The

Rosicrucian philosophy teaches that soul growth is accomplished when soul is absorbed and assimilated into the threefold spirit. Absorption is when the soul material is taken into the spirit. It is the same usage as when in our language we idiomatically say “he is absorbing knowledge.” Assimilation is when something absorbed is brought to its proper place. In physiology we say absorbed sugars are assimilated to the brain, and oils are assimilated to the heart. To begin to understand absorption and assimilation of soul, we must have at least a little understanding of the structure of the evolutionary creation.

The evolutionary creation is a reflective projection. The threefold spirit projects its creation through the lens of mind, in the center of being, into the concrete worlds of matter. It is analogous to projecting a real image through a lens, to produce a virtual image as we do in physics classes, or with a motion picture projector. The desire world is the reflective projection of the Human Spirit, for example. Similarly, the ethers are the reflective projection of Life Spirit, and the chemicals are the reflective projection of Divine Spirit. When emotional soul is absorbed, it is assimilated to Human Spirit, just as intellectual soul is assimilated to Life Spirit, and conscious soul to Divine Spirit. This is true in both the macrocosm, and the human microcosm. In this we can see that the deepest state of matter, the chemicals, reflectively correlates to the deepest state of spirit, Divine Spirit. In this relationship, we can begin to understand why the dense physical body is the prize.

In the Rosicrucian philosophy the primary characteristic of Divine Spirit is will. The will is the most subtle and powerful force in the cosmos, in both macrocosm and microcosm. Divine Spirit and Life Spirit are said to be realms of pure spirit. They are pure in that they are undivided and unconditioned in their being. The truth of Life Spirit, as when Christ says “I am the way, the truth and the life,” is unconditioned truth; whereas, the truths of the Human Spirit which are the principles of the abstract subdivision of the world of thought. They are universal but conditioned. The will of Divine Spirit is pure and unconditioned. It is the will to be, the will to be anything. Relative to the subject of this essay, it is the will to consciousness. All consciousness in the cosmos is founded in the will to consciousness. Since Divine Spirit is fed by conscious soul, and since everything in the creation seeks consciousness, it is no wonder that the dense physical body, as the source of conscious soul in microcosm, should be the prize.

A matter of this magnitude of importance begs another question, “How is conscious soul compounded?” Max Heindel answers this question in one word, impact. When we hear the word impact, we think of things like autos crashing into each other, or meteors striking the earth, actions of magnitude. These events surely are impacts, and some form of awakening is their result, but much more is meant by the word impact. Over millions of years, response to something as low in impact as light, helped us to produce the eye, which opened our consciousness to the magnificent reality that is the visible world. In simple, conscious soul is the product of direct interaction with the chemical world. It is a bilateral activity. We awaken, while awakening the minerals. Both agent and object, awaken consciousness in such an interaction, no matter how small the increment of awakening. This truth from the Rosicrucian philosophy, gives us a different view of raising consciousness than is normally presented to seekers. Normally we are led to believe that consciousness is raised by sitting and meditating. At some stages of development that is an important activity, but only when it is for processing the soul substance generated by interaction with the external world.

Not all awakening of the minerals is a directly personal activity. We mine, we separate metals from other minerals, we smelt the metals, and we manufacture devices to work on other minerals. All of these activities awaken consciousness in the minerals, and educt specific qualities from them. However, our most important interaction with minerals is personal. When we take in minerals, as components of our food, and incorporate them into our bodies, it is a special interaction. The *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* gives us the law of assimilation. From it we know that we must overpower our food in order to make it part of our bodies. The materials from our food, remain in our bodies as long as we keep them overpowered. We use will to develop greater will. We use consciousness to develop greater consciousness. There is a special alchemy, whereby the elements in our food are transformed, by being infused by our consciousness. The elements are spiritualized and our bodies are spiritualized. It is embarrassing when we juxtapose these spiritual facts, with the way we often eat, which is often anything but reverend. Of course, this is a slow, careful process, as all things in evolution are. Evolution is as certain as it is slow. It is so certain, that it occurs whether we are aware of it or not. Even someone in a coma is compounding conscious soul, as long as there is metabolism.

What about consciousness itself? We experience various grades and degrees of consciousness, but we are not always aware of what, or even where, it is. Perhaps a prosaic example can help us to understand these things a little. Suppose one cuts one's finger, and there is pain. In pain, one is conscious. The pain means a nerve has been harmed. The nerve in question transmits its condition to the brain. From the physical brain the impulse is carried into the etheric brain. From the etheric vital body it is transported to the desire body. In the desire body it is registered as the feeling of pain. Feeling is one of the functions of the desire body. Some would say consciousness of pain is in the desire body. That would not be completely correct. The desire body, like the other bodies, is a vehicle of consciousness. It is a vehicle for the Human Spirit, in the threefold spirit, or Self. Consciousness is in the spirit, but consciousness in the spirit is different from consciousness in the bodies. The spirit cannot be harmed in the way a body can be injured. The spirit is invulnerable. Consciousness in the spirit is universal and impersonal. It is aware of the meaning of experience, beyond the phenomenon of experience.

Now that we have a minimal understanding of consciousness, and it's awakening, we can return to our original statement from Max Heindel, to what it means to our lives of spiritual aspiration. We have seen that, ultimately, all consciousness, pure and basic consciousness, is in, and of, Divine Spirit, the realm of the Father. As Max Heindel loved to say, "In Him we live and move and have our being." We can see that the consciousness of Divine Spirit is awakened and nourished by conscious soul which is compounded in the chemical subdivision of the physical world, by means of our dense, physical bodies. Applying the principle of analogy, we can see that consciousness of different degrees, and qualities, can be awakened and nourished, by the soul material compounded in the bodies corresponding to the other two attributes of the threefold spirit, i.e., in the desire body and the vital body. In this we see another facet of the war between the desire body and the vital body. It doesn't have to be a war, though it must be an all-out activity. It doesn't even have to be a conflict. In transcendence it can be a dialog. The desire body is the reflective projection of the Human spirit, or Self, and the vital body is the reflective projection of the Life Spirit. When we, in our spiritual selfhood, commune with Christ in Life Spirit, we are using the transcendental counterparts of the participants of the war between the desire body and the vital body. Our ability to commune with Christ, is a consequence of our vigorous

participation in the battle between the desire body and the vital body. Max Heindel loved The imitation of Christ by Thomas Á Kempis, which is written in the form of this inner dialog. When we commune with Christ, we are using the attributes of the spirit to direct the interaction between the desire body and the vital body. We can do this in our retrospections by confessing to Christ. Doing this is analogous to using the will of Divine Spirit to overcome chemical matter and compound more conscious soul to nourish the Divine Spirit. This is practical, with transcendental practicality. Mystics are often considered impractical. Max Heindel, an accomplished mystic, used the word efficient as much as a production consultant does. Applying the divine, inner, dialog to the war between the desire body and the vital body; and receiving the soul product reciprocally, is efficiency of the highest order. It is also a glorious, uplifting, experience in consciousness.

Privacy

“Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which hath been spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops.” Luke 12:3. When these words were spoken, the Gospel Christ was alluding to the mysteries and initiation. In those times, our consciousness and customs were different from what they are now. Then, the mysteries, and initiations into them, were secret. An open statement, such as The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception was not possible, even though fragments from the mysteries were commonly accepted.

The mysteries are a special kind of secret. The psychology of secrets is engaging. There is something compelling about secrets. If something is meant to be unknown, why impart it to anyone? It is as if the person imparting the secret is so filled by its content that he/she cannot keep from sharing it. When it is imparted, the fullness to bursting, accompanies it. Keeping a secret is not easy. Often, love is the only emotion strong enough to contain a secret.

There are various reasons for secrets. One seems to be, that when some things are given general currency, they lose their special, delicate qualities that define them. Something intimate and poetic, cannot rightly be blared from loudspeakers, without being made profane and common. The essence of *The Secret Garden* by Frances Hodgson Burnett is a delicate flower of this nature. The holy experience of the mysteries is certainly part of the secrecy surrounding the mysteries.

Because we love, we want others to have the full joy of an experience. We don't disclose “who dunnit” when a friend is on chapter one of a detective novel. The secrets of contemporary freemasonry are of this type. The secret dramas of masonry contain echos of ancient mysteries. They no longer initiate one into a higher state of consciousness in the spiritual worlds, but they often do change one's outlook on life, and lead to moral betterment. The brotherhood of sharing a secret can bolster one's humanity. Writing this is done in mildly painful irony, because this writer is the only person in his family to not become a mason, or a member of an organization affiliated with masonry. He did not want to learn secrets of this type, that he could not share freely.

We keep some things from others because, without sufficient knowledge, they might harm themselves with them. We do this especially with children. As they develop, more is given to them.

In the process of education, secrecy is an excellent tool. A good teacher piques the curiosity of a student to want to learn more, to solve a mystery. This is true at all levels of inquiry. A mathematician may spend a lifetime working on an unsolved conjecture.

Then there are selfish secrets. There are things kept to one's self, so others cannot benefit from them. Trade secrets are of this ilk. Some are even institutionalized. We have laws that protect pharmaceutical companies from having their discoveries made publicly accessible, even when the research for the discoveries was publicly funded. Enormous profits are made off of the suffering of others, by these types of institutionalized secrets. The excuse that is given is, that without the profit incentive, discoveries would dry up. This argument ignores the innate curiosity of scientific investigators, who love to discover things, and also their compassion for those who suffer.

Masons, and other groups, have means for communication without disclosing their secret connections. There are code words, signals, handshakes and other devices. For accomplished mystics, secret communications are no problem. Communication can be accomplished through the ethers. Some etheric communication is called telepathy. Whoever is facile in the ethers, has access to these transmissions. It is said that the Teacher transmits lessons in living picture language into the auras of Probationers, and other dedicated aspirants, under propitious astrological conditions. Those who are capable, receive these lessons consciously. Those who are not as sensitive, benefit from the lessons anyway, but not in waking consciousness—they are in for some surprises during their post mortem panorama. When a still higher level of secrecy is desirable, the desire world can be used in an analogous manner. There are few who can work with objective consciousness in the subtlety of the desire world. Whenever the need for a deeper level of secrecy arises, one can always elevate to the next higher world, to keep something secret. This holds true until one reaches the world of Life Spirit. In Life Spirit there are no secrets. Everything is open in the light, everything is housetop.

The compulsion of a secret is bidirectional. One filled with the essence of a

secret feels compelled to share it. For a seeker, an unsolved mystery holds a compelling attraction.

Many years ago this writer would occasionally walk through the large study hall of the central library of the local university. It was an interesting experience, especially at the time of final examinations. Most students at the tables were intent on learning, or at least getting good grades. As one walked down the aisle between the large study tables, one could easily tell who was studying and who wasn't. One could tell, even if one was blindfolded. One was drawn to some tables as though by an invisible magnetism. Those were the tables where the students were deeply concentrated in study. There are spiritual reasons for this phenomenon. One is that when one is deeply interested in something, the interest initiates an attractive force in the desire world proportionate to the degree of interest. Another reason is that concrete thoughts are vacuums. When one is deeply concentrated, the resulting thought form is a vacuum, whose strength is proportionate to the depth and intensity of the concentration. This vacuum is attractive to transcendental truth, ... ,and to other thinkers. Great minds are often drawn to the same problems.

The evolutionary creation is also composed of vacuous, and attractive, thought forms. One feature of the creative scheme is that most of the thought forms are divine rather than human, and divinities are much deeper and more perfect creative thinkers than humans. In the creation there are a myriad evolutionary conditions, each with its own lessons. Some are more important than others, just as some of the many conditions and events in our lives, are more important than others. In the great creation there are certain lessons we must learn, certain states of consciousness we must reach, and there are definite creative powers to be developed in reaching them. They are called evolutionary goals. This state of affairs is true in the macrocosm, just as it is true in the microcosm of the human life cycle.

From the human point of view, the cosmic thought forms of mandatory importance and magnum interest, are called the mysteries. The vacuum of a thought form has the quality of a question, thus a mystery is a question that must be answered. An answer, or a solution, of a mystery is an initiation. Once one has been touched with divine discontent, and the need to banish unnecessary suffering, the draw of the mysteries, as an answer to both, is irresistible. It is like a nagging question, or the engaging riddle that brought

Oedipus to cure the plague of his country. It was when Max Heindel desperately wanted answers to life's problems, that he was initiated. One will endure anything to reduce suffering, or solve a mystery. It is a question that demands answering.

There are archetypes for everything in concrete manifestation, including the evolutionary creation itself. Archetypes are complex creative thought forms. Archetypes are frequently composed of other thought forms. Some constituent thought forms are more important than others. These thoughts are more deeply concentrated than others. They are archetypal.

The archetype of a given human rebirth provides an excellent example. There are epitomical, or archetypal, lives which serve as ideals to others, especially spiritual aspirants. Myths of heroes used to fill that function. For us, it is the life of Christ given in the Gospels. Each Gospel provides a standard for a specific type of aspirant. For Rosicrucian aspirants, it is the Gospel of St. John. The archetype of a specific rebirth of an aspirant, is a deviation from that standard. The degree of deviation is due to the different kinds of experience the aspirant has passed through in previous rebirths. Our lives are only vague imitations of the life of the Gospel Christ. We have all wandered, or strayed, from the ideal path (the express path of initiation) to some extent.

Our horoscopes are symbolic representations of the archetypes of our lives. They are localized deviations of the solar system, which is a dynamic delineation, in time, of the creative archetype of the evolutionary creation in the Earth Period. There are general and specific events in our lives. The births of our various bodies, such as puberty marking the birth of the desire body, are examples of general events which we all experience. There is some specificity in these general lives, in that each of us passes through these general events under different astrological conditions. Some people have more trying rites of passage than others. Then there are specific events. These are events for some people but not others. One individual might need to experience an automobile accident, another, a serendipitous blessing. As we grow in freedom and creativity, rebirth by rebirth, we gain more control of our lives. We determine the directions they take, but even advanced individuals need some specific events. As we grow in freedom and creativity, we bring our lives into harmony with the epitomical life, the life of Christ. We then see the truths of the creation and we work with them.

The archetype of the epitomical life is based on the archetype of the evolutionary creation. There are cosmic rites of passage which are mandatory to all. As in the little life, some things in the creation are more important to others. The things which are the most important are critical, in the sense of the word “critical”, whereby at a critical temperature a liquid becomes a gas. The most important things in the creative, cosmic archetype are deeply concentrated by divine beings. Since thought forms are vacuums to truth, deeply concentrated archetypes have extreme drawing power, with the quality of inevitable destiny. To us, the quality of the vacuum, has the character of a question. It is the “why”, or any other interrogative, that captivates the attention of the truth seeker. These centers of cosmic concentration are the cores of the mysteries. A truth seeker is drawn to them, in the same way this writer was drawn to the study tables in the library, where there was actual study. Paradoxically, the truth and freedom seeker, is captivated by a mystery, and it is a sweet captivation. It is like St. Paul saying “I, Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ.” The compulsion to discover a personal secret, is paled in comparison with the compulsion to solve a mystery. However, the solutions of the Mercurial Mysteries, are not mere mental activity. One can only solve a mystery by living out the truth of it. There is no substitute for living the life.

Though we might dream of effortlessly zooming through the spiritual worlds, we are always brought back to our daily lives. Some aspirants believe our lives are all we really have. What in our personal lives, relates us to secrets and mysteries? To answer that, we need to examine our daily lives vis-a-vis the higher life, the life of Christ. When we try to do that, the one thing that immediately comes to mind, is personalization. “God is no respecter of persons.” Subjectivity is inevitable in our lives but personalization is not. We have subjective circumstances in our lives, but that does not mean that we must take them personally. To live the life of Christ is to live and love impersonally.

Obviously, a general study of personalization is too long for this short essay. A smaller bit, about personal secrecy, is more manageable. Privacy is one word for personal secrecy. Privacy is also a topic too large for this essay, so we must limit ourselves to a few words about it, in the context of self-improvement and spiritual aspiration.

When it comes to specific matters of self-improvement, this writer finds it helpful to take an inventory of performance, with regard to specific behaviors. It can be done as a prelude to retrospection. Asking one's self a few pointed questions, often produces results. With regard to privacy, those questions might include: "How much of my life do I want to keep private?" or "What things in my life do I want to keep private?" When this writer asks himself the latter question, the inner answer is almost always "things that he is ashamed of." It is as if, the world is the validator of his sins, that the world is his confessor; that Christ (the Self of all selves) sees through him, through the eyes of the all. It is difficult to sustain unregenerate behavior, when it is open for all to see, and if one can sustain it, there is a deeper problem. There are beneficial things, that others do not need to know, but they usually aren't a matter of privacy, but more a matter of modest discretion. To ballyhoo benign behavior, is to gainsay it. The great Madam Blavatsky believed in hiding one's virtues and displaying one's faults. That view is still a bit too personal for this writer. Perhaps the wisest stance toward privacy is to be selfless, i.e., to do as one does, and live as one lives, without regard to whether our lives and deeds are private or public. Transparency is not exhibitionism, nor are open secrets clandestine. For aspirants to clairvoyance, transparency has an additional benefit. In clairvoyance, which is inner vision of the inner worlds, one is always looking through one's own aura, through one's own psychology. One cannot see and understand others without distortion, if one is looking through the lens of one's own secrets and prejudices. One of the greatest values of retrospection is clarification, leading to transparency.

An age of transparency is coming whether we are ready for it or not. Science and technology, as in data mining and analysis, are disclosing secrets about us which we, ourselves, might not be aware of. More and more people are on the verge of etheric clairvoyance, or some type of psychic awareness. Soon there will be no privacy, or no secrets, unless we can transfer them to a higher level of consciousness. Hiding things is often counter-evolutionary. When we love people, we do not keep things from them, because secrets become barriers to love and intimacy. As Christian Mystical aspirants, we aspire to altruism, a love of everyone. Secrecy and privacy, thence become barriers to our ideal. In this we can see there is an evolutionary concurrency between personal moral behavior, transparency, and the new faculty of clairvoyance.

There is an ethical incumbency in the converse, of being viewed clairvoyant-

ly, i.e., viewing others clairvoyantly. Because we can do something, does not mean we should do it. We are not compelled to examine someone clairvoyantly, or to pry into their personal business. Neophytes are urged to practice their new vision but, in the literature of the Rosicrucian Fellowship, we are urged to not do so, with those with whom we interact regularly. Prentice Tucker was advised by the Teacher to travel to distant cities to practice with people he did not know, and was not likely to meet. Max Heindel was very strict about practicing clairvoyance. It was to be used only in service. Living within this restriction is one of those things, which are easier said than done. As we have seen, secrets have drawing power. The power can often be compelling, especially to the curiosity of seekers. It requires a great forbearance to keep from delving into the secrets of others, just as it does to keep from divulging a secret. Such forbearance, can be founded in a patient faith in evolutionary process. What must be done, will be done, and it will be done in its own time. When it is ready, a plant will blossom and, when it is ready, the flower will produce fruit. “That which hath been spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops.”

The Problem of the Self

As life goes on, we find there are things we always wanted to achieve, but never did. This writer never graduated from college, though he wanted to. His life in formal, higher education was intermittent. He would work to earn enough money to go to college, then he would return to college until the money was about to run out, and then he would bum around with beatniks, until he had to return to work. During the work stage of this succession, he would live with his parents and work in a steel fabricating plant. He would work on an assembly line, assembling vending machines, office equipment, and even farm implements. During lunch hours he learned to play Sheephead, Schafkopf in German. Two experts, Gustav and Werner, were happy to teach him to play. The reason for their happiness was, that they would take a few extra coins home every day. At first, this writer lost every day but, as the year wore on, the experts were seeing plays they had never seen before, and this writer was taking home the extra coins—neither Gustav or Werner would admit to losing to a beginner, they were too sheepish. This writer learned more than Sheephead, and a few new tricks. He learned that if you want to improve, you have to compete with your betters. This practice applies to more than competition. It applies to everything in life, including spiritual aspiration. To grow, one must take on hard problems. Sometimes this means problems for which there is no solution. For example, the origin of most of the corpus of mathematics can be traced back to three insoluble problems: squaring a circle, doubling a cube, and trisecting an angle.

Spiritual philosophy has its own conundrums to be tackled. They are important because they are about life and ultimate reality, and not mere intellectual pursuit. One of these problems is called “the problem of the self.” It is a problem which has troubled, theologians, philosophers and, especially, seekers, for millennia. Different religions have different views about it, and how to approach it. As Christian Mystical aspirants, it is to our advantage to know at least a little bit about it, for the times when we encounter it in our inner lives.

Why should there be a problem about selfhood? On first view, it seems counter to Rosicrucian philosophy to think there is. In Rosicrucian literature, soul power (gleaned from experience,) a creative mind and waking, objective, self-conscious are definite goals of the evolutionary creation. If these goals are true, and they are fundamental, it is through them that we should be able

to determine if there is a problem about selfhood. Let's begin with experience.

It is self-evidently certain, that we experience consciousness. The basic self-evident nature of consciousness proves its existence to us with, or without, question. No one, as yet, has ever completely doubted consciousness successfully. Experience of consciousness can be subtle and illusory. If one closes one's eyes and focusses inwardly, one experiences something like a more pure consciousness. This immediate experience seems boundless. It could be eternal, since there is no concept of time unless one introduces it. There is no concept of space either, since one could be anywhere, and be conscious in this way. Though approaching pure consciousness, it is meaningless to us. It is meaningless because, at this time in our evolution, we find meaning in the consciousness of things and states of being. We say things like "I am conscious because I feel cold" or "I am conscious because I am happy." When we open our eyes, we return to this state of relative consciousness.

We know that consciousness is variable because we have memories of times when we were more, or less, conscious than now. Adepts in consciousness tell us that there is only consciousness, that there is no non conscious state. Even what we call unconsciousness is but a low degree of consciousness. If there were a non conscious state, how could we be conscious of it? Nothing can come out of such a kind of non being. Because of memory, we know that we have passed out of unconsciousness, into the state of consciousness we are now experience. Memory plays a large role in consciousness, but the basic nature of memory, and its relation to consciousness, is beyond the scope of this essay. As we are are looking at consciousness, in this moment, we see that memory is a major factor in self-consciousness, because what we call self has been constant in the continuity of our waking consciousness, no matter what the grade of that consciousness is. The self we experience today, is the same self we experienced yesterday. We are indirectly aware of self-consciousness, when others report identical consciousness of identical experiences from their memories. We know that we are agents of consciousness, as are others. Though meager, this minuscule awareness of general consciousness will have to suffice for now, as we turn our attention more in the direction of self-consciousness.

Every day we enhance our appreciation of self-consciousness. The value of

self-consciousness in everything in our lives, even simple things, is important. Take music for example. It is marvelous to listen to a good recording, of a good performance, of a good composition. If one is aware, with a technical awareness, of what the composer and the instrumentalists have done, the experience is richer. However, recorded music, no matter how well done, can never compare to hearing the same music live. In live music, the spirit expressed through the composition comes to life, and the listener comes to life in that spirit. It is a spirit to spirit communication. One is tempted to think a live performance is the epitome of musical experience. It isn't. Playing an instrument or singing as part of a performance, is superior to merely listening. In performing one is living more within the spirit of the music, and the spirit of the performer becomes alive, because it isn't passive, as when one is merely listening. Is there a better experience than this? Yes. Playing a piece of music that one has composed exceeds playing something from another composer, even if the piece is only a little ditty. When one is performing one's own composition, one is self-conscious of everything in the piece. One is part of the piece. Knowing what every note and nuance means, and how the spirit is brought through it, as both composer and performer, is an incomparable musical experience. In this, there is no doubt about the supreme value of self-consciousness.

In each rebirth, we awaken to self-consciousness in stages. The stages are recapitulations of previous evolutionary experiences, designed to bring us to the human state wherein self-consciousness is possible. These stages coincide with the births of our vehicles of consciousness, developed in past evolutionary work. The Spirit, the Self, identifies successively with each vehicle of consciousness as it is born, until it can experience and know itself as itself. During the first seven years of life, only the dense, physical body has been born. In the first period the Self identifies with this body. If the dense physical body of a toddler has been cut, for example, its very being is jeopardized in its consciousness, its identity has been harmed or threatened. It reacts accordingly, which is quite different from the way an adult would react to the same injury. Around age seven, when the permanent teeth begin to come in, the vital body is born. Then the septenary period of rapid growth begins. The Self identifies through growth. Those measurements of height on the door posts are deeply important to the developing individual. They are a self-accomplishment. To tell a child of this age "eat your spinach or you won't grow up to be big and strong," as is often done, is to threaten its identity. At

puberty the desire body is born and the Spirit identifies with it. The desire body, with its demands, curbs the activity of the vital body and growth slows until it stops. In this stage everyone is a romantic. One needs only to listen to teen pop music for a few minutes, to verify this. Emotion is the all. Hurt feelings are taken as an injury to one's being. At majority the concrete mind is born. At this stage of evolution, the Spirit now functions directly within the concrete mind. The spirit has self-control of its vehicles in proportion to its awakening in the past. The self, through the mind, takes control of the emotions, i.e., if one doesn't get stuck in the emotional stage, and has not healthfully grown out of it. There is a danger of getting stuck in any stage. Evolution, in large and small, is always progressive and it behooves one to progress with it. When one identifies with one's concrete mind, a refutation of a line of thought, can be as serious to the Self as a cut is to the toddler. It is not until one can rise above any form of identification, with any of the vehicles of consciousness, that one can be self-conscious. This usually happens after age twenty-eight, if it happens at all.

Because it is possible to transcend a vehicle of consciousness, doesn't mean transcendence will happen. Recapitulatory reawakening in the stages of development accompanying the births of our vehicles is mandatory. It happens to all of us because it is work which we all have accomplished in our evolutionary past, and are carrying into the present. It could be called evolutionary momentum. It continues on its own. Some have preferences for one vehicle or another, and some even become attached to one vehicle or another, but neither of these stances is desirable for evolutionary success, which requires adaption, and progress, without attachment. We, the Spirits or Selves, have reached the human stage. As humans we are on the threshold of becoming creators, and we are ready to leave behind our evolutionary careers as creatures. In this state, each of us has some degree of freedom, depending on how well we have worked during our evolutionary past. Creative work is spiritual, and spiritual activity is free and voluntary. We are not coerced into spirituality. "Freely ye have received, freely give."

Some do not transcend identification with the mind, to identify with themselves as spiritual beings. Such a choice is not perverse. It is not stiff necked rebellion. It is usually a matter of ignorance. One chooses the worldly life, and embraces it as ultimate reality, while ignoring spiritual matters. Most people insist that they are self-conscious. They probably are, but they may be

mistaken as to degree, because self-consciousness is relative. One is more or less self-conscious. The degree of self-consciousness is best determined from within. The Self determines value.

One must practice, or exercise, self-consciousness to awaken it. It doesn't just happen of its own accord. Most humans have little, if any, awareness of the scope and spiritual glory of the evolutionary creation of which they are part. Many recognize genius, but they don't think they possess it. If told they are gods in the making, many doubt it, even though Christ, the author of their religion, declared it. A few have experienced momentary, non volitional baptisms of the Holy Spirit, to encourage spiritual, self-conscious development. Even among them, there is an insecure lapse into hardshell fundamentalism for protection, instead of enthusiastically pursuing a vigorous spiritual life. That someone can be continuously self-conscious in the Holy Spirit, such that they can speak all languages like a native, or perform miraculous healings, is a fiction to most. Being told that it is one's duty to earnestly work toward those goals, even meets stubborn resistance. When it comes to pursuing spiritual development, many of us are not much different from the unwilling prophets of the Old Testament. Nonetheless, spiritual self-consciousness is a pearl of great price, worthy of our attention. Trying to understand the Self, from the outlook of transcendental philosophy, might help us.

The Universal Spirit seeks waking objective, self-consciousness in macrocosm, just as we do in microcosm. The quest for self-consciousness is a function of divine purpose. The Self is a spiritual entity to this end. It is an objectification of the Universal Spirit, within the Universal Spirit. It is a being, a spiritual being, within spiritual being. The objectification is a threefold conception. Our Selves are microcosmic, divine ideas; the macrocosmic Self, we call God, is also an idea. Spirit is spirit, but God is a conception, a divine conception of the highest order. Mathematics provides an excellent analog. Just as a triangle is the simplest, straight-line object in space in any number of dimensions, the threefold spirit is the simplest spiritual objectification in any dimension, or number of dimensions..

In the Rosicrucian philosophy, we learn that the threefold spirit is made up of Divine Spirit, Life Spirit, and Human Spirit. All other manifest states of being, are within Divine Spirit, and Divine Spirit is within all manifest states of being. Divine Spirit is. Its being, or is-ness, is both passive and active. The

non active, or passive, or indirect, being of Divine Spirit verges on non being. Non being in this sense means “virgin to being”, from the term “Virgin Spirits”. If the focus of attention in Divine Spirit is on the passive, or non being, state, the active state is freed. This active state of being within Divine Spirit, is born, or, better, eternally reborn, as Life Spirit. Divine Spirit is personified in the Father and Life Spirit is personified in the Son. Thus the Son is the “alone begotten” of the Father of orthodox Christian theology. In this we can see a passing from non being, or indirect being, to active being. Divine Spirit intends, and in intending, it does not lose its omnipotence as it would in directly active being. Divine Spirit intends and, in intending, it does not lose its omnipotence as it would in direct action. From St. John’s Gospel we learn repeatedly that Christ, the Son, carries out the will or intention of the Father, not the active command of the Father. “The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.” Divine Spirit and Life Spirit are states of pure spirit. They do not have structure, specifics, or any other limitations or objectifications. If they did, they would not be pure spirit. They spirit things into being. Divine Spirit is sometimes referred to as the spiritual masculine, and Life Spirit as the spiritual feminine. Life Spirit has the power of pure imagination, or pure conception. By this it is meant that it can imagine the capacity of imagining, or conceiving conception. If an image were imagined, or a conception conceived, that image or conception would be outside of the being of Life Spirit, even though interpenetrated by it. Thus, principles, ideas, and other concepts from Life Spirit are outside of it, in a state of being of their own. In the Rosicrucian Philosophy this state of being is called the abstract subdivision of the world of thought. Christ, speaking from Life Spirit, says in St. John’s Gospel, “I am the truth.” Following our line of theogony, if Life Spirit is truth, pure truth, then the principles, ideas and concepts of abstract thought, are truths. The descent is from non being, or indirect being, to active being, continues into a being. This is the descent from Divine Spirit, to Life Spirit, to Human Spirit, or Self. To know their selfness the states of Pure spirit Divine Spirit and Life Spirit, must project a being outside of themselves within themselves. Thus, universal objectivity is born via a limited objectification outside of pure spirit. The conception, the Self, is universal, but it has universal, internal, intentional limitations. Pure truth in pure spirit is incomprehensible to even the highest degree of rationality. It is supra-rational. The limitations within ideas, including the idea of Self, or the idea of God, are not to be spurned in the slightest. After all, it is through this limitation, this objectification, this externality, that the Univer-

sal Spirit comes to self-consciousness. Selfness-consciousness, if there were such a word, would be better.

We have seen some of the many benefits of self-consciousness in daily life, and in lofty pursuits. We have seen the divine pedigree of the Self, and we have seen its importance to the higher states of spirit beyond the Self. Can there really be a problem of the Self?

The answer to this question could be a theological or metaphysical problem, but it isn't. The problem is a practical problem which arises with active spiritual aspiration. We are aspiring to more than self-consciousness. Divine union is our goal. It is more than "nearer my God to thee," divine. We want to get beyond the Self, or the macrocosmic Self. i.e., God, to the higher states of spirit. We want to live out "not my will but thine be done."

When we begin to try to live the higher life, we immediately encounter egoism. We learn that some of the egoism arises from the pseudo-ego or lower self, which must be overcome. In seeking, one can become preoccupied with the lower nature, and the struggle with it, which can actually strengthen it, and give it more validity than it is worthy of. Nonetheless, we do have to tame it, and make it subservient to the true Self. The sooner we can do this, the better it is for us. The reason for the haste is that the flavor, or soul quality, of the true Self is determined by the emotional soul from the desire body that feeds it. What we do is what we become. The Self cannot become base, and it can surely spiritualize anything, but one certainly does not want to feed it on the essence of the husks of coarse, selfish and sensual desire. Though taming the pseudo-self is mandatory and important, it is not the source of the problem of the Self.

The problem of the Self arises when we look up, not when we look down. It arises when one addresses the Universal Spirit, as in prayer, for instance. We address the Universal Spirit through the center of Self, but the Universal Spirit is not the Self. Universal Spirit is within and beyond the Self. In this regard, the Self is its own barrier to consciousness beyond the Self. This is the problem of the Self.

Various religions and philosophical schools of thought have arisen to solve the problem of the Self. There are many solutions, too many for a short essay,

or even a lifelong study. They are deep, subtle and recondite, too much so for this essay. A few words about several of the most prominent philosophies on the problem of the Self are offered, to help us to begin to understand the problem, to appreciate the various efforts at solving it, and to reach the goal of this essay. Some of these words may seem childish and simplistic, to profound seekers. Please be merciful.

From some seekers, one hears the words “self mastery.” These words are even found in some Rosicrucian literature. It is a difficult and paradoxical combination of words. As in most metaphysical matters, the Rosicrucian view is evolutionary. In the course of spiritual evolution, one awakens to selfhood. As one awakens, one exercises the Self in creative, evolutionary work. In this work, the Self comes into its own and its powers are unfolded. This work of self-development is accomplished from within the Self. One might even think of it as spiritual, isometric exercise. There is no limit to self-development, except that the Self is still the Self, with the internal limitations of the idea of a being that it is. Self-development is encouraged for Rosicrucian aspirants. Self-development connotes something different from self-mastery. In mastery one masters something outside of one’s self, as one masters mathematics or a handicap. One cannot master one’s Self from without. If one tries, who is doing the mastering? of whom? Even if one allows self-mastery from within, which would curb some of the creativity of the Self, one does nothing to get beyond Self. In fact, in this light, an attempt at self-mastery might even make getting beyond Self more difficult, with increased self-preoccupation. In passing, it should be mentioned that, in practice, self-mastery usually refers more to the Self mastering all of its vehicles, than it does to trying to master itself.

Another paradoxical solution to the problem of the self is to destroy it. What is sometimes meant by these words, is to destroy the pseudo-self, the lower ego. Even that is not advisable, if it is even possible. It is preferable to tame the lower nature, and bring it into service of the Spiritual Self. It was engendered with the help of divine, creative hierarchies, and a dissolution of divine creations is usually not wise. When it is the spiritual Self that is meant, speaking facetiously, one can dispatch this solution in a shallow way, by asking “who is destroying whom?” This writer does not know if destruction of a Self is possible, and if it is possible, can it be done by one’s Self in a suicide of the spiritual entity, by the spiritual entity? In spiritual circles, including re-

ports from some Rosicrucian investigators, some individuals create vehicles which they cannot control. Such personalities live on, without a spirit within, for thousands of years, using various forms of occult vampirism. A clairvoyant description of the withdrawal of a threefold spirit from its renegade personality is given in *A Strange Story* by Bulwer Lytton. *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* tells us that in such extremely rare cases the entity must wait eons for another creative manifestation for another chance. The Virgin Spirit cannot be destroyed because it is part of the Universal Spirit. *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* does not explicitly say whether the threefold spirit, the Self, is disassembled, or not, in these cases.

This writer suspects that destroying the Self is not the intent of those who use those words. More likely it is that attachment to Self, is what is to be destroyed. This concept is not foreign to Christianity. "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it." The intent is, rather, to transcend the Self to Life Spirit. There is an analogy which is, at least, partially true. It is analogous leaving the dense, physical body so as to function consciously in the higher worlds, without the encumbrance and limitation of the dense, physical body. It cannot be done if one is attached to one's body. The analogy breaks down because, when one leaves the physical body, one is still self-conscious, but beyond the Self there is no self-consciousness except that which is a reflection from the self. This is exactly what is reported, from some who hold this view, and who have had the experience. The experience is completely ineffable. Others, from other schools, with similar lines of thought, report that the general character of the experience of transcending the Self, can be impressed on the Self, but with the limitations of the Self. Hypothesizing that these reports are true, the impression is possible, through the Life Spirit component of the threefold spirit. In any case, this is something farfetched, recondite, and removed from possibility for most humans.

In the eyes of this writer, Christianity has the best solution to the problem of the Self. It is also a solution accessible to everyone, and not only accomplished meditators. It is simple. One gives one's Self to Christ. In doing so, one does not abrogate one's responsibility, one fulfills it and does so in a larger way, than is possible with self-centered orientation. One does what one does, but it is done for the Christ's sake. In this, the orientation of the Self is shifted to the other, the universal Other, the ultimate Other. This is possible

because the Self finds its purpose in the overarching selfness of its source in the Life Spirit, the source of purpose. This goes beyond living for one's self, and it is universalized. None of these benefits detract from earlier mentioned means of getting beyond Self. Those methods are valid, and they are highly sophisticated, with centuries of development by many earnest practitioners. However, there is a noticeable difference in the descriptions of the experience. The more ancient and oriental experience, as described above, is more non personal. To some, the experience seems stark and even empty. To modern, western practitioners, the descriptions seem void of character, which, to some, is seen as a virtue. Characterization seems to be indicative of the evolution of consciousness, from the ancient orient to the modern occident. Character is a quality of spirit. A spiritual experience that includes recognition of character, is a richer, and more complete experience. Western materialism has overdone the appreciation of character. In the throes of materialism, people want more than the character of divinity, they want a personal God, and a personal savior, despite scriptural injunction against personalization. This kind of materialistic exaggeration puts something right, on the wrong side of the problem of the Self.

Covid-19

This essay originated as an informal email message to a friend who asked for some thoughts about the Covid-19 pandemic. From this friend, it was widely distributed around the world. The intention in writing it, was not to distribute or publish it, but since it has broad currency, this writer decided to repair it, improve it, and offer it anew, in the hope that it might be helpful to other students of spiritual astrology. Along the way suggestions have been offered, which have been received with gratitude, and included, when appropriate. Please forgive the inconvenience that rewrites sometimes produce mixed tenses, which are unavoidable in attempting to maintain the spirit of the original, creative intent.

Cycles are regular, rhythmic, recurrent phenomena. We live in a world of cycles. The Krebs metabolic cycle is measured in milliseconds, some astronomical cycles last millions of years. There are cosmological spirals like the spirals within spirals, within spirals ... spoken of in *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*. In astrology there are unary cycles, like the annual cycle of the Sun, binary cycles, like the famous Jupiter-Saturn cycle, and there are orientation cycles like the precession of the equinoxes. There are relationships between the cosmological cycles and the planetary cycles, but those relationships are a closely kept secret of the mystery schools. One British mathematician spent many years of his life trying to solve that mystery, and was unsuccessful. Cycles are a basic tool in the evolutionary creation. They offer the repetition of circumstances that bring about evolutionary development, and they provide opportunities for gradual change.

Epidemics or pandemics are not cyclical. They do not occur regularly, but they can be expected. For instance, whenever any species becomes over-populated, one can expect an epidemic. Though epidemics are not, themselves, cyclical, their astrological representations often have cyclical components. Coincidences of conjunctions of several outer planets, which are cyclical, are often present at the times of epidemics. For this reason, a little study of astrological cycles should be helpful to understanding the Covid-19 pandemic.

Saturn is the astrological ruler of time. In ancient Greek mythology, he was Chronos, as in chronological. Thus all cycles of time begin with Saturn or Capricorn. Our year begins when the Sun enters Capricorn at the winter sol-

stice, though it is now marked in January, because of errors in calendration in past centuries. The evolutionary creation began with the Saturn period.

In the Rosicrucian Fellowship astrology courses, we are taught that the midheaven, and its movement, if dominant, indicates a life best spent in more spiritual activities. If the midheaven progresses faster than the ascendant, it is an indication of dominance. In the same way that the midheaven in the horoscope corresponds to the cusp of Capricorn in the zodiac, the ascendant corresponds to the spring equinox, Aries in the northern hemisphere, and Libra in the southern hemisphere. In spring nature bursts forth with new forms. From this, and the teaching of Max Heindel about the movements of the progressed midheaven and ascendant, we can see that just as cycles of time begin with Capricorn, cycles of form begin with the vernal equinoctial point.

All binary (two planet) cycles begin and end with the conjunction. Recently there have been several major conjunctions in Capricorn. From the above, it can be seen that we are in the process of endings, and new beginnings. Since Capricorn is in the vertical, like the midheaven, they are likely to be new spiritual beginnings.

The greatest new beginning that a human can currently experience is initiation. The infinitive “to initiate” means to begin or to start. We know from the writings of Max Heindel, that initiation, as spiritual as it is, is not all pleasant. Often the candidate for initiation suffers a serious illness as a prelude to initiation. The illness accomplishes several things. It liquidates as much past destiny as the candidate can bear. The soul material from that liquidation gives the candidate a boost in soul power, necessary to accomplish the initiation. The illness also has a humbling effect and, thereby, opens the candidate to receive the spirit more deeply into the personality. The suffering also brings out more compassion in the candidate. All of these things promote new spiritual progress.

Using the principle of analogy, it can be seen how humanity, world wide, is suffering to some positive end. When an individual suffers, intuition can reveal the cause of suffering. When humanity suffers, spiritual astrology, with intuition, can help humanity to find the cause of the suffering.

Capricorn is an earth sign and Saturn, its ruler, is, in its dark side, the planet of selfishness. Selfishness about things of the earth, is a good definition of materialism. Materialism is currently the greatest block to spiritual development. A block that needs removal.

The Covid-19 virus, and other Covid viruses, are believed to have originated in bats. Traditionally, bats are ruled by the nocturnal sign axis of Capricorn and Cancer, but they are usually most associated with Capricorn. Bats are peculiar in the animal kingdom because they sleep with their heads down. They spend a significant amount of time in an inverted position relative to the earth. The philosophy of materialism is inverted. The philosophy of materialism is that everything originates in matter, not in spirit as mysticism teaches. In the Rosicrucian philosophy we learn that everything originates in spirit, and is reflectively projected into matter for the spiritualization of matter.

As imperfect humans, we live in a world of prejudices. Astrology is no exception. Most people have signs and planets that they like or dislike, prejudicially. In this writer's experience, Capricorn and Saturn, its ruler, generally seem to be the most disliked sign and planet in the astrological spectrum. We humans tend to project our prejudices, rather than own up to them. Selfishness seems to be the most ubiquitous human shortcoming. We hate the things that expose and challenge our selfishness. Saturn rules both selfishness and hatred, so this apparent, general prejudice correlates astrologically. Since bats are associated with Saturn and Capricorn, it is not surprising that they should become almost universal objects of hatred. We are the creators of our thoughts and desires, and our creations come back home to us. Thus, it is not surprising, that bats should carry so many viruses inimical to us.

Covid-19 is a virus. Nuclei are ruled by Pluto but viruses are ruled by Saturn, just as bacteria illnesses are ruled by Mars. Bacterial diseases are inflammations (a good Mars keyword). Saturn is the planet of cold. Viral conditions are, in some ways, conditions of cold. In the English language one common viral, respiratory, illness is called a "cold", and its virus is also in the Covid family. The viruses like the cavities around the nose and eyes, because the temperature is very slightly lower in those cavities, and the blood moves more slowly, both of which are ideal conditions for viruses. It is practical, therefore, to keep those areas warm by steaming or hot applications if there

is a possibility of possibly having contacted a virus.

In astrology Saturn and Mars are called the greater and lesser malefic planets. When misused, they represent the two most basic categories of sin. They are called the sins of omission and commission, respectively. In the sin of commission one does what shouldn't be done. In omission one does not do what ought to be done. In the Mars half of the Earth Period, there were more inflammatory, bacterial, infectious diseases because humanity had less restraint of desires. In the Mercury half of the Earth Period, the mind has come more into play and there is more restraint, and also more reserve, about doing what should be done. Even so, the self and the pseudo self (the lower nature) are growing stronger, and so is selfishness. The Lords of Mind worked on us in our mineral-like state during the Saturn period. The sins of Saturn are satanic, and the sins of Mars are luciferic. They work together, Mars is exalted in Capricorn. In the Garden of Eden story, the sin of rash sexuality was a sin of commission, a sin of Mars, but behind the temptation to commission, was the insecure, selfish desire for immortality, a sin of Saturn.

Viruses are the first human attempt at creating living forms. They are a half step between a mineral and a plant. Virologists can take organic chemicals off the shelf, so to speak, and create a virus. A virus cannot live by itself but it can hold life from another organism. It can reproduce, but it cannot live on its own, as a plant can. Viruses are single cells, and some have projections from its their forms. Except for size, a virus is very much like the human form in the polarian epoch, when we recapitulated the Saturn Period, and the mineral-like stage of evolution as humans—minerals are also ruled by Saturn. Recent research has found that there are extremely large viruses. Unfortunately, our humanity has come into creativity, while still under the cloud of sin. We are now reaping the consequences of that original selfishness responsible for our fall into matter, as deeply as we have fallen. Viruses are the product of concentration in an attitude of selfishness, just as Max Heindel tells us in Questions and Answers.

The conjunction is an aspect of concentration. In a conjunction, the qualities of both planets, are concentrated and fused together. Saturn rules the conjunction aspect.

When a number of planets are concentrated in a small region of the zodiac,

it is called a stellium. When there are aspects between them, the formation is called a revolving conjunction. In 2020, the outer planets Pluto, Saturn, Jupiter and Mars passed through Capricorn. The outer planets represent the more impersonal activities of greater society, in ephemeral astrology. Pluto has conjoined with Saturn, Jupiter, and Mars in that order. All of the inner planets have conjoined with these outer planets, which brings the greater influences into the personal sphere. Only Neptune and Uranus have not been directly involved in the concentrating, conjunction activity.

The conjunction, like all of the aspects, is a geometric relationship. Astrology is all about geometric angles. The more exact the geometric relationship, the more distinct the astrological influence. This effect is true in both natal astrology, and ephemeral astrology, which is the study of astrological influence in the world at a given time. However, in ephemeral astrology, there is another factor, duration. The longer an astrological influence is present, the greater its effect will be. The inner planets, i.e., planets inside the orbit of the Earth are Sun, Venus, Mercury and the Moon. They are called personal planets because their effects in a horoscope mostly effect one's personal life—identity, emotion and thought. The effects of the personal planets in ephemeral astrology, are brief and fleeting. The outer planets, i.e., planets outside of the orbit of Earth, are Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto. Outer planets are often called societal planets. Mars is an interloper, functioning mostly as a personal planet but sometimes as a societal planet. The reason outer planets are called societal planets, is that their positions and mutual aspects, last long enough to affect many people born under their influence. The slower the planet, the wider its societal influence. For example, the Neptune sextile Pluto, active in the heavens as this is written, has been in orb since 1942. It will continue in orb through 2037. This means that everyone born in this period of almost a century will have the same aspect. In turn, this means everyone born in this period, will be expressing some side of a common attitude relationship (a topic for another essay.) It is in this manner that societal attitudes manifest and develop. Sometimes, when societal attitudes are dark and negative, and they become manifest through astrological influence, the consequence is an epidemic or a pandemic. Rats, another Saturn-Capricorn animal, were responsible for the great plague. In that case, the prevailing, causal, saturnian attitude was ignorance.

Pluto is likely to have the greatest influence in this revolving conjunction

because it moves most slowly. This is modified slightly by the fact that most of humanity cannot yet respond to its influence, especially on its higher side. Pluto is the planet of power. In physics this kind of power is called potential. Pluto does not act directly, it influences others to act. Pluto rules Scorpio, a fixed water sign. One kind of fixed water is the still water behind a dam. It stands there seeming to do nothing, but the power, or potential, of its influence forces the water through the turbines, to produce useful energy.

Since Pluto aspects the other planets, one after another, it is likely the most significant planet, and the base for the combined activity of the revolving conjunction. However, Pluto, like all of the other octave planets, is hard to get at. The Mafia godfather is one human representation of Pluto. The godfather is an underworld figure who rules by terror, Scorpio is a sign of terror. The godfather does not give written instructions, nor oral instructions either. One understands what the godfather wants from his influence. Because of this, it may take a long time before the reasons behind the actions of this period of time are brought to light. It is certain to be about power, but the inner workings of power, in question, are still not obvious.

Pluto rules Scorpio. Scorpio rules the sexual force. The sexual force is the most powerful agency humans possess. All creativity is accomplished through the sexual force. It is also the force that humans have misused. The misuse has been selfish, which means Saturn is involved. The selfishness of Saturn combined with the sexual power of Pluto is a microcosmic miniature, of how our misuse of the sexual force, drove us deeper into matter than was intended in the divine plan. This is one of the things that is, at least partially, being healed by the pandemic. Deep within, the spirit knows what has brought this about.

Saturn is the second slowest planet in the revolving conjunction. Unlike Pluto, it is a planet to which everyone can respond—everyone has fear and selfishness. Saturn and Pluto are the two darkest planets of all the planets. The manifestation of this is obvious in the ignorance, fear, panic, terror and selfishness, which have abounded in the world during this crisis. The dark, primitive side of humanity is coming out, just as it does in us when we become Probationers, and we must own and transform our own darkness. Knowing this, it is extremely important, that we look for the good, stress and strengthen the good, and remain positive during the crisis. This is why we do our

spiritual exercises. By performing them, we can have self-control and serve efficiently in times of crisis. One of the greatest services we can offer, is to radiate love and positivity into the psychic background that affects everyone. If we have done our exercises, we have become skilled thinkers and prayers, capable of transmitting like little radio stations. It is our spiritual duty to have faith, be positive, and strengthen the good in these critical times, and this can be done, even in quarantine.

Jupiter is the planet of positivity. Unfortunately, Jupiter is in its detriment in Capricorn, during the main part of this revolving conjunction. It still works for the good, but it is stifled in Capricorn. The dark side of Jupiter can be found in the rapid expansion of the epidemic. However, knowing this, we can use the focussing agency of Capricorn to strengthen the good, in areas in which we have specific talents. There are other things about Jupiter, and things about Mars, that could be said, such as Mars conjoining Pluto indicating governmental mandates for public health, but doing that might distract from our spiritual purpose at this time. Besides, this writer has not the time, the space, or the heart, to do that. Omitting these other things, gives others the opportunity to work them out.

Jupiter, together with Saturn, indicates part of the redemption in the purpose of this suffering. Jupiter conjoins Saturn approximately every twenty years. A Jupiter-Saturn conjunction occurs approximately 242° forward in the zodiac from the Jupiter-Saturn conjunction that preceded it. For example, if one Jupiter-Saturn conjunction occurs at 0° of Aries, the next will be near 2° of Sagittarius, and the next near 4° of Leo, and so on. From this it can be seen that the conjunctions will remain in one astrological element for roughly 180 years. The figure of interlocking triangles formed by connecting the the points of successive conjunctions is called the trigons of Saturn and Jupiter. The first conjunction in an element, that is not followed by a reversion to the element preceding it, sets the tone for the entire period of the trigons in that element. Perhaps an example will help.

The first Jupiter-Saturn conjunction in the most recent passage of the trigons through the earth element was in Virgo in 1802. Due to the differences in the angles of inclinations of the orbits and the expansion and contractions of the orbits, the next conjunction did not occur in Taurus as might be expected, instead, the conjunction of 1921 occurred in the late degrees of Aries. How-

ever, the next conjunction in 1842 occurred in the earth sign Capricorn. All of the following conjunctions occurred in earth signs until, 1981 which was the first conjunction in an air sign, Libra. The 1842 conjunction in Capricorn set the tone for all of the rest of the conjunctions in earth signs. That Capricorn conjunction occurred in the 8th house of the United States horoscope. The 8th house is the house of death. Every United States president elected under a Jupiter-Saturn conjunction in an earth sign died in office. Ronald Reagan was elected under the Libra conjunction. There was a threat on his life but he survived, and the cycle was broken. The next conjunction, in 2000, was in Taurus so there was a reversion to the earth element. The next Jupiter-Saturn conjunction occurred on December 21, 2020, the date of the winter solstice when the Sun again enters Capricorn. Because there will be no reversion to an earth element, the 2020 conjunction sets the tone for approximately the next 180 years. The conjunction of 2020 was in Aquarius, the sign of altruism. Jupiter will have retrograde and direct conjunctions with Pluto before the winter solstice so we can expect other waves of woes for the earth. Jupiter will not conjoin Saturn until the solstice, so the main parts of the revolving conjunction will not be complete until then.

We know from the Rosicrucian philosophy, that altruism is the antidote for egoism. So it appears that after we have reaped the sorrow from selfishness and materialism, the time will be ripe for altruism. This trigon in the air element, beginning in Aquarius, will be a time to be able to manifest the qualities of the coming Aquarian age. This writer does not believe this will be the second coming of Christ, whom we will meet in the air, but it will be a good time to prepare the world for that event, when it does come. This is our coming work, and we can be confident that we will be working with the tide of the times.

As of this rewriting in mid 2022, no clear manifestation of the air sign trigon of Saturn and Jupiter has become noticeable to this writer. Perhaps he is not sufficiently perspicacious. Perhaps the Saturn-Jupiter trigon is analogous to the lunation cycle. We do not see the New Moon until at least a day has passed since the culmination of a New Moon. Often there is nothing noticeable in the lunation cycle until the first sextile of Sun and Moon. The first sextile of Saturn and Jupiter occurs on 19 June 2023.

While this kind of historical astro-analysis might be factual, this writer balks

at doing it. As Rosicrucian aspirants, we are not meant to be mere observers and commentators of the passage of the events of the world. We are meant to be active agents. We are children of fire, and it behooves us, as such, to initiate Aquarian Age activities as the impulse comes to us. The Aquarian Age comes to birth and life, through us and our deeds. Hopefully, this essay will motivate its readers to take our responsibility to heart.

Is this the only interpretation of the astrology of the pandemic? Certainly not! There are potentially others which would be valid and helpful. It would be wonderful if others worked out and expressed other interpretations in the way that instrumentalists present different interpretations of a composition. There are too many sides to the truth, for it to be wise, to look to only one interpreter. We want the whole truth and it is our duty, as truth seekers, to bring it out. If it can be done in a manner to inspire others to action, so much the better. This interpretation is intended for Rosicrucian aspirants striving to serve humanity. It is not comprehensive—service is a mighty task which requires all of us. Perhaps that is the realization, that the Aquarius trigon conjunction is about.

UFOs

From time to time in his career, this writer had to work at one or the other, of the two national laboratories in the Chicago area. This involved a three hour drive. Late one night, he returned home, together with a graduate student and an associate scientist. Being low man in the pecking order, it fell on him to drive. This writer loves to drive, but he has a history of falling asleep at the wheel. On several occasions it has almost cost him his life. Being weary, late at night, he had to find a way to keep awake. So, he said to the graduate student seated next to him: "Say Bill, have you seen any UFOs lately?" Immediately a bark from the back seat said "There aren't any UFOs, if there were, they would be in touch with the intelligencia." Of course, he meant people like himself. In any case, a lively conversation ensued and there was no danger of falling asleep at the wheel for the rest of the trip. Learning about UFOs, wasn't the purpose for bringing them into the conversation. The purpose was to stay awake. UFOs were a tool to serve that purpose.

This wasn't the only time UFOs have been used by this writer to some extraneous end. Sometimes one meets strangers, in circumstances in which it would be advantageous to know their mind set, in order to avoid conflict, such as a religious argument. By casually bringing UFOs into the conversation, one can get important information instantly. Suppose a response is "They are the instrument of the devil." From that answer one immediately knows what topics to avoid to have a peaceful, positive conversation. Responses aren't always as blatant as this example, but UFOs are almost always a vehicle to useful knowledge.

In effect, UFOs, being the unknown that they are, constitute something like a knowledge vacuum. Often, they also introduce a social vacuum or, better, a psychic vacuum. As Aristotle said, "nature abhors a vacuum." Hence, knowledge, or what is assumed to be knowledge, flows in to fill the vacuum. Most social settings are not controlled, and most offerings to them are not deliberated. Consequently, uncontrolled, unconscious content is likely to fill the vacuum. The associate scientist did not realize he was exposing and unconscious, elitist, intellectual bias. He thought he was merely making a reasonable statement, that was based in fact. He thought he knew something that he didn't.

It doesn't have to be UFOs that produce a psychic vacuum. Any unknown that excites interest can be used to this end. Max Heindel titled one of his Rosicrucian Christianity Lectures "Where are the dead?" This was an excellent choice to draw in an audience, because, except for a few trained clairvoyants, no one really knows where the dead are, and almost everyone is interested in, or has an opinion, about the subject.

It isn't the vacuum that is important, it is what flows into it that is. Through a well designed vacuum, something that has previously been hidden, unknown, or obscured, can be brought to light.

It doesn't have to be something from the personal unconscious that fills the void. It could very well be objective information, heretofore unknown, that is brought out scientifically. One reason why spiritual aspirants purify and empty the unconscious by retrospection and other exercises, is to avoid corrupting inquiry.

The vacuum doesn't have to be a question. Max Heindel gave us an excellent example. In one passage he describes a spiritual exercise in imagination. He describes creating and sustaining an imaginative visualization as clearly, and as long as possible. When the aspirant has created and held the image to satisfaction, the image dropped. If the aspirant has been successful in creating a distinct image, content from the desire world will be seen in the void created by dropping the image.

It doesn't have to be material from the higher spiritual worlds that fills a vacuum. Information and experience from the material world may be the source. In the realm of material science, it is hypotheses that form the vacuum to be filled by factual information. Hypotheses are sophisticated questions based on previous experiences. They are precise questions. In this, it is important that the form of the question, the void, determines the character and quality of the answer. The success of a scientific investigation often depends on the quality of the questions asked. Some experiments are more successful than others. Some investigators are more attuned to nature than others. Usually they have more intuition.

Intuition is central to all human endeavor with regard to the unknown. It doesn't have to be data that fills an intentional vacuum. It can be intuition.

Intuition is almost always a large part of a successful inquiry. Intuition is teaching from within, the within being the transcendental spirit. Our most meaningful questions are spiritual. Our prayers are questions, we are asking for light. These spiritual questions can be, but do not have to be, sophisticated. Some of the best of them are simple. Their quality and success is because of earnest sincerity and intensity, not complexity or elaboration. When we pray for something, say the healing of a friend, we do so with all of the intensity of the heart, and this forms a vacuum par excellence, which is filled with a spiritual response.

It doesn't have to be a scientific investigation, or a divine plea, that creates a vacuum for creative intuition. It could just as well be the void of a blank canvas, beckoning someone with a palette of splashy colors, and a lively creative imagination.

High questions, as voids or vacuums, do not have to be individual to be valuable and serviceable. When Max Heindel sought practical, spiritual answers for those who suffer, he did so for the world, and not just one or two individuals. The answers for him, were answers to universal questions. We know them as the mysteries. Millions have been served and satisfied by his quest, and his questions. Even in his large questions, he sought discrete, verifiable, and useful answers. The title page of the first edition of the *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* contains the following line: "Prove all things—Paul."

It doesn't have to be the vacuum of microcosmic human questioning that is filled. The entire evolutionary creation, the macrocosm in which we are blessed to participate, could be filling the void of the Unknown in the Absolute. It would then be Goethe's "Eternal Feminine" which draws us out, as it draws us in.

Have you seen any UFOs lately?

Closure

For about fifty-five years this writer has been practicing spiritual and astrological counseling, with no fee. Practicing is the correct word. He is adept at neither. His station is like a battlefield commission, based more on need than merit. While the reasons for spiritual counseling have remained nearly the same over time, the reasons for astrological counseling have changed. In the early years it was all hearts and flowers. The questions were like “is he (or she) the right one?” or “Are we compatible?” Frequently the counseling was a matter of helping the couple to understand the nature of their relationship. Astrologically speaking, was it a fifth house relationship?, fun, or a seventh house relationship?, commitment. Sometimes one of them, usually the male, thought it was of the fifth house, while the other was thinking seventh house. As the years passed, the emphasis of the questions asked, shifted one house forward to the sixth and eighth houses. Questioners were more interested in health and mortality. This shift seems to be true for everyone, not just astrologers or priests. With the passage of time, one eventually attends more memorial services than weddings.

To try to address both the sixth and eighth houses in one short essay is too much. A little bit about the sixth house is touched upon in an earlier essay. Even the eighth house, alone, is too much. As with all of the houses, there are many sides to the eighth house. The eighth house seems to be especially difficult to interpret for several reasons. One reason is that it is the house of secrets. Sometimes secrets are secret, even to astrologers. One may know there is a secret and what the secret is about, without uncovering the specific secret itself. The beautiful thing about this is that one can be helpful without having to know all of the details. Secrets are intriguing, and they demand experience to be known. The mysteries are grand secrets. They are inevitable secrets. The eighth house is about inevitables—“in this world nothing is certain but death and taxes” as Ben Franklin put it, and both are eighth house matters. All of the heroes of mythology, the seekers of apotheosis, had to pass through the world of the dead. Some, like Theseus, got stuck. (Theseus sat in the chair of contentment, when it was offered to him, and got stuck.) Leaving the body to take soul flights is called “the little death.” We cannot know the mysteries of life until we pass through the gateway of death to the invisible truths behind illusory material life.

Another reason the eighth house is so difficult, is the background with which it is imbued. The eighth house is derivative of the eighth sign, Scorpio. Some of the qualities of Scorpio are unpleasant. Scorpio can be the sign of ruthlessness and terror, and eighth house opportunities are often permeated with these attitudes. The second house is the house of personal finances. Its opposite, the eighth house, is the house of shared finances. Shared finances can mean one's partner's resources, or the "general fund" of tax revenues. Both are other people's money. An inheritance estate is another pot of other people's money. Some look at inheritance as free money, for which one does not have to work. They see inheritance in a manner, similar to the way some politicians see the general fund. In his astrological career, it has been shocking to this writer, to see what people will do for an inheritance. Sometimes even nice people will do nasty things for free money.

There are many forms of balance and compensation in the astrological mandala. Sagittarius and the ninth house follow Scorpio and the eighth house. Where Scorpions can be one of the more unpleasant signs to interact with, Sagittarians are some of the most pleasant and amiable. The vital questions of the eighth house, morph into the universal answers of the ninth house, the house of religion and philosophy. For some, religions have all of the answers, for others there are too many pat answers. Memorial services are on the cusp between the eighth and ninth houses. They bridge the demanding necessity of death, and the questions it raises, with the accepted beliefs about the afterlife, which are usually more elaborate than factual.

Memorial services are occasions when attendees are brought to face death. Death is certain, what happens after death is, for most people, unknown. People tend to treat unknowns with belief, in lieu of knowledge. Beliefs are an expression of character, conscious and unconscious. For worldly people a memorial service is a sober formality. For dour pessimists, it is dark and sad. For Rosicrucian students with faith, spirituality and, sometimes firsthand experience, it is an upbeat and joyous occasion.

Even in happy memorial services there is a tinge of sadness. We miss someone who has been a positive presence in our life, so we feel sad at the loss. Sometimes there is outright grieving. There seem to be differences between grieving and mourning. Grieving is more severe and intense, sometimes with extreme expressions. The essential differences between mourning and griev-

ing are not merely a matter of intensity, or even the flavor of the feelings. The differences lie in the object of the feelings. We mourn the fact that there will no longer be sharing directly with the beloved. We mourn for the departed, who may have to suffer the consequences of an unregenerate life, or who may not have sown many seeds of spiritual fruitfulness. We mourn for the departed because they never took all of the opportunities for a better life that they could have. We grieve for ourselves, ..., and we do so, because we realize that in the finality of death, we have lost our opportunities to do right by the deceased, as we ought to have done. The more egregious our unredeemed trespasses, the deeper our grieving. We can no longer procrastinate facing something unpleasant, though necessary, and we have missed the opportunity to overcome our own self-resistance. We must now live with our negligence and intransigence with no recourse, and that grieves us deeply. There is as much finality in death for the living as for the deceased, and it is more painful for the living in many cases.

Grieving is not the only easily misunderstood emotion at death. There are illusory sentiments at the other end of the emotional spectrum, the positive end. In the memorial services he has attended, this writer has never heard a negative eulogy, or remembrance, even if the deceased had been a scoundrel from time to time. It is as if death had sanctified the deceased, and purged all negative memories. That is not realistic, or representative, of reality.

It is also not healthy. As Rosicrucian aspirants, we are urged to exercise good judgment, and see things as they are. When we retrospect, we are admonished to review all of our deeds, not only the good, and not only the bad. Being the petty egoists that we are, we sometimes overlook our less than perfect actions, or inactions. Sometimes the inner adversary distracts our attention from recalling things which, if remembered, would lessen its influence over our lives. It is called psychological resistance. When we do this, we skew character development, and we don't make the changes which should be made. True though this is, it does not seem to be the reason for unbalanced positivity at memorial services.

Superstition might be part of the reason for this phenomenon. Some people think it is unlucky to speak ill of the deceased. In societies where involuntary clairvoyance is part of the culture, it is savvy to be prudent when one speaks of the deceased. Doing so might win psychic retaliation from the other side.

Fortunately, societies of this type are marginal and fading, though the superstition might persist.

There is another reason in most societies. It is social pressure in saving the appearances, and avoiding social embarrassment. People will say things in private, that they would never dare to say in public. This kind of hypocrisy is a consequence of materialism. In our evolutionary past, when our consciousness was focussed inward, we knew the soul quality of another, in the way a pet will know if a new acquaintance is a friend or foe to its owner. We were what we were, and our true feelings could not be hidden. As we have become increasingly focussed on the without, through sense perception, we have ignored inward consciousness. Outer appearances are important with this outlook. The lie that precipitated our too deep fall into matter, has become materialistic illusion. We want to appear as nice and positive people, even when we are not.

It doesn't help to condemn people for their faults, to "rub their nose" in them. It might even move them to entrench themselves in response to humiliation. On the other hand, bringing one's errors to one's attention proportionately, is beneficial. That is actually what purgatory does. In having a complete understanding of an action, through cause and consequence, one can understand the principle which was applied in error. There is a principle at the heart of every action. It is with this truth in mind, that we have wise old sayings such as "don't throw out the baby with the bath water." Perhaps there is an element of truth behind the practice of never saying anything bad about the deceased at a memorial. If so, it behooves us to dig it out, as we would dig out buried treasure.

Memorial services are for the living, not the dead. The dead are getting all the feedback they need, in the past life panorama, purgatory and first heaven. Memorial services are for closure. Closure, in this sense, means finalization. To this outer world, death is certainly final, but only for the physical form. We, in our lives, are more than our forms. Our lives are intimately shared with others. There is no such thing as an isolated life. Even the thoughts of a hermit affect the world. A monk in his cell may be more intimately in touch, and in effect, with society than a socialite. We share a collective consciousness, for better or worse. A church congregation is also a Christian community, a collective. Collective consciousness requires confirmation as

much as individual consciousness. Memorial services, like weddings, christenings and other rites, are collective confirmations. In them, the community witnesses an event, and confirms it. Confirmations are positive actions. Thus, there is in its existence, a positive confirmation, in a memorial service. Positive, though this realization is, it doesn't get us to a reason for exclusively positive proclamations in a memorial service.

Perhaps the reason is as simple as life, and everything in it, being not only positive but also good. This would mean that sadness, sorrow, and even loss, are good and positive. This is not a new thought. Perhaps no one has said it better than Tennyson: "Tis better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all." This has profound implications. For instance, being vis-a-vis with non being, or potential, is intrinsically good. It doesn't have to be academic. Being in nature on a bright, sunny day, one feels life is good. This truth is also positive and affirmative, but it is not so lofty as to approach aloofness. We want reasons and explanations at hand, and usable.

Perhaps the reason is not only that life, and what is in it, is good that brings closure. It might be the *knowing* that it is good, that does it. Knowing something is satisfying. One can rest assured in one's knowledge. Knowing that one knows, is even more satisfying. In this, one is more secure, and founded in one's own being—spiritual security. Still, knowledge, though satisfying, does not seem sufficient to bring closure. If it were, scholars would be established in closure, and that is certainly not true. Faust had vast knowledge and little closure in life. He was restless for something spiritual beyond mere worldly knowledge. Then there is the fact, that when we know something, we are also aware that there is much we do not know. There is something more than knowledge to closure.

Eventually, Faust did find closure. He found it in a most improbable place. It came in draining and redeeming a rotten swamp. His joy and acceptance in closure were not for himself alone. It included the multitude of free humans who would work together fruitfully. He is filled with gratitude, and is ready to die, even though Mephistopheles may claim his soul at death. Closure. Mephistopheles scoffs in cynicism at what he sees as a delusion.

It is gratitude that brought closure to Faust. Gratitude brings closure. In gratitude one has experienced something thoroughly, and knows it is good,

through and through, and appreciates it fully. Follow-through and completion are necessary for psychological health. Without completing things, or living them out, one is suspended in uncertainty and doubt. Freud thought that coitus interruptus produced neurosis. Perhaps, stressing only the positive things in a life brings, at least partial closure; the rest can pend until another life expression.

There is closure in even simple gestures when there is gratitude in their reception. “Thank you” and “your’e welcome” are powerful and satisfying words, when they are true. They are also liberating, as they were for Faust.

Closure in gratitude is not only found in little or prosaic things. It is found in the grand creation. In the first creation story in Genesis, as the Elohim look at their work at the end of each day of creation, they utter “and saw it was good.” Appreciation and closure.

Gratitude and closure are a greater and more important factor during the second half of our evolutionary creation. The second half is all about dissolution, decadence, absorption, assimilation, and spiritualization of experience into creative power. One by one, each of our vehicles of consciousness, on which we will have worked so long to build and evolve, will go into decadence. Beginning with the lowest, the dense physical body. The forces in each vehicle, in succession, will be built into the next highest vehicle, and eventually absorbed into the Spirit to be united there with its parent principles. The second half of the creation is, increasingly, a cosmic retrospection. The work of the final period, the Vulcan period, is almost exclusively retrospection. The cosmic retrospection of the second half of the creation, is neither dark nor begrudging, as our daily, personal retrospections sometimes tend to be. They are glorious and joyful. Jupiter and Venus, the rulers of the late periods, are the two most joyous signifiers in the spectrum of planetary qualities, and the compounding creative character of Vulcan, is beyond words.

The first of the exclusively evolutionary periods is the Jupiter period. Jupiter is the planet of gratitude. Thus cosmic closure begins with thanksgiving and gratitude. Jupiter, to the ancient Greeks, was Zeus, which name means “all bright.” More than the brightness of sunlight, which we see with our eyes, the light of Jupiter is spiritual brightness. Its brightness is even more than the brightness of intelligence. It is the brightness of positivity and appreciation

in spirit.

Jupiter is also the planet of expansion. In the second half of the evolutionary creation, the cosmos expands out of the cramping conditions of chemical matter, into space defined by spirit. This activity is mounting and cumulative. Thus, the individual and the Elohim, look back and see that it has been, and is, good. In this appreciation and gratitude, consciousness is expanded and more good is beheld, which produces still more expansion, and so on to the extent of the creation in every dimension. The thought of it leaves one breathless. The evolutionary half of the creation is like the opening of a flower in both microcosm and macrocosm. Its fragrance of gratitude is soul material absorbed into divinity. Closure.

The final word on the matter belongs to Meister Eckhart: “If the only prayer you ever say in your entire life is “thank you”, it will be enough.”

Winning

“Gnothi se auton”—know thyself—was the first of the three inscriptions chiseled in stone, at the temple of Apollo, at the Delphic Oracle. To candidates, the “self” was the threefold spirit, the spiritual Self, into which consciousness the candidate was initiated. Though not as lofty, the inscription applies also to the personal self. As we struggle in the inner war, we come to know our personality pretty well. We must in order to succeed, to win.

In the inner war, this writer has come to know, that in some respects, his personality is fixed and rigid. This is an impediment for someone seeking to respond to the infinitely subtle and supple Spirit. Knowing something is the first step. One must take action, to follow through on what one knows, as a second step. In an attempt to break up rigidity, he has taken to reading poetry. Poets see things differently from, so called, normal people with accepted standards. Poets’ insights are surprising, just the thing to break up rigidity. So, he reads all sorts of poetry, regularly. He is far from a connoisseur, or a master interpreter, but he goes ahead anyway. There is much in poetry that doesn’t speak to him, but sometimes one line is life changing. One example for this writer is a couplet from Sonnet 119 by Shakespeare:

What Wretched errors hat my heart committed,
Whilst it has though itself so blessed never.

The couplet speaks for itself, with an insight into which, any of us can testify. Too often, has this writer been certain, when in error, (Whilst it has though itself so blessed never) and he has acted in his surety, to his eventual grief. One peculiarity about surety, is that someone else is just as sure of something, which differs from one’s own surety. When one encounters someone of counter certainties, firm opinions clash in arguments.

Some arguments are never won. If sustained, they evolve, and other things evolve from them. In the history of the United States politics, the pendulum of of public opinion swings back and forth between the political left and the political right. Some swings span several generations. Whenever a swing occurs, it is fascinating how advocates of the new direction often believe they are offering new ideas, when they are actually offering old ideas in new dressings. The dressings evolve, and society evolves, but the evolutionary changes are not, necessarily, to the liking of either extreme. Winning isn’t necessary

for progress.

There are arguments about progress itself, though the participants in these arguments are not aware of it. This writer has participated in one of these arguments for years, off and on, without realizing the argument was about progress. The subject of this argument was winning. The premise can be stated in a simple question, “When is a game won?” At first glance, the answer seems obvious. It would seem to be won when the time period has expired, the decisive tally is scored, one player is check-mated, or whatever the rules state. In this view, the outcome is determined in the activity, in the moment, in the game itself. Thus, players never give up. This is in the spirit of Yogi Berra who said “it isn’t over, until it’s over.” One person who participated in this argument, and who was not someone who entered into competitions, did not see it this way. The view of this person was that the outcome was a matter of destiny. In other words, the World Series was determined before it began.

The argument from destiny before the fact of activity, seems absurd, especially to participating competitors. Why play the game if the outcome is predetermined? To a competitor there would be no pride in accomplishment, if the winner was foreshown. For Rosicrucian aspirants this argument cannot be easily disregarded. In *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*, and other Rosicrucian literature, we learn that, working together with the Recording Angels, we design a life in which certain events are mandatory. Winning the World Series could be one of them. We even learn that individuals, who balk upon seeing the images of predetermined events at the quickening, only make matter worse.

Evidence of this view is not only found in the Rosicrucian philosophy. It exists in pop culture. A few years ago, the U.S. Army experimented with clairvoyance, and other forms of ESP. They came up with something called “remote viewing,” because clairvoyance didn’t fit well in military vocabulary, even though clairvoyance was what it actually was. Though there was some success with some things, the program was abandoned because it didn’t produce the intelligence the Army wanted. Some of the trainers retired from the Army and commercialized the training. Often, the training was offered in Las Vegas. In advertisements for the program, prospective participants were told they could win back their entrance fee, with successful sports betting. There

are even schools that give advanced training in Remote Viewing for sports betting. Some of them make astounding claims of accuracy. To this writer's knowledge, none of this has been proven, or disproven. If there is an advantage with Remote Viewing, it is meager. Besides, if it is unsuccessful, some might be too ashamed to admit their losses. Remote Viewing sports betting, is an uncertain activity. Could it be that this is so because some games are predestined and some are not?

The issue of predestination applies to all of life, and the astrological environment in which it is lived out. How much of life is predestined? or, in inverse, in how much of life do we have freedom to create? Clearly, not all of life is predestined. If it were, we would be automatons going through the motions of life, like preprogrammed machines. If it were, freedom and self-determination would be illusions, and life, in this respect, would be a cruel hoax, and not a divine blessing. Since hard data about freedom and destiny is unavailable to him, the writer must rely on personal experience to try to answer these questions.

This writer does have a modicum of usable personal experience, from which to have come to partial answers to these questions. It is gleaned from about fifty-seven years of astrological study. At first, he had a vainglorious, self-conceit in picturing himself becoming a wizard of prediction. With youthful folly, he accepted a challenge from skeptics to predict some world events. When he did so, his success shocked even himself. The skeptics were impressed, but not for long. They wanted more data points. It was then that this writer realized that there would always be demands for more, ..., and more. With some misgivings, he plowed forward. Soon he was spending an enormous amount of time in this activity. Then there was a truth session. In it the "still small voice" within came forth with searing words. It went something like: "Why are you spending all of this time and effort trying to predict events about which you can do nothing?" It went on: "Why don't you give yourself to doing things to serve others, in matters where something can be done?" The admonishment was taken to heart and that was the end of a cometary career in one form of vanity, not to say that there haven't been others. After the truth session, his efforts were redirected into spiritual and astrological counseling on real life issues—less glory, more work and more responsibility, but also more quiet joy.

In counseling there has been some predictive work also, but it is of a different kind, and it is much less. Taking this direction has been intentional, because this writer has come to see, that understanding why events come about, is more important when they come about; except when knowing “when” helps to understand “why”. In horoscopy there are questions similar to those in predicting world events, but most of them are not germane to this essay, the purpose of which, is to explore the relationship of freedom and predictability in human destiny.

In the middle ages astrologers were fatalistic, especially Arabian astrologers, because of their belief that the will of Allah, as it is manifest in destiny, is absolute. Since the Renaissance, astrology has become less fatalistic. Christian astrologers, believing “you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free,” separated themselves from fatalism. This is why William Lilly titled his masterpiece *Christian Astrology Modestly Treated of in Three Books*. Despite a growing belief in freedom, the progression away from fatalism and prediction, toward freedom in creative and spontaneous living, using astrology, has been slow. Even today there is an unspoken fatalism among astrologers, that lies slightly beneath the gloss of positivity. Considering there are so many talented and studious practitioners of astrology, one wonders why this is so. This writer cannot speak for other astrologers, or astrology as a whole, but he can speak for himself.

After many years of practice, with many horoscopes, this writer can see that, for most people, most seeming freedom, is mostly a delusion. This is an outrageous statement, which demands elucidation and substantiation, in large and small.

In large, looking at a lifetime as a whole, one’s life partner is one of the most important people in one’s life. Many people seek an ideal partner, and will go to extremes, to find and meet that person. Often the ideal partner is a fantasy, but even when it isn’t, the search is. Our lives are not exclusively our own, nor are they formed in isolation. Between lives we build the world, and our lives in it, working together with other beings, some of whom are divine. Our lives are renewals, in a great, ongoing, creative work. Rebirths are fresh restarts but not everything is completely new. Much of life is a carrying out of things initiated in the near or distant past. A completely fresh restart does not happen, any more than a new soul is brought into the creation in the

middle of the creation. In this ongoing work, we build working relationships with others. The work isn't only with things outside of ourselves. We actually build within each other's lives. It is mostly done by influence but the effect is not minimal. Often, spouses seem to look like each other, as their life together progresses. In meeting potential spouses, it is a pickup line to say "it's destiny" when one meets someone attractive. Little do most people know, that there is more truth than fiction in that line. It is nearly impossible to avoid someone, with whom one will share one's most intimate and important destiny, especially if that person is a life partner. Marriages are, indeed, "made in heaven," before we come to rebirth. One's time and energy would be better spent in learning about sharing and partnership, than in seeking a mate.

In small, we are wont to believe we are in control of ourselves, which allows us to live life spontaneously in freedom. The reality is that we are mostly creatures of habit, which is neither control nor spontaneity. Even a beginning astrologer can see when one will be jocular, or angry, or whatever. Self-Control, which is a means to freedom, is expressed in self-consciousness. In some spiritual schools, candidates trying to develop clairvoyance are urged to do everything with deliberate self-application. Everything. Even such a trivial thing as tying ones shoelaces is to be done deliberately and not automatically. This practice leaves no gap in attention, for there to be a lapse from spiritual awareness and self-control. In some Christian schools, everything is done for the Christ's sake as in "this do in remembrance of me." Everything.

The most important people, and many important events, in our lives are predetermined by us, before we come to rebirth. Most of what is determined during life, is how and why we come to these predetermined people and events. Do we pass through a temptation presented to us in an event ?, or do we lapse into a vice learned in a previous rebirth?. Ironically, it is in some of the non essential things of life, that we have the most freedom of self-determination. The children born to us may be destined, but the things we do with them, do not have to be. They can be free and spontaneous. Ironically, it is in some of the non essential things, that we have the most freedom of self-determination. Things like games. Some of this writer's fondest memories from childhood were formed when we played games with our mother on Sunday afternoons. Being a Mars ruled family, even simple games were competitive, but they were also intimate. Winning did not seem to have been predetermined, but striving to win was intense. If winning had been predetermined,

the games would have been insipid and pointless. The same can be said to be true of life itself. We live life to succeed. We play games to win. If we don't, it isn't fair to our opponents, or ourselves. Nonetheless, they are still only games, and if we forget that, we lose the perspective necessary to win. The value of this impersonal attitude, carries into life success, which brings us back to our original question of when games are won, and who wins them.

When a game is over, we know who has won, but we cannot be certain when it was won without a comprehensive vision of destiny, but it had to have been won at some time, either in the moment or between rebirths. Anyone who has participated in an intensely competitive activity, knows it is live, spontaneous, and seemingly indeterminate. However, almost every player, and many spectators, have sensed, that victory in some games was not really determined in the moment. Sometimes it seems like a fluke occurrence, an accident, brings an unexpected victory. Sometimes there is an unexplained lapse in concentration or control, a distraction, or a reversion to a line-of-play known to be unsuccessful. It was destiny. When the game is over, it is over. We may not know when the game was won, but we know it was won, and it is over and done for all time. Or is it?

The sensing that a victory was a matter of destiny doesn't make things easier. It is humiliating to lose, and it is humiliating to win as a matter of destiny, rather than by mastery. In either case, there is always a demand for a rematch. Max Heindel tells us the Trojans were reborn as Romans to defeat the Greeks, who were reborn as Carthaginians to both defeat and lose to the Romans, who were later reborn as British to fight the Germans, who were previously Greeks. Some wars, like some arguments, are never won. Fortunately, the Lords of Destiny use both sides to promote spiritual evolution.

We live in both uncertainty and certainty, with regard to destiny. We know with certainty, that we will get exactly what we need, because of the infallibility of the twin laws of cause and consequence, and rebirth. We live with uncertainty because we cannot yet determine all of the events of our lives. The House does not lose overall to Revote Viewing sports bettors in Las Vegas. The reason for that may be, that the winners of all games are not predetermined, only some of them, while the knowledge of permutations and probabilities of the House, spans both. We do not see pictures of all of the events of our coming life at the quickening, only some of them. In deliberate,

self-conscious actions, we can prove to ourselves that we are not automata passing through a completely predetermined life. In winning games, we know that we have determined some events in our lives because, in victory, we have proved it to ourselves. In this milieu of certainty and uncertainty, questions arise, the answers to which, would be advantageous to evolutionary progress.

How many events in life are predetermined? Without well trained clairvoyance, one cannot give an accurate answer. We know it varies from individual to individual, and from rebirth to rebirth. From the astrological writings of Max Heindel, we have rough guidelines to answer this question. He averred that many, or strong, astrological significators in fixed signs indicate a more predetermined life. Similarly, a strong Saturn, in pleasant or unpleasant aspects, indicates a more destined life. Other astrologers seem to have found validity that close aspects with fixed stars mean an eventful life. Many astrological statements, concerning this matter, could provide a more clear determination of the matter, but we would likely remain uneasy with any answer to this question, that is not based on definite foreknowledge. Even the Teacher is not certain of the outcome of the final trial of a candidate for initiation. One wonders if this kind of information is valuable at all. It might be helpful if one feels a need to brace one's self to meet destiny, but such knowledge has also been known to also paralyze individuals in fear and a feeling of doom. It is wiser to develop faith sufficient to meet whatever destiny presents us. Besides, we already have events which we know are coming, for which we do not prepare ourselves well, to meet them.

Any event, predetermined or not, is important. An event is an objectification. An event, such as a victory, is when something potential becomes something actual, something factual. It is a moment of truth. In a game it usually determines who is a better player. Because an event is a materialization, it is subject to all of the illusions to which materializations are prone. One of the illusions is that events tend to become ends in themselves. The game becomes the all, or winning becomes the all. Predetermined events in destiny aren't important for themselves. They are important for what we put into them and, especially, what we get out of them. Destiny is not important as an end, it is important for facilitating ongoing evolutionary progress. It provides creative feedback, and prevents fallback.

Since predetermined events are important, it would be helpful to distinguish them from other events, preferably before they occur. With foreknowledge, we can plan to get the most out of events. This seems to be the reason why we see them at the quickening. However, once we enter the dense physical body to stay, they are lost to our waking consciousness—a good reason to expand our waking consciousness. Trained clairvoyance into the memory of nature in the world of thought, is the most sure way to see predetermination, but that is not possible for most people who could benefit from this knowledge. No astrological method, known to this writer, can disclose predestined events without error, either before, or even after, the fact. Intuition is the only tool available to most people, but because of our materialistic preoccupation, we often do not recognize it. Some sports gamblers have hunches. They flatter themselves, by thinking they are intuitions. If they are really intuitions, they are distorted, because selfishness shuts intuition down, or distorts its interpretation.

When are events determined? When are predetermined events known? These questions still confound us. In answer to both questions, players in a game would say in the game itself. That might be true of most games but, according to the Rosicrucian philosophy, it is not true to life. *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*, which is the product of many clairvoyant investigations and corroborations, tells us predetermined events are built into the archetype of the coming life, as much as hundreds of years before birth. Foreknowledge of them is possible at any time until they occur. Recognition of them can be gained at various times before actual occurrence. For example, things are manifest in the ethers, before they are finalized in the chemicals. Even unconscious Invisible Helpers pass through the ethers, when returning to their dense physical bodies. If they pay attention, when returning to the body, they sometimes see events materializing through the ethers days, or even weeks, before those events are completed in the chemicals. It pays to be aware upon awakening. From this example, we can see that practices like remote viewing in sports betting, are possible in some cases, but not likely in most.

Events are finalizations of actions. Events are objectifying. Events are the fruits of our labors. Not all events are what we intended when we began our endeavor—nobody wins every game. Whether successful, relative to our intentions, or not; events are successful in disclosing the quality of efforts, and help us to understand what we have put into them. “By their fruits ye shall

know them.” Our deeds stand for themselves. There is no evolutionary progress without the stepping and marking stones, that events are. In the retrospection after the events of the day, we find errors, flaws and weaknesses, as well as confirmations and recognitions of strengths and principles successfully applied. The post game analysis of a master chess game may last for decades, and influence generations of players. Understanding life events is much more difficult than understanding a chess game. There are a multitude of factors in life events, and there are more than two players. Maneuvering life events is more like sailing on an ocean, then keeping one’s feet on a path. Determination is common to both activities. Events are determinations.

In games, winning means that one player (or team) determines more, or the most, crucial factors of the game. One chess savant once said, it is the person who makes the second last mistake, that wins the game. Determination means control. The main factors of control in a game are will and ability. Both are the consequence of evolutionary application. The relationship of control and success raises an unexpected paradox. It is a paradox of freedom and control We do not usually associate freedom with control. For example, if our lives are controlled, we feel we lack freedom. Ironically, if our lives are out of control, we forfeit freedom. To the degree that we exercise self-control, do we have success in life, and gain more freedom. A jazz musician cannot freely improvise and create, unless he can control himself and his instrument. Self-control for life success is far more difficult than determining a game, or improvising a solo.

There is one crucial factor in the relationship of freedom and control, the individual. To the degree that one exercises control, is that one free. It is the individual, not the opponent or the world, that determines success.

From every pow’r that holds the world in chains
Man frees himself when self-control he gains.

Freedom is skill in self-controlled living.

It is clear that some people are more free than others. Some people win more often than others. One wonders “What is the limit?” Goethe’s quote would imply there is no limit. There must be a limit, but a limit with a condition not given by Goethe. If each individual evolved to be perfect, as our Lord asked us to, who would win games? Everyone would be in control and free to de-

termine every game, but not all can win. Would every game end in a draw? It seems likely that, if each individual evolved to be perfect, there would be no predetermined events in life. For us, life would be completely free and spontaneous. Life would also seem to our present consciousness to be chaotic except for one factor, evolution. To reach the standard given to us by Christ, we must evolve a new kind of consciousness with new values.

In the Darwinian conception of evolution, competition is the chief driving factor. The Darwinian view ignores the preponderate factors of cooperation and symbiosis in nature. Even parasites promote progress. Some Rosicrucian aspirants would suggest, that even the competition between cheetahs, and antelopes is really a cooperation between their respective Group Spirits to help their charges to improve. Perhaps nature and evolution are not as savage as we make them out to be. It is only in humans that competition has become predominant and destructive, even cooperation among humans is used as a means to dominate. Humans try function outside of, or above nature, but our behavior isn't the thing of beauty that we see in nature. It is destructive and self-destructive. It seems to be a matter of winning at any cost, and losing everything. We need to shift from perpetual competition to unending cooperation.

To approach free and spontaneous living, we must evolve toward creative cooperation. Because we have individuated, we cannot readopt a Group Spirit to do that for us. Even the thought of it is offensive to a free being. We must move forward to cooperation, and it must be voluntary. We must find a higher, common purpose. In behavior, for Christian Mystical aspirants, this means aspiring and awakening to altruism. This means we must go deeper into the heart of our being. We must transcend the Human Spirit to the Life Spirit. This is done by finding the essence of our selfhood in that from which all selves are derived. This Self of Selves, that is this essence, is the love-wisdom principle of the Godhead. It is the essence of life. To know this, is to chose purpose, over the goal of winning. Purpose is open-ended, and spiritually boundless.

Progress to altruism, and thinking in terms of the other, and the all, is slow. All evolutionary progress is slow. There will be intermediary steps along the way. As we approach the Aquarian Age, the time for altruism is ripening. Aquarius is the sign that rules freedom and altruism. It is also the sign of

impersonal attitudes, which means we can give our all to something for its own sake, without personal attachment, without personal strain. Acting impersonally, one can give more of one's self, without the onus of ego. Games are included. Some New-Age aspirants have already developed games where cooperation replaces competition, and everyone wins.

We say we are approaching the Aquarian Age, because the vernal, equinoctial point is approaching the constellation of Aquarius. The Aquarian Age is for the world at large. The opposite point is for the few, the esoteric aspirants. The point opposite to vernal equinox is approaching the constellation of Leo. As aspirants to the Mysteries, we respond to Leo, the opposite of Aquarius, Leo rules the heart. Under Leo we can live and act whole heartedly. We can give our all. Leo holds the esoteric key to Aquarian altruism, and to Christ in the Life Spirit. It is when we do things from the goodness of the heart, and for the Christ's sake, instead of our own, that we become more free within ourselves. We also gain the corresponding, physical control, by being able to use the heart as a voluntary muscle, to direct the circulation to the areas of the brain that rule altruism. These are deeds we can do in the little things of daily life, that have big consequences. Perhaps for us, the watchwords "know thyself" should become "know thyself in Christ."

Loneliness

Sometimes a life of spiritual aspiration is a lonely life. There are times when we need to find and adjust things in our personalities to accommodate the spirit within, in the face of adversity without. Seeking outside help is of no avail. The spirit within is our only true resource. During these lonely times, there is a danger of personalization. One is apt to think, “Why me?” or “Why is the world against me?” When we find ourselves taking trials personally, it is helpful to call to mind the life of Jesus. Though being the most perfect of humans, and vessel to the Christ, he was not without critics, and even enemies. With his perfectly impersonal stance, he was able to carry out his work, sometimes even by means of his opposition. Moreover, on a grander scale, if Christ bears the cross of the earth, who am I to complain?

The more one aspires to the higher life, the more likely one is to have adversaries to help one advance. Even Max Heindel has his detractors. To some, he was uncredentialed, and unsophisticated, a spiritual bounder. These aspersions were put forth, despite the breadth, depth and perspective of his work. This writer has yet to meet a serious reader of *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* who has not had to resort to a dictionary. These charges are leveled, despite his biblical scholarship, and his thorough knowledge of physiology. Some have even accused him of plagiarism, an intellectual thief of low character. “By their fruits you shall know them.” A base individual is incapable of expressing the staunch and lofty things expressed by Max Heindel—it is impossible.

Though misguided, or blinded by prejudice, distractors might well be clever. They can find invidious means to promote their views. Sometimes it is a backhanded compliment, or even a snide comment, meant to denigrate. For example, one such statement about Max Heindel is, that he liked, and recommended, *Pollyanna*—a sure way to belittle him to the world.

Pollyanna is a children’s book written by Eleanor Porter. Pollyanna is an orphan adopted by her cold, spinster, aunt Polly, who adopts her as a matter of social duty, rather than love. Before becoming orphaned, she learns the “glad game” from her father. In the “glad game” one finds something to be glad about in any situation, no matter how terrible it might be. In the story Pollyanna helps others in her aunt’s small town to change the dismal circum-

stances of their lives by playing the “glad game.” Eventually, even aunt Polly thaws. Then, Pollyanna is struck and crippled by an auto. Her serious situation makes it difficult for her to play the “glad game” until others, whom she has helped, encourage her. With effort, she regains her infallible optimism, and even learns to walk again.

There have been many sequels by several writers. Over decades, a Pollyanna has come to mean someone with a childish, unrealistically, positive attitude. It is now used as a demeaning slur by cynics who consider themselves urbane and sophisticated.

Pollyanna optimism is an attitude, a healthy attitude. Optimism is ruled by Jupiter, the great opener and expander. Optimism and positivity are effective as openers. This writer believes, for example, that science would be more fruitful with more optimism, instead of the negative skepticism that many scientists now hold. To claim something is true before it is proven true, is clearly wrong, but to think something is not true until proven true, tends to close one’s mind to possibilities. To believe something might be true opens one’s mind to finding a rigorous proof of it, if such a proof exists.

It is questionable whether attitudes, such as optimism, are innate or acquired. Some, such as many astrologers, would say innate; others, like many psychologists and sociologists, would say acquired. To some extent, both are true in the context of spiritual evolution. Some people seem to be born optimistic, others acquire optimism through life experience, and self-application.

As spiritual aspirants to self-reliance, we are more interested in acquired attitudes. Even a little thought on this subject, discloses how prevalent acquired attitudes are, and how they are often negative.

Our complete environment is more than physical. We live in a milieu which is also social, psychological, and spiritual. Through education and maturation, we adapt to our environment. Pollyanna was educated into optimism by her father. Maturation is more tricky. In maturation we often acquire attitudes, not intended by us, or by those around us. We sometimes have prejudicial attitudes, which we hold as truths, without ever having done the least to verify them. We acquired them from our family, who themselves may have

acquired them from their predecessors. Our self-conscious self-awareness is minimal at present. Though many, or most, of our acquired attitudes come from our families, we also acquire them from society. It is possible to adapt successfully to a highly biased culture, without even suspecting one's biases. We may even defend them. To a spiritual aspirant, this aspect of our current state is unacceptable. We want self-knowledge. We want freedom, complete freedom.

From every pow'r that holds the world in chains
Man frees himself when self-control he gains.

Seeing freedom from acquired attitudes, is edifying; even in the most grotesque circumstances. This writer knows a child, now 26, who has never spoken a word in her life. Her only utterances are a giggle, and, rarely, weeping. A horrendous infancy, including severe battery and rape, has left her multiply handicapped, including being unable to speak. She can barely walk. Despite this constant deprivation and suffering, she exercises her giggle frequently. She has not acquired the attitude that, in deprivation and suffering, one must be unhappy. In her own way she is a Pollyanna, and she brings joy to others. If she can do it, we can do it.

Coming to self-knowledge and building character is a slow, difficult process. To be successful, we need to be able to step outside of our personality to know ourselves, "as we are known." When we are successful, and we see our attitudes for what they are. Then we find the unregenerate attitudes intolerable, and we can no longer live with them. Retrospection is invaluable to accomplishing this. Some aspirants do more. They take a personal inventory, relative to a list of desirable and undesirable attitudes—a list of astrological keywords serves this purpose excellently.

It is beyond the scope of this essay to describe even a minor inventory. One attitude will have to be sufficient to get the idea of attitude analysis and improvement.

One of the most widespread, detrimental attitudes we face is loneliness. At this time in our evolution, loneliness is almost unavoidable. Sometimes, even some spiritual aspirants are lonely. If not dealt with correctly, loneliness is detrimental to spiritual development.

Being alone is not loneliness. One can have a happy, solitary life without loneliness. Loneliness is an attitude about being alone. The attitude of loneliness is not innate. It is acquired, but its acquisition is not mainly from education, or absorbing it from others. It is a consequence of, or a response to, our fallen state in evolution, in small and large.

In an evolutionary sense, loneliness is born from comparative cognition. To be lonely implies there was a time when one wasn't lonely. For most, in small, that was when we were young and in the intimacy of the nuclear family. Removal from many other circumstances of intimate togetherness, can have the same effect. Even a loss of antipathies, can lead to loneliness.

Loneliness is not a matter of numbers. One can be lonely in a throng of people. Loss of intimacy is more of a factor, than the presence, or absence, of others. It is fallacious to think that loneliness can be cured by having more people in one's life. It is also fallacious to think that intimacy, by itself, is a cure for loneliness, because mere intimacy does not penetrate to the lonely self, at the core of one's being. Perhaps seeing an evolutionary, historical perspective from Christian Mysticism, will help to understand the genesis of loneliness in large, and its purpose in general.

St. Paul tells us in the first chapter of Romans that, at one time, we could see the power and glory of God, to the very Godhead, itself. We did so with a form of inner, spiritual vision. We still possessed that vision, at the time spoken of in the Garden of Eden story of the book of Genesis. With it, we knew the soul nature of anyone we encountered, much as animals do now. We were one, unified, humanity without loneliness. This was before "their eyes were opened." However, it was our evolutionary destiny to become outward, as well as inward. We were also to become individualized, within the human whole. To these ends no pains were spared. *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* tells us of extremely painful methods used to bring us to awareness of the external world, and our separate physical bodies in it. Almost anything that awakened external and individual consciousness was "good", even things we would now consider horrendous. One of the most important experiences of the external world, and our personal existence, was carnal knowledge. In the extreme sensitivity of personal intimacy, we knew someone personally outside of ourselves. However, because we took control of the procreative activity before we knew how to use it in harmony with the

cosmos, we introduced discord into the cosmos. We did this in disobedience. In this disharmoniousness, we veered off from the intended course of evolution. We chose excessive, outward experience, over a balance of experience and understanding. Since we are divine, creative beings, our selfish attitude drove us deeper into matter than was intended in the divine plan. It even hardened matter more than intended! This excessive outwardness closed our inner vision, concomitantly with our descent into materialism. Concurrently, our internal sensitivity to the inner cosmos degraded. Eventually, we reached our current state, wherein we are encased in the flesh, blind to the spirit, and alone with ourselves.

At present we have a, mostly unconscious, longing for the spiritual union, we once had. In a similar way we are lonely for the fellowship, we once had with everything in the creation. We are lonely because we vaguely remember a glorious time when we weren't lonely.

Looking at loneliness in terms of evolution makes it seem like something more capable of being overcome, than the sad situations so many face without reference. Loneliness is not something sad that merely happened. It seems like a biblical curse placed on us, a consequence of selfish materialism, in deviating from the divine plan. It is a consequence from a causal action, made when we didn't really know the consequences of that action. Ignorance. Being a curse, or a deviance from divine law, or an act of ignorance, does not make us any more, or less, responsible for our situation. Viewing this in the light of evolution, provides us with a framework to understand it and work on it.

The Rosicrucian philosophy provides us with an excellent means to do this. In the Rosicrucian philosophy we learn, that we are participating in an orderly, evolutionary, creation, based on divine principles. In our philosophy we can see that we are not only responsible for our actions, great and small, but that we are creative agents, for redeeming the situation. We can do something about our plight. In our cosmology we learn that one of the primary agencies of the evolutionary process is the cycle. In a spiral comprised of almost incomprehensible numbers of cycles, into and out of various states of matter, we experience slightly varying conditions repeatedly, as we unfold corresponding states of consciousness, in the infinite potential of the spirit.

We have already reached the nadir of materiality of this creative manifestation. Our conscious attention is focussed preponderately outward toward matter. We even think of our friends as their bodies, not the spirits within. This nadir is a major turning point in the creation. We, and the cosmos, have contracted and turned outward into materiality, as far as we can. It is time to turn the corner from materialism, and refocus our attention inward toward the inner, spiritual worlds. To persist in materialism would be to spin off on a tangent, away from the spiral of creation. Beginning to turn inward, away from materialism, is one of the most important activities of our times. Loneliness is an important factor in progressing, in this inward and upward evolutionary arc. When we realize, in loneliness, the futility of finding meaning exclusively in the outer world, we have taken a major step forward in evolution. When we consciously turn inward, we take an even greater step.

Since inwardness is so important, we need to be clear about it. There is a false inwardness. It is called psychological withdrawal, as found in individuals with severe psychological problems. This kind of withdrawal is an act of extreme egoism. It is an attempt to set up, and escape into, a world of one's own design, without objective respect to inner or outer reality. True inwardness has a unified, objective, respect to outward reality. One sees the inner aspects of outer reality, and one sees outer things as manifestations of an inner world of creation. It is, in some ways, opposite to the carnal knowledge of the Garden of Eden story. In the intensity of personal intimacy one knows there is someone within the physical person of the other, and that inner being is much, much more than physical sensation. It is our goal to reverently interact, inwardly, with the whole of the creation. Perception is not voided, it becomes a doorway to the inner universe. True inwardness is a positive redirection of attention, to a more complete experience of reality.

Spiritual inwardness is not a denial or nullification of outwardness. It is a repurposing of one's view of outwardness. It is an outward giving, instead of an outward seeking and taking. Inwardness is more than a direction. It is an approach to the spiritual Divinity within everything. One cannot turn one's consciousness inward, and give of one's self, without generating an efflux of divine creativity. The inner life is a life of blessing, not a life of self-satisfaction. Above all, it is creative giving. "From the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks."

Transformation out of loneliness does not happen instantly. The evolutionary creation is slow and certain, to ensure perfection. One is not lonely one day, and intimately in touch with anything, or everything, the next. The creation is both sensitive and certain. It has definite ends. Even a vague intuition that there is something spiritually alive withing the manifestations of the outer world, something which can be approached from within, has a surety about it, even at a distance. The story of the Prodigal Son in the Gospel of St Luke is an allegory about our indulgent fall into matter, our comeuppance with materialism, and our return to the Universal Spirit. In the story, when the prodigal decides to return home, to become a servant to his father, his father sees him from “a great way off”, and rushes to receive him. Even a slight urge toward inwardness is felt and responded to from within. The Spirit rushes to greet us more than we bend toward it.

For now, loneliness is a pandemic scourge of contemporary society. What is to be done to relieve it? It cannot be solved from without, but that does not mean external acton should be abandoned. To be effective, our actions must be harmonious with cosmological principles, and the means must be harmonious with the ends. The objective of inwardness is to open to divine, inner reality; so our actions from without, must be harmonious with that objective. This leaves no room for hypocrisy. One cannot hope to successfully address loneliness in another, if one is not actively aspiring inwardly. Only if we are cultivating a rich inner life ourselves, can we effectively help our lonely friends to develop an inner life, to become whole, inwardly and outwardly. Doing this is more a matter of heart than of mind. It is as the fox said to the Little Prince: “And now here is my secret, a very simple secret: it is only with the heart that one can see rightly, what is essential is invisible to the eye.”

Eviction

The *Rosicrucian Fellowship Temple Service* draws from Corinthians 1: “For now we know in part, and we prophecy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.” Things in the concrete worlds are always in part. Even the most accurate physical measurement is only an approximation. Things of the transcendental, spiritual worlds are wholes. Spirit is indivisible in its perfection. Our current focus of consciousness, in the depths of matter, is partial—just as St. Paul says. However, in our inmost being, we are spiritual beings; we sense the spiritual wholes within, and behind, partial things—just as St. Paul did.

When spiritual creations become manifest in concretion, they must accommodate for limitation, incompleteness, and partial existence. This accommodation is accomplished by delineation in time. Treating a cycle as a whole, gives us a sense of a delineation of a whole in time. A year is a cycle, a whole as we are looking at it. While living in it, we do not immediately understand a year as a whole. We experience and understand, a year as it unfolds around us, in the seasons, each with its own qualities, and a few exceptions. We do not understand a year as a whole until it is completed, and we can look back at it. We do not understand a lifetime until it has been experienced, the experience has been processed, and we have the overview from third heaven, which is a transcendental spiritual world.

The process of manifesting, experiencing, and understanding a whole, through delineation in time, is universal. For example, a life (or a life cycle), whether in general, or in specific, is a delineation of a creative assertion of a spiritual Ego. It is a whole. Understanding wholes in this manner also applies to other things such as the evolution of a religion, or religion as a whole. Max Heindel clearly delineated an evolution of religion, from the religion of fear and obedience, to the religion of rewards according to behavior, to the religion of deferred rewards laid up in heaven, to the religion of Christ wherein behavior is born of love, to a future religion of the Father, beyond our current capacity to conceive. In the Christianity of today, we are in the position of St. Paul in Corinthians 1. We sense the wholeness of the religion of love in spirit. We long for it, but we are not there yet. The longing impels us forward.

There are other valid ways to view the evolution of religion. Before the Chris-

tian era, religious psychology was much different from what it is now. Involuntary, involuntarily clairvoyance was more of a factor than it is today. Some of what is now belief was then quasi-experiential. There was no need for reasons to believe, because there were few doubts. If we contrast that with the religious psychology of today, the difference is almost shocking. Atheism was almost unheard of then, now twenty-six percent of Americans are atheistic. Now we believe, because there are doubts, and those doubts are answered. Now religion is more rational, and it is becoming more so. Religions then did not have theologians, now religions are rife with them. They are all seeking answers to spiritual problems. The philosophy of the Rosicrucian Fellowship is for the most advanced spiritual seekers of our time. It is loaded with reasons to believe, almost too many (Rosicrucian seekers are sometimes prone to sit back in smug satisfaction with the abundance of reasons, and thereby fail to develop greater faith.) Part of the reason for religion becoming more rational is that we are moving progressively into the Mercury half of our current Earth Period of evolution. Consequently the mind is coming more to the forefront of all of our activities. It is becoming dominant as an evolutionary tool.

The first coming of Christ came just past the time of the turning point from involution to evolution. As involution ends and evolution begins, we are becoming more expressive and outwardly giving. "Freely have ye received, freely give." We are becoming more creative. We are becoming divinities, as intended in the divine plan. In this, the influence of Christ is tremendous, and it, too, is increasing. However, the Christ influence cannot account for the questioning and doubt of our time. Christ came to give us life "more abundantly," not atheism. To find the source of the change from blind acceptance to open questioning, we must look elsewhere in the evolution of religion.

In the centuries immediately before the appearance of Christ, and for several centuries after, there were the Gnostics. There was no single gnostic religion. There were numerous gnostic sects, some quite different from others; some pre-Christian and some post-Christian; some Christian and some non-Christian. Though not monolithic, gnostic sects did share some things in common. For one, they were more esoteric than exoteric. The word Gnostic is taken from the Greek word gnosis, which means to know. The gnostics claimed to have essential, immediate spiritual knowledge based on experience. If they didn't, they weren't gnostics. One facet of that experience, was conscious

awareness of the divinity within. They knew the divinity within, is spirit as much as the Universal Spirit is spirit. Some thought they were equals with the Universal Spirit. Another thing they shared in common, was that they were highly Luciferic in their questioning. They were rebellious to orthodoxy, and they were willing to challenge anything, even divinities. Some, when they studied astrology, did so to see what the gods were up too, so they could do the opposite. The Demiurge was the Gnostic name for the Creator—Jehovah in Judaism. To them, He was an imperfect being, who broke every one of his own commandments, and produced a flawed creation. To the Gnostics, He was at least as responsible for the eviction of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden, as they were themselves, for breaking the laws.

Gnosticism never gained broad acceptance. Few were inclined to, or capable of, becoming gnostics. Though few in number, with their well-developed ideas, they did influence the evolution of Christianity. Significant numbers of the members of the Councils of the early Christian Church, were influenced by gnosticism. Some were pro and some were anti-gnostic but, in either case, they influenced early Christian doctrine. Some scholars trace early alchemy to an origin in gnosticism. The relationship of alchemy to Rosicrucianism, and other mystery schools, is historical fact. In the gnostic influence on the development of Christianity, there is an analogy with the cycle of the year, and this writer's garden. A few extremely cold days in winter do not change the general tenor, of an otherwise warm year, but they do influence some factors in it. There may be fewer insects because fewer larvae and pupae survive the cold snap. Because of the small cults of gnosticism, we have the birth of questioning in modern Christianity, and even the skeptical rigor of materialistic science, which grew out of alchemy.

The influence of gnosticism is not purposeless. It is important for understanding how some cosmological changes in the evolutionary creation, come about. This essay is about activity performed with a gnostic attitude, its relation to eviction, and how this attitude brings about cosmological change.

Cosmological changes come in large and small sizes. They are the products of creative activity in cycles, within cycles, within cycles, large and small. The change from involution to evolution, i.e., from creature to creator, is likely the largest cosmological change for us in our evolution. The entrance of Christ into our evolution around the time of this change, magnifies the

importance of this change. The fact that Christ came to redeem us from our course (which would have resulted in a tangential, materialistic expulsion from the great cycle of creation) increases the importance even more. The origin of our deviate evolutionary course, occurred at a time described in the biblical story of the Garden of Eden. At that time, we accepted the Luciferic influence to become disobedient to divine law, which in the story, is described as a commandment. Therefore, it is important to understand some pertinent things about that event.

We are told that we were evicted, or banished—expelled is the word usually used—from the Garden of Eden. The darlings of Jehovah, who wrote the Bible, stated it that way. The children of fire, under Luciferic influence, would never state things that way. They would likely say, we expelled ourselves, and they would be correct.

The Garden of Eden is a symbol for the inner, spiritual worlds, which are different from the material world of the senses, whereby we only sense the illusory outside of things. The first realm of inwardness is the etheric subdivision of the physical world, the fringe of Eden. The four ethers, in their flowing energy, are represented as the four rivers flowing through Eden. The “commandment” to not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, is not like the command one gives to a dog, such as “stay.” It is more of a statement of a cosmic principle than a decree. It can only be seen as a commandment in the sense that the creative Word is a fiat, because of its power. Our choice to follow the suggestion of the Lucifer Spirits was an act of freedom. In fact, it introduced a unique freedom into the divine plan. However, it was done in partial ignorance. Because of this, we brought an imbalance into the creation, an imbalance of choosing personal experience over understanding. By doing this we brought Luciferic influence into human evolutionary activities. The Luciferic influence, though faint, already existed in the general cosmos from the previous acts of the Lucifers, in the Moon Period. The Luciferic influence cannot be removed from the cosmos, anymore than the influence of a few extremely cold days in winter, can be removed from the writer’s annual garden. It must be dealt with. To do that, we need to know what that influence means in our activity in the evolutionary creation.

Before we can understand the influence of divine dissatisfaction, which we are calling Luciferic, on our activities in the evolutionary creation, we need

to clarify our view of the cosmos, in which it occurs. There are many illusions about the nature of the cosmos. Most of them have developed out of our materialistic outlook, developed over ages. Some people hold illusions of angels with feathered wings flying through the air like so many birds. One prominent illusion is the notion that space is empty as was taught by science in the past. Mystics find that what we call space is not empty at all. It is a plenum, a full space. Space, like its co-factor time, is a potential in which manifestation occurs. One might even say, manifestation defines space, or that space is an accommodation of manifestation, an expandable womb. Even materialistic science now teaches that space is permeated by electromagnetic field (which mystics would call etheric), a lower octave manifestation of Life Spirit. It also now teaches, that space is warped by material manifestation. Mystics see these findings as only a beginning. The etheric world is permeated, by still more subtle worlds, such as the desire world, and the world of thought. There is a procession of worlds within and behind other worlds, all the way to the Supreme Being, the One, the Universal Spirit.

Some early mystics, when describing the spiritual worlds, have occasionally made unfortunate choices in selecting descriptive words. A misleading example is describing the physical world, that we perceive through our senses, as the most dense world. It is the most concrete and the most outwardly manifest world, but not the most dense. In fact, it is the least dense. There is considerable, proportionate distance between physical atoms. Whereas the etheric subdivision, in which the physical is suspended, is both more rare, and more dense, in its concentration. It is almost without gaps. As one proceeds inward and upward through the spiritual worlds, the trend of increasing subtlety and closeness, called density, holds true. The early Greek mystics called the world of Life Spirit, the Crystallium, the place of awakening, and the probable origin of the term Christ, the Rock.

There are other illusions about the nature of the cosmos. One is about life and death. Many think that minerals, such as stones, are dead. Mystics find that everything in the cosmos is alive. Stones might not have the vital life that plants and animals possess, but they do have their own peculiar life, they are abuzz with it. Science now agrees with mystics in this. Where there is life there is consciousness. Everything in the cosmos is conscious. Stones may have only a deep, trance-like consciousness, but it is consciousness; and they are capable of more. Everything in the cosmos is awakening, more and

better, consciousness. Awakening consciousness is one of the purposes of evolution.

Where there is life, form, and consciousness, there are beings. All of the worlds within worlds, within worlds, are the bodies of beings within other beings, and so on. Even what we call laws of nature, are really the consciousness of exalted beings. The cosmos is comprised and permeated by Divinity, and divinities. Were it possible to focus on, and consciously penetrate, one cubic meter of space(as we conceive space three dimensionally) we would experience a cross-section, so to speak, of the bodies of many exalted, divine beings with consciousness beyond our current ability to conceive. Emanuel Swedenborg describes a moment, wherein he sees divine beings, only to have them seem to dissolve to his vision, and open to even more grand and holy beings within and behind them. After several replications of this, the reader (almost with hair standing on end) is awe struck, even when reading it three hundred years after it was written.

Between these generations of beings, there are relationships. Most of the relationships are hierarchical. Some seem adversarial, though they all work for the Good. We see, for example, how the divine Beings working through the zodiacal sign Aries, might seem as cross-purposes with those working through Cancer, but both work for the good in different ways. Of the various existent relationships, it is the hierarchical, or vertical, relationships that we are interested, at the moment.

The first, and most prominent, vertical relationship most humans experience is in the family. Our parents were like gods to us. Parents provide a nest, wherein their children can safely grow, mature, and be educated, in preparation for adult life. On a larger scale, strong, developed, nations provide protectorates for fledgeling societies, until they are ready for independence. All of us were under the control of a Group Spirit, before we began to individuate. Even after individuation, we have been under the influence of race, cultural, and religious spirits. Among other things, the worlds and principles within them, are embodiments of divine beings, the protectors and inspirers of all evolving within them.

Vertical evolutionary relationships are functional. The functions are more than providence and protection. A provider can carry out many more intents

through its charges than could be carried out by itself alone. The inverse is also true. An apprentice can benefit from the experience of a master artist. In the cosmos, these vertical relationships are necessary and symbiotic. In the One, we all need each other.

Change is essential in the evolutionary creation. The functions for vertical relationships change. Some end. Children grow up, and become adults, with no need for parental protection. At best, the parental relationship can become advisory. In the grand scope of the creation, some divine hierarchies withdraw and pass on to new and higher things, leaving their duties to those coming up behind them in creativity.

Withdrawal is not the only way vertical relationships terminate. The animal kingdom has its own way of termination. When it is time, a mother bear will drive off her cubs; eagles will withhold food from their fledglings, to encourage them to fly. With humans it is opposite. During the third septenary period of life, when the desire body is born, and there is a recapitulation of the Moon Period, the Lemurian epoch, and the animal-like evolutionary stage, the Luciferic influence is reactivated. Thus begins the period of teenage and young adult rebellion. We separate ourselves from our parents, just as humanity separated itself from the control of the hierarchies. Eviction. A reenactment of Eden in other conditions.

The fall that followed our auto-eviction from Eden has been hard, but not without a positive side. At the price of suffering in blind, materialistic ignorance, with the possibility of completely dropping out of the creation, we have gained something of inestimable value—freedom. We have acted outside of the divine plan as much as is possible. This outsider status gives us the opportunity of autonomy, unavailable to the other hierarchies. We see things differently, and we can act decisively. As Max Heindel put it in “The Law of Success in Spiritual Matters”: When you have reached the point where you are fully persuaded that you can succeed positively, determined that you will succeed in some pursuit, there is no power on earth or in heaven that can withstand you in that particular pursuit;

This applies to more than personal pursuits. It applies to all of our work in the evolutionary creation. We must do things with a unique attitude, a Luciferically tinged attitude. we must exercise our “divine discontent.” However,

it must not be applied destructively, or in inane personal rebellion. To paraphrase Max Heindel, we must strive to make two blades of grass grow where only one grew before.

Our work does not mean eviction from the divine plan, but within the divine plan. We do not separate ourselves from the creation. We do not separate ourselves from our fellowmen, in divisive nationalism. For one who has developed a strong individuality, patriotism is unbearable. The heart cries out in the words of Thomas Paine, that Max Heindel loved to quote: “The world is my country and my religion is to do good.” To do this is not easy. When we evicted ourselves from Eden, it wasn’t easy either. For us, merely refusing to stand for the National Anthem, will draw scorn and more, and we must understand that the people doing the scorning are not bad people. We must have the courage of conviction to live in freedom, and commitment to all humanity, simultaneously.

If there is suffering, it isn’t necessarily a disincentive. It can be an asset. Max Heindel points out that contentment on the spiritual path is a major evolutionary drawback, which some call spiritual death. Even discontent about not being as perfect, as we think we should be, is beneficial. Everywhere in nature, we see evolutionary change proceeding, as some have put it, “from perfection to perfection.” In nature, changes in the evolutionary environment, demand change to survive and progress, like the mother bear chasing her cubs away. For us, the demand must come from within, no matter what the cost.

It is important that we sustain inner discontent, because it is so easy to be lulled into contentment. In contentment we eagerly seek to preserve the status quo. After all, what we are in is beautiful and wonderful, and we would love to rest in it as it is, forever. Moreover, with regard to our current condition—everything we are—is a product of the gods, the divine hierarchies. Until now, our work during involution has been to respond to the workings of divine beings. We should be filled with gratitude, for all that we have received. Gratitude does not nullify discontent. We love our parents and are grateful for what they have done for us, but we don’t want to be under their control for the entirety of our lives. Beneficent as their gifts have been, we want and need to change our relationships with the creative hierarchies. We want to evict them, or evict ourselves, from too great of control by them. It is

part of our evolutionary work. It is beneficial for them as well. Our parents don't want us to live at home, dependent on them, forever. They want to go on to other things, to retire from parenting, to do greater and higher things as the Cherubim and Seraphim did.

As spiritual aspirants, we long to unfold spiritual powers, to serve the Good. This is accomplished, in part, in the very activity addressed in this essay. Spiritual dissatisfaction arises when we are uncomfortable with something. Often it arises from discomfort within. In soul growth we become uncomfortable with things in our inner being—spiritual slivers, so to speak. We then turn inward in retrospection, or some form of inner analysis, until we find the source of our discomfort. Then we transform, or expel, the source, as the case maybe. As we advance in consciousness, we find that some sources of inner discomfort arise from our relationships with the creative hierarchies, that helped us to become as we are. These relationships must change, even if it means eviction.

Not all advancement comes through discomfort. Some arises from the urge to create. It may arise from inspiration, or from admiration of something in the creation. In either case, it means we must change, even if it means the status quo must go.

We have been speaking of little, personal, instances and actions of a principle, as that principle applies to our lives at present. The principle also applies to the greater evolution and the distant future. An example may be helpful.

The influence of divine hierarchies extends into the systems, organs, and even cells, of our physical bodies. The living principles of the hierarchies determine how our bodies function—they are in the very structure and use of it. An excellent example can be found in the kidneys. The kidneys are ruled by the astrological sign Libra, through which the Lords of Individuality and other hierarchies also work. Libra is ruled by Venus, and Saturn is exalted there. Libra is a sign of justice. Its symbol is a representation of the scales of justice. Venus represents love, and St. Paul tells us “the fulfilling of the law is love.” Saturn is more exacting. Saturn is the lord of the law, and its influence is found at the fulcrum of the beam of the scales. It is the point of the law where cause and consequence are linked, the deed. The linkage of cause and consequence, as we progress through life, has been likened to the linkage of a chain. Ghosts in the lower desire world, are sometimes pictured as burdened by the onus of the heavy chains they must bear. Adding another dimension to a chain produces a net, the net of destiny. In effect, the kidneys are a net.

The blood rushes through them but the larger molecules do not pass through the net, and they slide into the bladder. In the mechanics of this, we see the workings of the hierarchies of Libra, spiritually, and physically.

The influence of the hierarchies of Libra in our kidneys, is beneficent. The influence of our parents, is beneficent, even long after they have passed away. Benign though these influences may be, we want to be free from them. We are grateful for our parents, but we still want to be good people on our own, with our own kind of goodness. We feel we owe it to the divinity within, to be autonomous, self-reliant, beings. We cannot help others if we cannot help ourselves. We want to experience the purity of freedom.

Freedom is in degrees. In democracies we say we are free because we can choose or elect our government. We have freedom of choice. Creative activity is a deeper degree of freedom, than choice. In creating we are doing something new, not merely choosing between existing options. Some of the hierarchies have even greater freedom by creating opportunities in which others can create.

Freedom is not independence. Freedom and independence can be opposites. To be entirely free from any external influence—absolute independence—is a Luciferic illusion. If it were possible, absolute independence would mean absolute dissociation and loneliness. It would be, by definition, expulsion, or eviction, from the Creation. The truth is, that freedom is not abridged by even the tightest cooperative agreement. Independence is independence from; Freedom is freedom within. One can be free within even the seemingly most externally demanding relationships. Our ideal freedom is that we love God, not because we have to, but because we want to. If it is compelled, it isn't love.

We free ourselves in the little things of life. We awaken to freedom, for instance, when we realize we want to be at work on time, because it makes it better for everyone. Much of the beauty of music would be lost if the musicians disregarded keeping time, for the sake of "freedom." This writer's garden wouldn't amount to much, if everything in nature didn't heed the times and seasons. The effects of little deeds, made in freedom, accumulate. Eventually, the etheric effects of our little voluntary acts, made from the goodness of our hearts, will coalesce and enrich the vital body of the Earth in such a

way that we can levitate and guide it. In the Rosicrucian philosophy we are told that doing this will liberate Christ from this enormous burden. In this sense, liberation is a form of eviction. The Earth, as we know it now in its chemical state, will no longer be necessary. The minerals will dissolve back into the ethers, and we will meet Christ “in the air.” We will have also evicted ourselves from our earthly burdens. With the same stroke, we evict, or liberate, the hierarchies of Libra, and other astrological signs, from direct influence in our physical bodies. “For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.” Neither will we need kidneys.

The dissolution of the Earth, and the resurrection, are magnum, evolutionary changes, when compared to a frigid winter. Major evolutionary changes create monumental demands. We must struggle to adapt to new conditions, even if only in consciousness. There will be no night, as we know it now, and no need to sleep, or eat as well. Are we ready to adapt to that much “free” time? Do we waste our free time now? We must have awakened enough of a sense of conviction in our urge to create, in order to adapt. We must have the law “written in our hearts,” and we must be founded in perpetual purposefulness. Our bodies will change with the new conditions, and with our new consciousness. The hierarchies working through Libra will be evicted, whether by changes in evolutionary conditions, or by our quest for creative freedom.

We have received more from Libra than filtration. We have received a sense of fairness, justice, and judgment. These qualities cannot be expelled; they have become part of our spiritual character. They can be shared, just as the Librans shared them with us. Sharing is our duty as creative beings. In our spiritual aspiration, we do not rid ourselves of flaws, or negative influences, (and the elementals created by them,) we creatively transform them into living virtues. The things which have been bestowed on us from above, we pass on to our evolutionary charges. We want to become people who find ways to impart principles into our evolutionary work, and sustain them until they take hold. To begin with, it might be something as simple as endowing character to the hue of the minerals applied to a painting. The possibilities are as numerous as the richness of our imaginations. It is a joy and privilege given to us, but it must be done, and the doing must be sustained until effectual.

“Freely ye have received, freely give.”

The God Spot

In the neighborhood where this is being written is a street named O'Sheridan. It has a small degree of notoriety among locals. Some hold the opinion that one isn't a true resident of the city, an old-timer, unless one knows about the O'Sheridan illusion. O'Sheridan points directly at the state capitol across the lake. As one proceeds northward on O'Sheridan, one approaches the capitol. However, instead of appearing nearer, the capitol seems to recede and shrink. The effect is stronger, when one is in an auto, rather than walking, and it is more pronounced at night. Experiencing the O'Sheridan illusion produces a feeling of puzzled wonderment. One knows one is experiencing an illusion, but one doesn't know why. Some illusions are more subtle, so subtle one doesn't know one is suffering an illusion.

If one views a full moon on the eastern horizon, it appears enormous. If one continues to observe it, the moon seems to shrink and recede into the distance of space as it rises, especially if there is a cloudless sky. If one observes the same moon through an aperture, open just enough to allow one to see only the moon, and nothing else, the moon seems to have a constant size and distance, irrespective of its degree of ascension. The illusions of size and distance are a consequence of unconscious association of the moon with other objects in the field of vision. One has an idea about the size of the moon, and is familiar with the other objects, and is trying to rationalize what is being seen. In so doing, the moon is seems to be larger. Similar illusions can be produced by taking two identical objects—twin objects—and surrounding each twin with a group of other objects; with one group of comprised of objects larger than its twin, while the objects with the other twin are smaller than its twin. The twin surrounded by smaller objects than itself, will seem larger than its twin surrounded by larger objects, if both groups are in one's field of vision. It is called the Ebbinghaus illusion.

As truth seekers, we want to see the truth, even about objects of perception. The Rosicrucian Prayer has a line which reads: "not more of light, but eyes to see what is." We want to be free of illusion, which is not an easy task. It is possible. There are so-called primitive people, who are not subject to this kind of illusion. They are capable of judging size and distance without mistake. Some are so free of accepted cultural context, that, when shown a two dimensional sketch of a three dimensional object, they don't see the object

in the representation. They see areas of more or less darkness, and lines. As truth seekers, we want to be free of illusion, but not at the price of losing dimensional perspective, not an easy task. We need to increase our awareness to be aware of illusion, but not subject to it. We want to be free enough to choose what we see, and be accurate in our observation. This is not easy, but nobody ever said that knowledge, and living in truth, is easy.

Probably everyone has seen the Rubin face-vase cognitive illusion. It is what seems to be a white vase in a black background. Seen another way, it is two silhouette faces in black looking at each other on a white background. It is called a cognitive illusion because one can only cognize (or know) it, in only one way at a time. There has been much intellectual ballyhoo about this illusion. The Gestaltists see it as part of the basis for their psychological and philosophical system; and the great positivist philosopher, Wittgenstein thought it was seeing two disparate facts simultaneously. A distinction needs to be made between seeing, and knowing. It is quite difficult to perceive this illusion without cognizing it one way or the other. Almost always, it is seen only one way or the other. Because faces and vases are recognized through different parts of the brain, it is not possible to cognize it both ways simultaneously. A mystical aspirant could try to take the easy way out, and say something like “this is just another example of the limitations of the material world and the physical body.” We want more than that. If nothing else, this type of illusion compels us to look at all sides of anything presented to us. To see, and adhere to one side of things, either black or white, deprives us of the whole truth, and leaves us with a petty prejudice. There is more. Max Heindel tells us that with full blown desire world vision, one can see all of the pages of a book, and the relationships of their contents, simultaneously. Nobody ever said unfolding higher consciousness is easy.

There are many illusions and categories of illusions, too many to be discussed in a short essay. Most illusions are optical, though there are auditory and other sensory illusions. Some illusions become the basis of psychological theory. In Op Art, illusions are used to elicit responses from viewers, but not much can be said for them aesthetically. Mostly illusions are treated trivially, as a forms of entertainment, as novelties. As we have seen, for spiritual aspirants, they disclose our limitations in knowing the truth.

Then there are phenomena which seem to be illusions but are not. They are

every bit as important as illusions, for truth seekers. A perfect example is found in the neurophysiology of chronic pain. Suppose one suffers from sciatica, a condition of excruciating pain produced by pressure on the sciatic nerve. When there is a stab of pain, a neural impulse from the sciatic nerve makes its way from the peripheral nervous system, to the spinal nervous system, to the brain. When the impulse is registered in the brain, it is passed along to the etheric brain, which passes it on to the desire body, where it is felt as pain in the region of feeling in the desire world. Usually, there are all sorts of thoughts and emotions surrounding the pain. These too, are registered in the brain. When there are repeated, pain impulses from the same stimulus, as in chronic pain, the neural pathway becomes established like a well paved highway. The establishment also occurs in the brain, and it includes the things attendant to the pain, such as thoughts and emotions. Then suppose the pressure on the nerve is relieved. One would expect that when the stimulus is removed, the pain would cease, sometimes it doesn't. This is possible, because the circuitry established by chronic pain, can also be stimulated by the nexus of thoughts and emotions in the brain, associated with the pain. If the thoughts and emotions have become habitual, and are expressed without the sciatic stimulus, the pain continues to be chronic. In the brain, physical and etheric, and the desire body, this pain is every bit as real as when the stimulus was pressure on the sciatic nerve. The only thing that has changed is the origin of activation. This is not a rare occurrence. It is so common that some spinal surgeons will not perform surgery unless the patient first takes a course in psychological pain management, and practices it. Sometimes such practice obviates the need for surgery.

In the Rosicrucian philosophy we learn that thoughts are things. Thoughts, and the emotions that attend to them, are every bit as real as things in the physical world. Moreover, they are causal, whereas things in the physical world are mostly consequences. Even the sciatic condition that causes severe pain is likely a consequence of a bad attitude stressing and distorting the body posture. It is difficult to change the physical body—"which of you by taking thought can add one cubit onto his stature?" The mind and the desire body are less mature in their development than the physical body, and they are closer to the Spirit. They are more amenable to change. As creative beings, it is our duty and destiny to develop and perfect, creative minds. In Rosicrucian philosophy courses, we are taught that a creative mind is one of the objectives of our participation in this evolutionary creation."Be ye trans-

formed by the renewing of your mind.”

The thoughts immediately above, are lofty goals and sentiments. One certainly cannot argue with them. However, their attainment is distant, when what we really need is something immediate, both in our lives and in this essay on illusion.

Real pain caused by attitudes, and not by physical stimuli, is an extreme example. Extremes often bring to light things which are normally subliminal in our, not so bright and clear, consciousness. As aspirants, we are seeking clear consciousness. The word clairvoyance literally means clear seeing. One element of clear seeing, is seeing what is—“not more of light, but eyes to see what is.” Sometimes our vision of reality is clouded by our attitudes. Bad attitudes are more than obscuration. As we have just seen, they can produce realities which are indubitable, such as pseudo-sciatic pain. We may be creating realities for ourselves, which are not beneficial for us, or for others, for that matter. We need to ask ourselves how much of our grief and suffering is auto-generated, and how much is destined, perhaps by bad attitudes from the distant past. The former is something we can change now, just as we can eliminate some chronic pain, which is a product of bad attitude habits. This is one of the reasons we retrospect. One might say, we change to eliminate illusionary reality, strange though that may sound, so we can see true reality for what it is.

Then there is the God Spot. The God Spot is a hypothetical location in the brain activated by mystical experience. The God Spot is the Holy Grail for some neuroscientists. If one could trigger a neural event which would produce a mystical experience in the subject, it would substantiate the philosophical stance of many neuroscientists. Because of the findings in their science, some of the most acclaimed neuroscientists are determinists. They do not believe in free will. To them, all actions are a product of neurophysiological conditioning, either by heredity or training. Some of their studies are quite impressive and persuasive.

The debate on the existence of the God Spot has not been settled yet. At present, there is prevailing agreement among neuroscientists, that spiritual and religious experiences (two different things), are spread around the brain, and not in one location. Every few years the argument shifts between: yes, there

is a God Spot, and no, there isn't. Experiments with the God Helmet, which stimulated the temporal lobes with weak magnetic fields, produced mild mystic-like experiences in 80% of the subjects. Some even excreted floral smelling sweat which has been associated with mystics. None experienced a full-blown spiritual experience of divinity. The original experimental results have never been replicated satisfactorily.

There have been other side door experiments, and attempts, to produce mystical experiences. In recent years there has been a resurgence of scientific experimentation with psychedelic drugs. In the first wave it was LSD, Mescaline, THC, PCP, and MDMA (Ecstasy.) These drugs are still used in experiments, but now Psilocybin mushrooms and Ayahuasca seem to be preferred for experimentation. Almost everyone who takes these drugs has remarkable experiences. Some see colors, and strange things in the inner worlds. Most experience a change of perspective about the material world, and life in it. These experiences are the reason for experimentation by psychotherapists. They find many people are attached to life in the material world in unhealthy ways. People are caught up in the material attitudes and illusions, held by an unhealthy society. They are tense and limited, they feel psychologically trapped. They have nothing higher to live for. These kinds of drug experiences seem to break such a spell, and open the way to a new, more spiritual, life. This is the reason native peoples use Psilocybin, Ayahuasca and Peyote. To them, it is a liberating sacrament. The drugs take them away from the humdrum nature of material life, and into a higher reality.

The visions, and the other world states of consciousness, are real, or they have some semblance of reality. The so-called hallucinations are not different from things seen by clairvoyants in the lower desire world. The "higher reality" experienced is real, but the manner in which it is experienced may not be accurate—our consciousness alters our perception in the higher worlds. This writer has been told that the experience of higher worlds with drugs, elicits a feeling of puzzled wonderment, perhaps not unlike the experience of the O'Sheridan illusion. These experiences have set attitudes about them, which are determined by the nature of the drug. For some, these attitudes are as confining as the rigid societal attitudes the user is escaping, though more subtle. The religions of the native peoples, who use these herbal drugs, are founded in these set, common, experiences. They form a ritual.

If the experiences are real, and the things experienced are real, what is wrong with them? This is the very question asked by researchers studying them. Recreational users of hallucinogens also feel they should be free to use them. In recent years, laws have been trending in the direction of freedom of use, for both researchers and recreational users. One wonders what spiritual aspirants are to think about illusions, and what we are calling pseudo-illusory realities.

Each of the illusions and pseudo-illusions mentioned in this essay, poses a question for spiritual aspirants. Trying to partially answer these questions should be helpful for clarifying our aspiration, and coping with illusion when it appears.

For this writer, the answers are sometimes ironic. Truth seems to be that way. The use of drugs for experiment, either personal or clinical, is a question about freedom. Should people be free to use hallucinogens for research, psychotherapy, or recreation? This writer believes in almost absolute freedom for everyone, provided one is not harming others. Thus, he believes that if one is an adult of reasonably sound mind, he/she should be free to experiment with drugs, but with safety stipulations like not driving an auto, for instance. However, one must be clear about what freedom is. Warnings about the dangers of illusion and dependency must be given, as they are given with alcohol and tobacco. Aside from illusion, some people are benefited from minimal drug use. This writer has seen incidences where recreational users, or patients, have gone from minimal use, to healthy lives, even including spiritual seeking without drugs, but such incidences do not seem to occur frequently. More often recreational users lose sight of the original insights obtained in early experiences. They then lose themselves to the drug experiences, and they degenerate in body and soul, to the point that they can only talk about their “high”, the altitude of which, isn’t much. What began as something easy, eventually became hard.

Ironically, recreational users want the freedom, to give away their freedom. In drug use, one is freed from everyday consciousness, whether healthy or unhealthy, but one is not freed from the drug. Mystical aspirants seek the freedom to change their focus of consciousness at will, to whatever state of reality they may choose. That is real freedom. The drug directs one’s consciousness to a limited range of experience, and not very deep into the spir-

itual worlds. That might be enough for those who are happy with a larger cage. It is an ironic illusion, to think that one can only be free, if one has to take a drug to be free. Some have carried this illusion about freedom to an absurd degree. Heroin was introduced to free users from morphine addiction, today methadone addiction is used to free users from Heroin addiction. What about methadone addiction? There are enough problems for neophyte trainees in clairvoyance, without adding the burden of induced illusions.

The experiments with the God Spot, highlight questions for aspirants. Our various bodies, which are specialized out of the stuff of the worlds in which they function, are called vehicles of consciousness. Through them the Spirit, the Truth Knower, awakens consciousness by experiencing, and creating, in their respective worlds. Our various bodies are our laboratories, and ateliers, in our evolutionary work. Our dense bodies, for example, are wonderful instruments. The sense of smell can detect the presence of an odor in parts per billion, and some blind people can discriminate one color from another with the sense of touch. As perfect as our vehicles of consciousness may be, they cannot be completely perfect. This is, in part, due to the fact that they are works in progress. It is also impossible, because of the very nature of concretion is limitation. The concrete worlds are unknowns, becoming known through an interaction, called the spiritualization of matter in the Rosicrucian philosophy. A painter may be creatively drawing out the qualities of lapis lazuli pigment in a painting, and even potential qualities of the blue hue, may be drawn out in the process. Scientists include instrument error, such as the imperfect transparency of a lens, when calculating their findings. As mystical aspirants, we are always working with incomplete unknowns, using imperfect apparatus. Thus, one of the major questions for us, as truth seekers, is “What is the significant truth of an experience, and what is a product of the apparatus?” The pain, produced by activating an established neural with thoughts and desires, has a different significance for a healer, than pain produced by a pinched nerve. The experience produced by activation of the “God Spot” by electromagnetism is almost exclusively illusionary, except for its petty existential reality, but most of the subjects did feel something associated with divinity. The evolution of the brain is not fortuitous. There had to have been divine experience for there to be an apparatus evolved to register it. It is extremely important for us to know what of an experience, is in the apparatus, and what is in the reality the apparatus registers. In activation of the “God Spot”, it is all in the apparatus, but it points to something highly

meaningful by existential inference; in pains induced by attitude activity, it is mostly in the apparatus, but it is meaningful for healing, nonetheless. Psychedelic visions of the inner worlds pose a similar problem. They are activated by something external—“what happens in any world effects every other world”—and they have an objective reality, like the psychogenic pain, but whether they are significant or meaningful is another question.

To answer this question, a snippet of a story is helpful. When Aristaeus lived and ruled in Arcadia, all of the bees died. In his distress, he sought a reason for the plague. His mother, Cyrene, who was of semi-divine origin, told him the river god Proteus, who was a great prophet, could answer his question. Aristaeus was purified and instructed to force Proteus to answer, because Proteus was a reluctant prophet. Aristaeus sneaked up on Proteus during his nap. Aristaeus grabbed him and held him fast. Proteus went through many transformations to evade prophesying. He became a bear, a bearded lion, a serpent, a panther, water, and even fire. But, because Aristaeus never relaxed his grip, Proteus eventually had to relent, appear as himself, and give Aristaeus his answer.

In the Rosicrucian philosophy, we are told that neophyte clairvoyants are taught to hold their attention on what they see. If they don't, many elemental denizens of the desire world will transform themselves in the style of Proteus. Eventually, a trained seer will see through illusions and see the truth as it is, and know it is true by intuition. Spiritual sight is more than clairvoyance, it is clairvoyance with intuition. Intuition is truth—“Ye shall know the truth and the truth will make you free.” Sustained concentration of attention is more than a beginner's exercise. It grows in importance as we progress. Max Heindel tells us it can burn through anything, to get to the core of anything. By applying concentration to intuition, one discerns the difference of reality from appearance, and truth from illusion.

Cognitive illusions, such as the Rubin face-vase illusion, suggest other knowledge spiritual aspirants would benefit from. In the Rosicrucian philosophy, we are told that our precious self-consciousness is new, and still very small. We have come to our self-consciousness, here in the chemical subdivision of the physical world. This is the most limited realm in which our evolution transpires. It is because of this limitation, that we began our career in self-consciousness here. In this severe limitation we can learn the ABCs of

self-consciousness in the simplicity of reality, without the confusion of multiple distractions found in the less limited desire world, for example. It is not an accident, or some devious demonic curse, that we can see only one perspective of the face-vase illusion at a time. There is nothing wrong with seeing only one perspective. If done without bias, it is a fulfillment of the first step in awakening self-consciousness. It is “seeing what is.” One cannot confidently cognize more, or other things, until one has cognized one thing clearly. However, it is only when we think there is only one perspective, and it is our perspective, that problems arise. In our fallen insecurity, we become attached to our perceptions and perspectives, we personalize them, and this engenders many of the problems of materialism. There is irony in this attachment. One expects that discrete perspective differences in objects of perception, would produce discrete awareness in the consciousness of the observer, not fixity. This is the reason why, in our observation exercise, we try to see things as clearly as possible. However, self-conscious awakening, has developed concurrently with perception, during a time when we have been exiled from awareness of the higher spiritual worlds. Among the consequences of this, are personal identification and insecure possessiveness of material things. The Rubin face-vase illusion is not really an illusion. It is a demonstration of how the brain has evolved to cognize one perspective at a time. It also clearly shows multiple, potential perspectives in a simple, black and white object. Identification, attachment, prejudice and other attitudes surrounding materialism are the illusions. Yes, they do exist, but they don't have to, and they are an unnecessary encumbrance, when they do.

Seeing a thing as it really is, such as the moon on the horizon, is difficult because we are attached to our conceptions of the moon, and the other things which might be on the horizon, such as trees. When the associate things are removed, so is the illusion about the apparent size of the moon, as we saw with the aperture. However, the attachment to our conceptions of things, is not healed by removing the things, and the illusions will return, once the associate things are restored. The illusions are due to our attachments to our conceptions, to the associate objects, or the conceptions themselves. Associations are necessary in creation and evolution. A single musical note has many potential qualities. Some of the qualities come out in the associations of the note with the notes preceding and succeeding it in a melody line. Others come out according to the association with the chords in which it may be found. Yet others are brought out by other things, such as the mood of a

musical movement. Our behavior around some people, is different from our behavior when we are around others. The difference may, or may not, be to our liking. Again, if it is not to our liking, the reason is not necessarily due to the association, or to the others. It is most likely due to ourselves. Becoming a hermit will not solve this either. "The fault dear Brutus, is not in our stars, but in ourselves." Ironically, turning away from the objects of illusion, and turning inward and delving into ourselves alone, is where we find resolution. Whether by retrospection, or some other means of self-correction, we must come to terms with the divinity within, and we must cleanse ourselves of unhealthy attachments, to see things as they really are. No other being in heaven or earth can do it for us. "Gnothi se auton," know thyself.

We cannot rid ourselves of our conceptions of trees or moons, or even the trees and moons themselves, but we can cleanse ourselves of attachments to our conceptions which cause illusions. In the Rosicrucian philosophy we are told to do this by astute observation. We are urged to observe things as clearly, and as exactly, as possible, and to get glasses if we don't. The primitive hasn't formed abstract conceptions of things; we have, and it would be a severe regression to rid ourselves of them, i.e., to form some kind of psychological aperture or blinder, if that were possible. It is a matter of freedom. We are free to focus on whatever we choose, to the exclusion of everything else. This kind of freedom is one of the objectives of our concentration exercise. It isn't easy, but nobody ever said spiritual development is easy.

Every now and then, it isn't a bad idea to take a trip down O'Sheridan, or to watch the moon rise, to see how we are doing.

Pain

Fifty-three years ago, in 1969, this writer offered his first course in elementary astrology. Things were different then. A significant amount of time was spent in helping students learn how to cast a horoscope, using ephemerides and tables of houses, and also learning how to determine if a horoscope was cast correctly. One day, back then, three ladies from a neighboring city, asked this writer if he would teach them to cast horoscopes. They were sure they would be able to read horoscopes, if they had them. One of the ladies was a colorful person with a big personality, which she readily shared, whether one wanted it or not. One day her horoscope in the daily newspaper, said she should surround herself with red. Upon reading this, she promptly went out and bought a red sports car, which didn't enhance her husband's appreciation of astrology in the least. As with many candescent personalities, there were compensatory dark areas. In her view of life, she hated Saturn, no doubt because she didn't like restraint. She thought someone should invent a cannon to blow Saturn out of the sky. She is not alone in her opinion. Many people, perhaps even a majority, dislike Saturn. It may be that they don't like the things Saturn represents, such as fear, hatred and doubt; or it may be that they disdain restraint, or being held to task, or other similar saturnian things. In any case, Saturn does not have a good reputation among people familiar with astrology. Some pay lip service to the positive side of Saturn, but their conviction is not very deep or sincere, especially when Saturn plays a part in their lives. Saturn, along with the truly positive things it represents, needs rehabilitation in the attitudes of many. As things stand now, dark attitudes about saturnian limitations, permeate the psychic atmosphere, and inhibit recognition of positive saturnian virtues—we remain in Sumerian darkness. However, this is not an astrological essay, so the redemption of saturnian virtues will not happen here. This is an essay about spiritual philosophy. The intent of this essay is to redeem something else held in almost universal detestation, pain. If we can introduce true, positive, attitudes about pain into the world, we will have done a great service to our evolutionary progress. Hopefully, this will be a modest beginning.

The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception tells us the nervous system is an expression of the desire body. The desire body has other physical expressions such as the muscular system which carries out desires in the physical body. The nerves stimulate the muscles, but that isn't the neural function we are seek-

ing. We are seeking the function of feeling. Through the nervous system, we feel the external world, while we are in our physical bodies. The senses, such as sight, are superb refinements of the nervous system. Pain, as a somatic feeling, is sensed by specialized receptor cells in the peripheral nervous system. A stimulus is transmitted through the central nervous system to the brain, then to the etheric brain, and finally to the region of feeling in the desire body. When we sense pain, we are aware of our bodies, and the stimulus in the world. Awareness is important. We humans are in a long, drawn out, process of waking up through many rebirths. In this process, anything that awakens us and brings us to awareness of reality, is beneficial, no matter how horrible it might seem. We are told in the *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* that we began to awaken to, and become aware of, the external world during the Lemurian epoch. Boys at that time were made to participate in extremely brutal fights. The purpose was twofold. One reason was to develop will power, and the other was to feel the world without, through pain. Whatever produced awakening through pain, was good. Since we are such slow learners, that function of awakening through pain is still important. As children, we learn that fire burns. Without the sense of pain, one could hold a hand in a fire, until it burned away. Indubitable positivity.

As we have grown through evolution, pain has taken on new functions and meanings. It has thoroughly positive value, beyond warning us of danger, in some of its functions. When we build muscles, we experience pain, and we know we are succeeding—“no pain, no gain” as the body builders say. These positive functions of pain are more than physical. They have become part of our moral and psychological evolution. Through many experiences, we have developed a complex psychology in the desire body. It is made up of emotions, desires and feelings in many moods attitudes, sentiments, and the like. Through these developments and refinements, we have come to interpret and appreciate, subtle sensations of pain from the external world. Consequently, we can experience such positive things as a gentle, loving, caress, the beauty of a face, or the scent of a rose. Perhaps the pressure on neural receptors that we call pain, is not so bad after all—ask any mother who has painfully given birth to the wonder that is a new personality.

Because we are as imperfect as we are, pain serves another function in our moral evolution. This function is also a matter of awareness. In the same way pain warns us of the danger of destruction when we place a hand in a fire, pain

also warns us of the danger in our unregenerate deeds, our sins. Our deeds, in all of our bodies, have consequences. Since the chain of creation proceeds from thoughts, to desires, to actions in the ethers, to the physical body; our misdeeds follow the same path into our physical experience. Sometimes the process is so slow that it takes several rebirths to manifest physically. Often, when we experience physical consequences, we no longer remember the misdeeds, even though there may have been many replications, say of bad thoughts, for example, in the distant past. Sometimes our bad attitudes have become so habitual that we take them for granted, and we learn to tolerate them in ourselves. In extreme cases, we balk at ridding ourselves of them, or even transforming them, because we think we would be losing part of our being. Greater reality does not tolerate such illusions. Causes will have their consequences; and the eventual consequence of persistent misdoing, is pain. The pain persists until there is awareness leading to reformation. We may not be aware of the causes in the personality, but the Spirit is aware, because it is the creative source of the deeds. Perfect feedback. Awareness, in the Spirit is slow, but it will surely come, even though it may take several rebirths. “The mills of God grind slowly but the grind exceedingly fine.” In this process, there is a tremendous improvement in efficiency with the retrospection exercise. It isn’t always easy to be aware of our attitudes in retrospection, due to their subtlety, but it can be done, and it is much to our benefit to keep trying.

Awareness is a form of consciousness. Consciousness is one of the goals of evolution. The Rosicrucian philosophy states in several places, that consciousness is currently a result of the struggle between the vital body and the desire body. Therefore, pain must also be a factor in this struggle in the evolution of consciousness. The scale of this struggle, in time and space, is of evolutionary proportions; much more than we conceive of it to be, in its manifestation in our daily lives.

The vital body is of a solar nature—we are vitalized by the sun. The evolution of the vital body commenced in the Sun Period. Our somatic experience, in all of our bodies, was at that time “soft” and solar. In the Polarian and Hyperborean epochs of this revolution of the Earth Period, before the sun, planets and satellites were precipitated out of the ethers, everything was part of what could be called a proto-sun. In the Lemurian epoch, the solar system, as we know it, was formed out of this proto-sun. Planets were formed in the whirling proto-sun, until the sun, as we know it now, came to be. Moons were

expelled, or co-formed, where necessary. In the Lemurian epoch, conditions were significantly changed from the earlier epochs. The Lemurian epoch is a small scale recapitulation of the Moon Period. In the Moon Period our desire bodies commenced their evolution. The desire bodies of our human life wave were agencies used by the Divine Hierarchies, for the precipitation of the planets into the chemical subdivision of the physical world. This activity of precipitation was active in macrocosm and microcosm. Our dense physical bodies solidified, coetaneously with the physical body of the earth. Because the solidification of the earth, and our human physical bodies, was too deep, the forces and beings responsible for solidification and formation, had to be removed from immediate presence in the earth, lest the earth and its inhabitants harden out of the ability to evolve. Moreover, some in our life wave had devolved to the degree that their presence was a danger to human evolution. To address these problems the moon was separated from the earth to remove the hardening, formative forces, and the “failures” most responsible for the hardening, to a safe distance.

Solidification requires discrete differentiation. Materialization is an activity of differentiation, whether it is a planet or a bodily organ, that is materialized. *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* tells us that, at some point in the Lemurian epoch, the bony skeleton was formed, for example. All of these evolutionary advancements, in microcosm and macrocosm, were accomplished by the hardening power of the desire body, which was then in ascendancy in its struggle with the vital body. In the Lemurian epoch, we were also becoming aware of our separate physical bodies, and the external world. This awareness was accomplished by pain felt in the desire body. Thus, we had the exercises of painful cruelty, mentioned above. As was said, whatever produced awareness, was good. Out of these exercises, we developed the “lower will” described in the Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception, and the higher will in Divine Spirit, via conscious soul, in reflection from the dense, physical body. To our enormous grief, which continues to this day, we overdid all of our activities in the Lemurian epoch—extremity is the way of the Lucifer Spirits, who influenced us. Through unbridled expression of sexual desire in the quest for immortality, which was born out of the fear of death; as well as death-dealing black magic; we have brought ourselves to great pain, while simultaneously exiled from direct inner guidance, into a hardened material world, with a hardened materialistic attitude. In our skewed evolutionary journey, we are blessed with the Rosicrucian philosophy, which helps us to

know that by our efforts in loving, self-forgetting service, we are to etherealize and dissolve the earth, and in so doing, build our soul bodies to live in the inner worlds again. What was sacrificed during involution in the Lemurian epoch, is to be regained at a higher level in the coming epochs.

Beyond physical hardening, there is moral and psychological hardening. It is also the result of indulgence in desire. Psychological and moral hardening are more difficult to correct. Part of the reason for the difficulty is subtlety. Most people are aware of only the most obvious emotions and desires, such as anger and fear, and they are deficient in finer feelings. They exercise the desires that they know, and they (in the lower self) revel in them, because desire is exciting. The hues of emotion are almost infinite. In the future a large part of our inner work will be developing a wider range of emotions, but for now, we are not very colorful. This deficiency is complicated by the fact that the desire body is the seat of the inner adversary to the true Self. The inner adversary is called the “lower will” and “a sort of animal will” in *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*. It loves desire, without a care about hardening. In many respects we have become hard hearted, or what the Old Testament calls, “stiff-necked.” Repeated desire gratification can even choke awareness of conscience. Though adversaries, the desire body and vital body, can work together, for better or worse. If the Self is concentrated on one goal, all of its vehicles are brought together to work as one for the aim of the Self. The pseudo-self, the inner adversary in the desire body, cannot create, but it can imitate, and it does so very well. If we are not inwardly discerning and self-knowing, the inner adversary will mimic the true Self, to impel the personality to its desires. With its cunning, it senses that, if it can express a given desire enough times, it will get the vital body to assist it to its ends by co-opting the habit-forming tendency of the vital body. All of this is happening, in the part of our being, of which we are mostly unconscious. The result is moral and psychological hardening in a well-woven desire body-vital body complex. In extreme cases, it produces what Max Heindel calls a “sin body” which requires thousands of years of sustained effort to break down. Sin bodies are rare but, lest we breathe easily too soon, we must realize that all of us have living backlogs of unredeemed destiny weighing us down, and urging us to actions not in our best interests. In our waking consciousness, we may not believe this, but if we didn’t have such a backlog, we would have no Dweller on the Threshold, and we would all be high initiates. Even a little, sincere retrospection, or honest self-observation, reveals to us that we are

not all sweetness and love within.

What is to be done about this? How is the hardening to be dissolved?

These questions can be answered, in one regard, in a manner similar to the way the hardening occurred, i.e., in macrocosm and microcosm. The macrocosmic answers are both easy and difficult. The easy part is that the softening, leavening, and levitation of the earth is enhanced by the tremendous sacrifice of Christ. The desire body of Christ interpenetrates the macrocosmic, desire body of the earth, and the desire bodies of all of its inhabitants. We live in a desire world atmosphere of Christ's loving desires, the influence of which (if we accept it) has a salubrious effect on us individually, and collectively. We use it, at a pace which is extremely slow, relative to our spiritual longing. Attitudes expressed in the laws and customs of people, are softening. The word altruism didn't exist before the nineteenth century; capital punishment is gradually being abolished; and cruelty to animals is gradually being seen for the monstrosity that it is. The difficult part is, that we have no metric by which we can measure our progress, by which we could be encouraged or stimulated, to greater collective kindness. Various historical personages have put forth guesses as to when we will be collectively successful. Nostradamus predicted the dissolution of the earth around the year 7000. That is approximately the time when the vernal equinox reaches zero degrees of Capricorn in the natural, or sidereal, zodiac. That point was called the Southern Gate of the sun by Plato and other ancients. It is the gate by which gods enter the earth, and men leave the earth. Max Heindel tells us that the opposite Northern Gate, was where ancient Egyptians said that souls awaiting rebirth, congregated to come to birth. Other ancients said the Northern Gate was where gods left the earth. The vernal equinox was at the Northern Gate at the time of last deluge of Atlantis. Berossos, the Chaldean astrologer, who was honored by the Greeks with a statue with a golden tongue for the truth he spoke, predicted the earth would end in fire, when the planets meet at the Southern Gate. It is like the words of the folk music spiritual about the flood of Noah and the rainbow: "no more water, but a fire next time." We know the hardening moon drifts away from the earth at a rate of one and one-half inches per year, but we do not know if that is a valid correlative indicator of unhardening. At this rate, the moon will only be six hundred feet more distant by the year 7000, when the vernal equinox will have approximately precessed to the Southern Gate, on the cusp of the fiery Sagittarius. We can

calculate the gravitational effect of the greater distance, but not the spiritual hardening effect. We do not even know if lunar drift is a correlative of psychological hardening and, if so, its effect on our behavior. It is all engaging speculation, but it is only speculation. The Bible tells us and Max Heindel reiterates several times, “the hour no man knoweth.” For us that is good. It gives us a sense of mounting anticipation and urgency, in doing our part, For spiritual aspirants, it enlarges our compassion for the lingering agony of Christ, who is burdened by the weight of the earth , and our unkindness toward each other.

In the human microcosm, there seem to be several agencies employed by the divine hierarchies, such as the Recording Angels, who help us in our evolutionary work concerning, including the problem of hardening. One agency is analogous to that of the macrocosm, Christ. The washing of the feet in St. John’s gospel is more than a demonstration of humility, and, as Max Heindel points out, it is a recognition, and appreciation, of the interdependence of the server and the served. It is also about spiritual softening, through spiritual cleansing: “He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit.” If one is blessed to receive the baptism of Christ in the Life Spirit, one is clean, and softened. As wonderful as such an experience is, it is not efficient at this time in our evolutionary career, because very few qualify for that experience. Another means to psychological and moral softening, is radical catharsis. Part of initiatory work is radical catharsis, analogous to our post mortem purgatory. A deep and sincere retrospection, in full awareness of one’s transgressions, softens one’s heart, such that one cannot consider repeating the old hard ways. Even a moment of intense cathartic compassion has the same effect. Again, few have the courage and integrity, to face themselves, as if in confession, before Christ, and that includes many Rosicrucian Probationers. Since few qualify, or qualify themselves, for spiritual softening by these agencies; and since the need is great—with an added urgency of time; the Recording Angels must resort to the remedy that is available and effective for all, pain. Whether physical or psychological, pain softens. Even hardened and adamant souls are eventually softened by pain, and they abandon their unregenerate desires. A lifetime of pain produces a person of tender compassion. It was with great wisdom, that Max Heindel chose to reference the *Vision of Sir Launfal* four times in his writings, to demonstrate this principle. As with almost all principles, this can be abused. It is possible to use pain to drive one deeper into one’s hardening desires, but such tenden-

cies are extremely rare, and not likely to be ultimately successful. To intentionally seek pain, as in masochism, is perverse, and ultimately unsuccessful, as a way of life. To accept pain as an awakener, when it is due, is healthy; to endure pain, when it is necessary in order to serve, is laudatory, and both acceptances produce an inner softness, comparable to the still silent voice of the Christ within. In general, pain is our friend in spiritual softening.

As aspirants, we want to grow as quickly and safely as possible. We want to become Christ-like. In our aspiration, to the degree of our sincerity, we have a promise that “no pains will be spared to give us exactly what we need for our development.”

The Problem of Evil

It is difficult to write about some subjects. Not because they are deep or complicated, but because of their very nature. Some subjects make a writer uneasy, even if the scribe is not normally squeamish. Some odors are repulsive, because the substance they emanate from, is poisonous—the revulsion is a natural protection. Evil seems to be one of these difficult subjects, perhaps for the same reason. Can it be that there is something inimical to the immortal spirit? Certainly not to the spirit, but almost certainly to the personality—a psychological cyanide. Some might question the concept of a personality toxin, but there are instances of influences purloining a personality from its divine career. Evil is a dark mystery and, as truth seekers, a mystery important to our calling. We want and need to know about this mystery (including whether it actually exists) without being subject to it. Our careers might depend on it.

When we turn to what Christian mystics have written and said about evil, we encounter two very different views on the subject. One could be called an educational outlook. The idea is, that if an aspirant can recognize evil, and know its ways, it can be avoided, or dealt with. The aspirant is given a description of the types of evil (usually two: Luciferic-like and Satanic-like), how they function in the world, their consequences, and so on. The aspirant is prepared to live the higher life, with a clear vision of its perils. Some mystics believe there is only one sin, ignorance. If this is true, illuminating education would seem to be the perfect antidote to evil. In the eyes of this writer, this is one of those cases where the theory is beautiful, but the application doesn't seem to bear out the theory. Over decades of observing aspiring adherents to this philosophy, it seems more attention is given to evil, and its other world sources, than is given to the good and its Source. The manifestation of this philosophy, is not as extreme as seeing a devil under every bush, though there is some of that; it is more a matter of seeing inimical influence within all of the activities of the world. One cannot separate the tares from the wheat without diminishing the harvest. Similarly, evil, if it exists, cannot be ejected from the stream of human activity, it must be recognized, and avoided, or transformed. The educational outlook is a sophisticated view, as are its educated proponents. Adherents to this outlook cannot, in any way be considered evil. It is more a matter of this view being mildly inhibitive of spiritual progress by distraction from a dedicated focus on the good. When

the “educational outlook” is found in religion, rather than mysticism, the nature of sin is, is clearly described, and there is plenty of devil sniping. This is an instance wherein this writer is willing to concede that, while his observations may be accurate, his interpretation of them may not be.

The other view seems to be more the view held by Max Heindel. This view could be called an aspiration outlook about evil or, better, an aspirational outlook about good. According to this view, one aspires intently to the good— aspiring to the Good is greatly different from avoiding evil. For one thing, it is positive, which by itself, is pro-evolutionary. In following this outlook, one can see evil, when it appears, for what it is in the light of truth. In some respects, it is almost an expression of the old adage: the brighter the light, the darker the shadow. Max Heindel did not eschew speaking of evil, but when he did address the subject, he did so sparingly. If one is driving down the highway and looks to the side, one soon finds the vehicle slanting in the direction of the sidelong observation. In this viewpoint, evil is a distraction, and it can be a fascinating distraction. The danger of this viewpoint, lies in assuming one knows what is good, or evil, when one might not. In religion there is often a smug assumption that one knows what is good, and what is evil, while the reality is sometimes not so certain. Intuition dispels the illusion of false knowledge, but sometimes we are prone to confuse opinion with intuition. Moreover, if one carries out one’s impulses far enough to experience their consequences, the qualities of impulses become clear—another reason why retrospection is important. One does not often find the “aspirational outlook” carried out in the way that it is carried out in mysticism. However, horrendous things have been carried out by religions under false assumptions about something being evil, when it was not. This statement about the “aspirational outlook” is another instance wherein this writer is willing to concede that his outlook may not be correct.

When one addresses the subject of evil, as we are, one soon finds one’s self in a dualism of good and evil. Individuals disposed toward approaching spiritual aspiration with the head more than the heart, seem especially prone to moral dualism. For instance, the great Madame Blavatsky averred that evil was the necessary opposite to the good. Some gnostics, including some Neo-Platonists, associated evil with matter, as the necessary resistance to the spirit in the creation. Matter is, in fact, resistant to spirit, but not because it is inherently evil. The resistance of matter is a reflection of creative projec-

tion into the potential of cosmic root substance. The potential is undefined, it could be anything. It is so undefined, that there is nothing on which to gain advantage—it is like trying to grab a handful of water—paradoxically, it is also so dense, that it approaches impenetrability. In this regard, it is similar to our life wave in the Saturn Period, when we were plunged so deeply into unconsciousness, that the Lords of Flame had difficulty getting the germ of form, which was to become our physical vehicle, to take. Matter is not absolutely resistant. It does eventually become spiritualized, and ignorance does become enlightened. Spirit does grow, in all respects, in the process of compounding soul out of matter. Goodness is enhanced in a struggle with evil; but the notion that the good needs evil to blossom into its fulness, is preposterous. The Good is intrinsically good; good is good. Some Neo-Platonists correctly associate the True with what we call Human Spirit, the Beautiful with Life Spirit, and the Good with Divine Spirit. The will to be, that is Divine Spirit, is more than some aloof, insensate, state of being, it is good, and its goodness is only distantly felt in our moral numbness. The Good does not need evil to be good, though when it sacrifices itself to share in a creative manifestation, it evokes resistance to accomplish its goodness.

The *Tao Teh Ching* is a profound book of ancient Chinese wisdom by the sage philosopher Laotse. In a chapter titled “The Rise of Relative Opposites” one finds the following line: “When the people of the earth all know the good as good, there arises evil.” Taken by itself, this line could be interpreted as a vague statement of the “aspirational outlook” mentioned above, but that is not what the author meant. In the succeeding lines it is shown to mean “interdependency” of good and evil, polarity of action, or definition. The line might just as well have been written: “If you define a good man, you define a not good man, i.e., an evil man.” The problem with polar opposites, like these, is that one has only two choices and there is no progress. The “Relative Opposites” in the chapter heading could also be understood as comparative differences, not absolute differences. In such a case, if you define a good man, you open the way to a better man. You also open the way to a worse man, because it is possible to devolve as well as evolve, but not in absolute, because experience cannot be nullified. Comparative, or relative, evolution of moral actions, or inactions, allows for a spectrum of moral behavior. It also allows progress, whereas absolute moral dualism, or denial of it, does not. Some might argue that “progress” is just another social definition, an indoctrination into conformity. If one is a mystical aspirant, progress is a reality, a mat-

ter of self-observation and intuition, that is often experienced in the form of conscience. An earnest and honest aspirant intuitively knows that she/he is getting better. As Rosicrucian aspirants it is our duty to strive for moral improvement, and to objectively judge our progress. Problems only arise when we judge others, or judge ourselves relative to others. “To thine own self be true.” This view is not subjectivistic because, inwardly in spirit, we are part of the one Universal Spirit, and the Universal Spirit is ultimately objective.

The view of Max Heindel about good and evil is called agathism, which is a fancy way of saying that all things work for the good—with or without the Neo-Platonistic definition of the Good. He was fond of saying things like “evil is good in the making.” This is not merely a “feel good” statement, it is real. It is orderly; it is objective; it is evolutionary. The very workings of the “Man and the Method of Evolution” section of *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* are moral. What could be more perfect than, that we get perfect moral feedback through the principle of consequence? What could be more edifying than experiencing the higher spiritual worlds, and the influence of the divinity in grace. The life of mystical aspiration, is a life of moral experience, more than it is intellectual philosophy.

Theology is usually more about intellectual philosophy than spiritual experience. “The problem of evil” is a term from theology. The inability to solve “the problem of evil” has caused many theologians to become atheists, especially academic theologians. “The problem of evil” is a classic dilemma, a two headed monster. In it, either God is not omnipotent and cannot purge and disallow the evil we see in the world, or God is the source of evil as much as the source of good. The latter alternative is again the dualistic evil which, at its best, is the necessary proving of the good, as though divine good needed proving. St. Paul admonished Christians to “prove all things” (because we are subject to illusion and misunderstanding) in spiritual matters, but it is absurd to see the atrocious monstrosities of evil in the world as proving of divine goodness. Besides, if one continues to question or prove things, one eventually reaches the indubitable, self-evident, intuition of the goodness of divinity. Doing this does not disprove the possibility of God also being evil as well as good. As mystics, we seek direct spiritual experience, at least as much as we seek proof that satisfies the intellect. This writer knows of no mystic that has reported a mystical experience of the Universal Spirit intending evil as much as good. Many mystics have reported malignant beings of great

magnitude, but none equal to the Universal Spirit, and all ultimately serving the Universal Spirit—“The spirit of Negation; the power that still /Works for the good through scheming ill.”—Goethe. This writer realizes that this argument does not disprove the thesis of God being equally good and evil, but the observation of the evolution of moral improvement seems to substantiate it for us, until we see it for ourselves, and experience the intuition of the goodness of the Universal Spirit in the Universal Spirit.

The other head of this monster has its own share of absurdities and paradoxes. Whether mystical or materialistic, the undeniable presence of existence is more significant than the forms of existence. Either good or evil, by whatever definition, is a form of existence, not existence itself. Thinking this way, the burden of the argument is shifted from good and evil to the source of existence. Once again, we find the existential dilemma cannot be resolved intellectually. Every argument has a counter argument. The atheistic argument is a purely intellectual argument. Its appeal, even to theologians, is that divinity is unnecessary to the dilemma. What is, is. Existence is the all. In this view, we are free agents to change things as we see fit which, of course, leads to endless intellectual arguments about what is good or what is evil. The atheistic argument of the existential dilemma, side steps the question of the origin of existence by saying it isn't necessary to postulate an origin. It points to materialistic science, with all of its discoveries and applications, as not needing an ultimate origin to discover truth. Materialistic science is about how things in existence work, not about the origin of existence, which is a subject it has steadfastly refused to address, though opinions about it are abundant. In this also, we are blest to have a path of experience to cut through, or avoid, the irresolute tangle of endless arguments.

Mysticism offers the best answer to “the problem of evil” by avoiding the futile intellectual content in the statement of of the problem. It goes directly to the heart of the matter, and can be stated in one word, freedom. We are all foci of one universal spirit, spirits within spirit. We may differ in consciousness, creativity and evolutionary achievement, but in spirit, we are all equal. Pure unconditioned spirit cannot be more spirit. In our manifest state of spirit, our consciousness and creative ability is far less, than that of the spiritual being we call God, or the Creator. We are becoming creators within the manifestation of the Creator. There are many goals in this manifestation; one of them is for us to share in the joy of creation as creators. We are being care-

fully nursed from unconsciousness to creative, spiritual consciousness, with our degree of application, being the only limit. In this process, we willingly and gratefully, take roles as co-creators, according to our abilities, as do the angels, archangels and other creative beings. Though our role at this time is subsidiary, we are not meant to be eternal underlings or automatons. It is intended that we attain to the creative capacity now maintained by the Creator. The Creator does not stint in sharing, It gives everything it has. Of course, in the creation, the Creator will attain to greater creative capacity, but that is beside the point. In order for us to attain to this intent, it is necessary for us to have the same freedom as that enjoyed by the Creator. This freedom includes the liberty to go against the Divine Plan, or do evil. Unfortunately, we have chosen to do both. This does not mean that all is lost. It does mean that the creation must adapt to a different course. It also does not mean that we are to be eternally flawed beings. By the law of action, we will learn from our reactions, and become a different kind of divine beings, than originally intended; perhaps better for having chosen the extreme and defiant expression of freedom that we did, we will have had an unprecedented path. Evil will eventually eradicated by God, the God in us.

All of this is lofty, inspiring, and comforting, as we sit in our reading chair, or at our writing desk, but what are we doing to eradicate evil, or redeem its perpetrators? Without action, this knowledge will soon lose its savor and become what Hamlet says: “words, words, words”. Redemptive action in the real problem of evil, has its own difficult problems. Ironically, they turn on the same fulcrum, freedom.

The principle of cause and consequence does well for most of us. We sin or err, and we suffer the consequences, and we improve through the four Rs: recognition, remorse, repentance and restitution. Not sinning is only a small part of redemption, the greater part lies in giving love, in large and small. Are we doing our part in changing the psychic environment to make it more conducive to love and goodness? As mystical aspirants, we are endeavoring to go beyond our daily duties in the ongoing evolutionary work of the world. We need to ask ourselves if we are deliberately, self-consciously, and freely contributing positive, loving, thoughts and emotions to the world. As Christian aspirants, we strive to live our lives in the imitation of Christ, who freely gave an enormous gift of love to the psychic atmosphere in which we live. “Freely ye have received, freely give.” There is freedom in not having to do

something; there is greater freedom in doing something from the goodness of one's heart, without coercion of any kind.

More difficult problems arise, concerning incorrigible evil doers. Some of whom have become inverted. They believe themselves equal in manifestation, not merely in spirit, to the manifest Creator; they gain their strength in opposing divinity, and they grow stronger feeding off of the hate from others. Adolph Hitler invited people to send him their hate. *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* tells us, and we see it play out increasingly in the world, that some are becoming openly and unavowedly evil. This is occurring at the same time when others are striving for the good by renouncing force, or any form of coercion, out of respect for all spiritual beings, and their freedom. This is a nasty combination. With things as they are now, if someone is attacked, the police are called, the perpetrator(s) are overpowered, tried, and sentenced to whatever is, hopefully, correctional. What if there were no police, or anyone who would willingly overpower another? This is part of the future described for us in *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* when speaking of the contemporary Manichean, greater mystery school, which is seeking to solve this problem. The Gospels advise against self-defense; St. Paul was stoned, and St. Stephen was stoned to death, without resistance. We can defend others by shielding them with love, but not by counterattack or retribution. What can we do? We can love! We can live in imitation of Christ by bringing love into the world as much as possible through our prayers, including protective prayers. "Pray ceaselessly." In this way we are contributing to the solution of the problem of evil in a general way, by changing the psychic environment. Specific services depend on specific situations.

Most Rosicrucian aspirants are children of fire, more head than heart oriented. Being such, we can use our specialized development to help solve this problem of evil. It is not likely that we will exceed the Manichean initiates in our thinking, but there are things we can do as we are. Over a lifetime, filled with errors and observations, this writer has learned that evil is not logical; in fact, it is stupid. There is no tenable justification, even with astounding mental capacity, for evil, in any analysis. Max Heindel observed, that one of the primary reasons for taking the path to perdition, is pride of intellect, vanity in thought. Combining these two observations with love, one can see, that plausible and pervasive thoughts can be aired, which might speak to minds, not yet irredeemably hardened, to reconsider their thoughts and actions—

their pride in not wanting to be stupid could actually save them. Our Lord told us to love those who spitefully use us, and this is a way it can be done without direct confrontation, or coercion. It is worth a try.

Grace, and the Forgiveness of Sins

Rainer Maria Rilke wrote sublimely beautiful poetry. In delicate, air-drawn lines, he expressed ideas with rare emotions. In *The Bowl of Roses*, his descriptions capture uncanny truth and beauty, with deft simplicity. With the intuition of an artist, he knew that his delicate conceptions had to be introduced with contrast to have their best effect. Thus the opening stanza is as follows.

You saw anger flare, saw to boys
ball themselves into something
that was hatred and writhed on the ground
like an animal attacked by bees;
actors, towering exaggerators,
raging horses that crashed down,
casting away their gazes, baring their teeth
as if their skulls peeled from their mouths.

A sight probably everyone has seen. Two young lads going at each other with a furor which would be the envy of a professional prize fighter. It is not easy to untangle them. Then comes the hard part, getting them to apologize and forgive. They meant it when they were fighting; they still mean it after they are parted. Eventually, they can be cajoled, or commanded, to make up. When they do, the apologies do not have the sincerity their anger had. Apologies are like that. Either they come too easily, meaning that they are insincere, or too hard, meaning they aren't true. It isn't limited to children, it is similar with adults. Only rarely does one encounter a sincere apology, ..., followed by healing. Even then, the cause is not forgotten.

Attempting to rationalize forgiveness, meets similar obstacles. Some believe forgiveness is impossible. What has been done, has been done, and cannot be undone. Deeds change everything; time can be reversed in physics equations, but not in life. A cause cannot be removed from its consequences. Reparations and amends, though they mollify the recipients, do not nullify the original causes. Voiding an entire experience, cause and consequence, if it were possible, would be voiding experience, and experience is one of the purposes of our existence. Treating individual causes and consequences in isolation, is treating them in abstract. Abstract ideas, like mathematical theorems, are capable of incontrovertible proof, but only in theory. Application of abstract

principles in concrete manifestation, is more complicated, even messy, but it does seem to evolve, if not resolve. In life, one errs, suffers the consequences, repents, requites, absorbs the essence of the experience as soul, and moves on. It is not as tidy and pure as the proof of a theorem, but there is true progress toward perfection.

The difficulty with forgiveness, is more than a matter of abstract, philosophical, ethics. It is important to Christians and, especially, Christian Mystical aspirants. It was vitally important to the Gospel Christ-Jesus. When Christ-Jesus forgave sins as part of a healing, the Pharisees who didn't believe in him (some did until then) turned against him with vehemence, and soon thereafter brought on the crucifixion. The Pharisees were a legalistic, socio-religious sect that had beliefs not found in the Torah, which was the sole basis of belief of the Sadducees and other more conservative sects. Some of the beliefs of the Pharisees teachings, came from the Prophets and "traditions of the fathers." They included resurrection of the dead, and a belief that only God could forgive sins. To them, when Christ-Jesus forgave sins, he was proclaiming divinity—blasphemy, a sin punishable by death.

The belief of the Pharisees, concerning the forgiveness of sins, is a religious parallel to the philosophical statement about the impossibility of forgiveness given above, except that it includes the divine prerogative. Christ did not deny this belief, did not defend himself, and did not proclaim divinity directly. His acts stood for themselves. From without, there is no proof of sins actually being forgiven, though the testimony of the healed seems to substantiate it. Only the divine inner vision, the eye of God, can know for certain.

Christ did more than forgive, he commanded those who would follow him, to do so also. Forgiveness is mentioned in all of the Gospels; there are forty-eight instances. In St. Matthews Gospel, St. Peter is admonished to forgive someone seventy times seven times. In both versions of the Lord's Prayer, the supplicant asks for forgiveness of sins, while forgiving the sins of others. Christ would never ask his followers to do something impossible to do. Hence, it is necessary to know clearly what forgiveness is, and how it is accomplished.

There are different varieties of forgiveness. Forgiving a financial debt, is different from redressing an emotional slight. Remission of sin, is what is

usually meant by forgiveness among Christians. This common definition of remission raises more questions and conundrums. For one, it seems to necessitate a definition of sin, another philosophically problematic act. The simplest definition of sin is a transgression of divine law. This definition immediately spawns still more questions, such as “are there divine laws?” and “if so, what are they?” There are plenty of religious laws, the Old Testament is chocked full of them. However, they are not laws, in the way laws of nature are laws. Religious laws are respective to specific religions, and religions are respective to the needs of specific populations. Such a definition of sin and forgiveness, is subjective, and not likely what our Lord meant, though there is some indication of this in the Gospels. The fact is, that he and his disciples, were rebuked for not keeping religious laws, and in this, he defended his stance eloquently.

In mysticism, which is not religion but spirituality, there is one law that applies to human behavior. Classically, it is called the principle, or law, of action. More commonly, it is known as the principle of cause and consequence. Every action has its equal and opposite reaction, or every cause has its consequence. In this principle there is the security of divine justice. In this principle there is perfect creative feedback. In this principle there is not a vindication of the remission of sins—some non-Christian mystics still adhere to the principle of action without forgiveness.

The simplest description of the remission, or forgiveness, of sin, is to make things as though the sin never occurred. To do this would be to abrogate the principle of action. To do this would be to gut an action of its experience. “Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the Prophets, I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.” Perhaps, in the forgiveness of a sin, the guiltiness of about the deed is removed but not the deed.

If the principle of action is inviolable, and religious law is subject to the people, and the times; sin and its forgiveness, if they exist, must be found elsewhere. Perhaps in something which includes the best points of both.

The word religion literally means to reconnect. The reconnection is to divinity. After the fall, humanity gradually lost the inner, spiritual vision, with which humanity could see its divine heritage. After the fall, humanity began focussing increasingly on the outer, material world, almost to the exclusion

of inner spiritual purpose. Human, incarnate existence was becoming spiritually barren. Spirit is not to be denied. Bereft of direct, divine, experience, the spirit still hungered for divinity. The hunger was satisfied by high, spiritual beings providing religions to bring their charges to experience the feel divinity, according their needs and natures. When humans, by taking creative power into their own hands, exercised free will in disobedience, it was, in effect, a declaration of divinity. It was an action that proclaimed divinity, in the same way the forgiveness in healings given by Christ, did. The divine hierarchies could no longer directly control humans at will, as they had previously. They had to respect the divinity in humans. Religion had to uplift, guide, and control, indirectly. With the loss of inner, spiritual vision, came the loss of the sense of purpose embodied in the grand design of the evolutionary creation. Religion then had to be subjective to serve the deviate needs of humans, until they could see again, and voluntarily dedicate themselves to the divine plan. Religious laws are subjective, but their intent is to help humans to return to objective, divine, harmony. At first, religions were strict, because of the extremity of recalcitrant deviance; sometimes violation of religious law was lethal. Atonement consisted of sacrificing dear, material, things; sometimes even life. Forgiveness of sins was impossible. Gradually, over millennia, religious laws have come closer to approximating the principles of the evolutionary creation, and we have become more amenable to attunement to spiritual purpose. Forgiveness of religious sins has become possible, and it is a loving reminder of our neglect of spiritual responsibility. In forgiveness of religious sins, one is, by love, drawn to love, and away from constraints externally imposed.

These things are about subjective religious transgressions and atonements; what about objective sin and forgiveness, sin against divine law? At the time of the fall, humanity was undergoing gradually decreasing control by divine hierarchies, coetaneous with awakening consciousness. There was no religion, which only became necessary after the fall. Hence, sin had to have been objective to the laws of the creation, cosmic laws. This, again, raises the question “what is the nature of objective sin and its forgiveness?”

Religious law can be seen as a limited analogical subset of principles of the evolutionary creation—divine, objective law. Religious law is artificial, because human disobedience took humans out of the divine, or authentic, plan, and its laws. Cosmic law, the law of the cosmos or evolutionary creation, is

based on universal principles. Chief among these principles, relative to this topic, is the law of action, wherein every action will have its equal and opposite reaction. Though these principles are abstract, transcendental, and eternal, the interactive expression of them is dynamic, and down to earth. There is no standing still in evolution. Either one is progressing, or falling behind the flow. Cosmic, creative principles are not dead, they are alive and lively. Even the edifice of geometry is not lifeless; its ideas are filled with the radiant life of truth, which is expressed in its manifest expressions. The principles of the creation are not colorless and empty, they are pregnant with character. The One, the Universal Spirit, is being, which expresses itself, in its truth, in the living principles of the creation. The principle of cause and consequence is a living, divine being, living within every discrete being. It is not an external coercive force, it is within every being of action. It is inescapable in any action, and without action, there is no life.

There is a difference between being and a being. A being, a spiritual entity, is different from a state of spiritual being whose character is boundless. In the Rosicrucian philosophy, Life Spirit and Divine Spirit are states of spiritual being that transcend the Human Spirit, which is a manifest being, in the abstract subdivision of the world of thought, the world of ideas, laws and principles, including the principle of action. It requires an individual to act directly. The third member of any trinity acts. The third member of the Supreme Being is motion or action. The trinity, called the Godhead, has the attributes of will, love-wisdom, and activity. Spirit lives, individuals and individualities act, and when they act, they act under the principle of action. In this is the answer to the question of the nature of forgiveness, in large and small.

As spiritual beings we effect causes. We could do so before the fall; before we even had a lower nature, with its personal ego. Until the fall, we were innocent and ignorant. We had not eaten the fruit of the tree of knowledge. At that time, we sloughed physical bodies with as little concern as a snake sloughing its skin. It was also a time of transition. We were becoming less aware of spiritual things, and more aware of material things. In our innocence, our attention was spuriously turned to the loss of our bodies, with the intent of awakening insecurity. We fell for it, and we also awakened the potential of selfishness, under which we initiated actions in ignorance. We initiated actions, of whose consequences we were unaware. Our timing and

intentions fell out of harmony with the pace and purpose of the evolutionary creation. Our causes, made in ignorance, produced consequences, received in ignorance. The arc into materiality, became an arc into cumulative suffering in ignorance. We generated more discordant consequences than we could transmute. This has been our lot in the larger arena of evolution, and the smaller sphere of our everyday lives. In our selfish ignorance, and our relative, creative impotence, we have generated an appreciable backlog of unredeemed destiny, which some call the burden of sin. Moreover, we have made it personal, whereas the creation is impersonal—"God is no respecter of persons."

We are now on the upswing on the arc out of materiality, and into greater spirituality. Our experiences have awakened us; we have learned from them, and we have gained soul power. Nonetheless, we still act in relative ignorance and selfishness, and we still take things personally. The weight of the burden of sin, with its insistent and painful urge to requital, which is a perverted, personal misinterpretation of cause and consequence, as "justice," is becoming more unbearable. In our spiritual awareness, we long for freedom from suffering, for ourselves and others. We have awakened a hunger for righteousness, and we crave forgiveness. What is to be done?

The law of action, on its own, has not been adequate to the task of redemption, since we became outlaws. With our perverse, creative interjections, our burden of sin has grown under the law. Sometimes it feels like we add to it daily, though that might be merely greater recognition and not factual reality. We are more aware of ourselves as initiators of causes, and we are becoming more clearly aware of our character, in the flavor of our consequences. However, cause and consequence are still not enough, nor is the Self, divine though it is, the answer to the dilemma. It feels as though causes and consequences could rattle on as long as time exists, like some giant machine with a multitude of operators. In a larger view of things, the law of action by itself, does not describe the evolutionary creation. In the greater reality, evolutionary and creative conditions are always changing, and as we have seen, even the divine plan has changed to accommodate our transgression of it. The reason for the changes, large and small, is novelty. Newness has been, and always is, injected into the ongoing stream of causes and consequences. There is improvement despite our often errant ways. "Things getting better" is a valid description of spiritual evolution. In novelty, the solution to the

problems of forgiveness is to be found.

Injecting new things into the ongoing stream of causes and consequences we call evolution, will not in itself, produce redemption in either macrocosm and microcosm. We invent new war machines and new machinations to disgrace perceived enemies. Neither brings forgiveness and the resolution that issues from it. A deeper understanding of novelty is necessary.

The Bible, though in some respects archaic, often offers valuable hints for spiritual understanding. It is a good place to begin to understand this. In the book of Revelation, He who sits on the throne and works salvation through the lamb says “Behold, I make all things new.” Through Christ, the lamb, we are to reach salvation, redemption and the forgiveness of sins.

Christ, the Highest Initiate of the sun period, is the living representative of Life Spirit, as the second person of the Godhead. As the personification of Life Spirit, Christ dispenses all of the powers of Life Spirit into the creation. Life Spirit transcends Human Spirit. Life Spirit is a state of spiritual being, a Human Spirit is a being. Human Spirit, though universal, has internal qualifications, like every other being and principle in the abstract subdivision of the world of thought. To be in Human Spirit, is to act, as do all third members of trinities. For example, the human Self, as a spiritual being, is the Thinker. From this we can see Christ-given novelty from Life Spirit, as the purest blessing of novelty. It is forgiveness. Though true, this is terribly abstract. What one wants is the “living water.”

Life Spirit transcends Human Spirit. Therefore, it transcends not only the personal ego, it transcends even the spiritual Self. Nonetheless, Life Spirit is not aloof or distant. It is infinitely close and intimate. Life Spirit is the essence of selfness from which the Self is conceived. It expresses its love-wisdom character, without any hitch or bias. In its altruism, it is free; living in its freedom, it respects freedom as well as the needs of others. One asks for forgiveness, or to forgive others. In doing this, one transcends Self, without losing Self, for the sake of the other, for the sake of the all, for the sake of Christ.

True forgiveness is a state of grace. In a state of grace one is more than one’s Self. One is both humbled and uplifted to, and by, Life Spirit. One experi-

ences the fullness of love and all of the other qualities of Life Spirit, including boundless newness. The experience is not idle. In grace, newness is expressed in the highest form of creativity, creativity in life. In grace, causes are not eradicated, they are creatively transformed. What had been as ugly as sin, becomes a thing of beauty; in the way a seed, a “necessary nothing,” becomes a rose, with the beauty we call graceful.

Personal attachment is a bane to spiritual development. If we approach our responsibilities to others with attachment, we produce unnecessary tension. We occlude or cripple the very things we would do. If we do fulfill our duties in this way, it is not the glorious achievement it could be. When we give ourselves and our works over to Christ, so to speak, we depersonalize them, and we “demystify” them. There is as little of living friction as possible. “My yoke is easy.” There is RELIEF, blessed relief. Beyond the removal of impediment, there is something gloriously positive in the experience of the grace of Christ. JOY, spiritual joy. Life, and everything in it, is a joyous experience. Even if we only experience the anticipation of grace, there is the promise of joy—“that my joy may remain in you, and that your joy might be full.” This is true whether we experience a moment of grace, or a life of grace.

Christ, speaking from Life Spirit, said “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” Life Spirit is beyond the world of thought. The truth that is Life Spirit, is beyond even the abstract principles of logic. In Life Spirit, paradoxical opposites meet, and unite in Truth. In the way that we associate the Father, in what is to us, the spiritual, masculine, Divine Spirit, we can associate, what is to us the spiritual, feminine, Life Spirit, with a divine mother. We as Selves, or spiritual individualities, are children of one all-loving Mother. The love of Life Spirit as divine mother, looks after our every need in a manner beyond our understanding, if we allow it. Life Spirit love, loves where love is most needed. In the love of Christ and Life Spirit, we learn more, in the way of wisdom, than we do from the principle of action. As wonderful as this is, there is more—with Christ there is always more.

The paradoxical way of Life Spirit is sometimes better described in poetry than in philosophy. John 1:16 is an excellent example, “And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace.” Good poetry is capable of more than one interpretation. One interpretation of “and grace for grace” gives poetic insight into the paradoxical nature of grace. Grace is more than a prac-

tical giving of love according to need. In grace, Life Spirit love loves because it loves. It is the purest of pure. Its very nature is to love; it can't do other than love. Life Spirit loves in complete freedom. There is no weight to it, as there is with a cause. At the same time, Life Spirit loves, because it must love. In a state of grace, one cannot help but love. The expression of grace is an overflowing of love, beyond its capacity, in boundless love. Paradox. In inward conversation, St Paul tells us "And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient unto the" It is always more than enough for our needs; yet, one always craves more, and always receives more. Paradox.

In street language, grace and forgiveness, are giving someone an undeserved break and an opening, and therein lies its power in Life Spirit. We humans didn't deserve a break, but we received one, in the gift of Christ. Grace is like that. Life Spirit loves, and it doesn't calculate worthiness. It seems most prodigal in lost causes, but it is always redemptive, and its application is always appropriate. It is always and ever beautiful, with a beauty which is elegantly tasteful. In this spirit, creative forgiveness should always be the easiest thing possible, if not done for ourselves.

There is more. In grace there is always more.

Martyrdom

Fyodor Dostoevsky was an unusual Christian. Beside the slanderous rumors about him from rivals and detractors, his true sins were many and serious, but so were his remorse and repentance, which were deep and sincere. He progressed spiritually, through struggling with his sins. Some of his success came by working out his problems through characters in his novels. Due to his unusual personal experience, he was drawn to explore some of the darker corners of the human soul. One of the corners that fascinated him, was the desire to overcome laws, man-made and natural. One of his characters was a sniveling nobody who, in his self-conceit, believed he would be a somebody by committing a crime, and getting away with it. This would mean he was above and beyond the law. He botches a petty crime, and becomes a double ax murder. In his punishment he repents, becomes a true Christian, and accepts his humanity, with the the help of a loving friend. Another character, Kirillov, in another novel, believes that suicide is a proof of ultimate transcendence of the human condition, because in suicide one overcomes the most basic natural law of self-preservation. Kirillov plans to, but does not commit suicide, because his wife has a baby, and he sees the miracle of a new life; two lives where there was only one before, He senses life as a continuum, beyond mere biological existence. Despite the resolution of Kirillov in the novel, his arguments have been the subject of study for those trying to solve the general problem of suicide from various points of view.

The argument of Kirillov is similar to the argument for martyrdom. In martyrdom one sacrifices one's life, for something beyond the mere mortal condition. One question in this, is whether martyrdom is suicide?

There will almost certainly be some, who will take offense at the association of martyrdom with suicide. Their views must be considered, even if only minimally.

In the west, martyrdom began with the persecution of the early Christians by the Romans. The Romans considered the early Christians, with their humility, an insult to their religion, which instilled pride in its adherents, to such a degree, that suicide was more noble, than to live on in humility. Irony. During the persecutions, Christians were given the choice to recant or die. More irony. At that time the word martyr meant "to give testimony" or "to

hold faith.” Thus a martyr was someone who held fast to a belief, under the threat of death.

In modern times a martyr is someone who sacrifices life for a cause, with or without an immediate, personal threat to life. Kamikaze pilots and Muslim suicide bombers are martyrs, by this definition. In present day usage, a martyr is more loosely defined as someone, who willingly suffers, or sacrifices, to extreme, for a cause. For the purposes of this essay, a martyr is anyone who sacrifices their life for a cause. The intent of this essay is, to discuss martyrdom in the context of contemporary culture and Christianity.

There seems to be a prevailing belief, especially among Christians, that sacrificial death strengthens a cause. To this writer, this belief is questionable. It is not the sacrifice that he questions, it is the death. There is no question about sacrifice being inspiring, it certainly is. Death accentuates the sincerity of intent, but does death in itself, strengthen the cause?

Adherents of this belief usually point to the sacrificial death of the body of Jesus. The Gospels speak of prophecies predicting the death of the messiah. On numerous occasions, Christ-Jesus, himself, alludes to the necessity of his death. How many times in life have we heard the words, “Christ died for your sins”? The reality is that Christ lives for our sins. The necessity for the death of Christ-Jesus, was about of us, more than it was about Christ. It is true that Christ learned, firsthand, the fear that humans have of death, by undergoing crucifixion, and thereby can minister to our fears from experience, but that is only a small part of the matter. Surely from the vantage of the highest of the Archangels, his consciousness was far beyond the personal pain during passage from one world to another. Christ did suffer on the cross, but the suffering was in the realization of the magnitude of the sacrifice that was being made, not so much the pain. The crucifixion was about acceptance. Christ was accepting the burden of us, and of the earth. Christ was taking on our suffering, which is enormous. The acceptance of Christ was with the realization that we are mostly ignorant of the causes of our suffering. There was, and is, acceptance on our part also. The most common definition of being human is: “to be human is to be moral.” We define ourselves by death. This self-definition has arisen since the fall, which was about death and the fear of death. Christ was an alien to us, just as much as death was alien to him. In killing the body of Jesus, inhabited by Christ, we accepted Christ as one

of us. In accepting Christ, we opened ourselves to the potential of redemption through grace. The gift of the grace of Christ, is a matter of freedom. It is given in freedom, and can only be received in freedom. In the crucifixion, we accepted Christ as one of us, and received him into the earth. Individual acceptance of Christ, inwardly, is a separate issue. The sacrifice of Christ had to be a blood sacrifice for several reasons. The spiritual life is in the blood. In giving blood, one is establishing the bond of life. Mephistopheles wanted the signature of Faust in blood. In some societies, one cannot bond in friendship without an exchange of blood. The sacrifice of Christ, beyond being immense, was also a practical necessity. The power of the crucifixion was in Christ, not in the death, which was a finalization—something like the signing of a will. The crucifixion, and the work of Christ was, and is, the greatest sacrifice known to us. The power attributed to the death of the body of Jesus, is actually in the sacrifice—the foregoing of something for something greater. “Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.” “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.” Knowing this, as Christian mystical aspirants who try to live the life of Christ in ourselves, it behooves us to further examine the power in sacrifice, and Christian sacrifice in particular. Doing this helps understanding suicide.

Suicide, which is not a sacrifice, is a reality, which mystical aspirants must address, if they wish to serve all humans. It seems to this writer, that Rosicrucian aspirants have not done well with the problem of suicide. Knowledge of what happens to suicides in the post mortem, seems to have led to complacency instead of compassion. We have left the matter to the laws of nature operative in the spiritual worlds. We have given our attention to consequences, instead of causes, and we have left it at that. We have looked death’s negativity, and not at the undeniable positivity of life, as Kirillov came to do. In instances when we do try to help, we often frighten would be suicides with the consequences in the post mortem for suicides, instead of strengthening the positivity of undeniable life. It is serious when an individual misplaces attention from purposeful life, to preoccupation with personal problems, to such an extent that death seems a reasonable solution to the problems. When things have gone that far, correction, or a redirection of attention, is not simple or easy. Understanding the consciousness of a potential suicide is often trying and difficult. It is worthy of whatever effort is required. The parable of the good Shepard is helpful in such instances. There may be no better way to evolve our minds, than to find a way to help another who is in

this kind of trouble.

Many books have been written on the subject of suicide, some by depressive people who have struggled with suicidal thoughts most of their lives. Most of the books are worthwhile reading for spiritual aspirants.

Suicidal psychology is a deep and complicated subject. The suicidal mind seems to thrive on complications; often complication is part of the problem. During fifty years of informal counseling, this writer has worked with suicidal people several times, sometimes successfully, and sometimes unsuccessfully. In the unsuccessful instances, intentions to suicide were not announced before the deed. That fact alone could kindle interest in those fascinated with invisible causes; to wit, mystical aspirants. Most of this writer's career in counseling is past. It has been wonderful, and he urges others to pursue such a course of service. In doing so, one can learn by doing, and if one offers one's services free of charge, abundant help will come from the higher worlds. Rosicrucian aspirants have advantages in this kind of service work. One advantage is astrology which allows one a view of the hidden, normally unseen, inner life of individuals. Another advantage is the love and positivity of Christ, the lord of life. Together they are a tandem which can produce a good success rate, when helping troubled people.

Having read several of these essays, most readers will have noted that most of them are brief. They are also not thorough, nor are they anywhere near the final word on any of their subjects. They are invitations for readers, to a life of study and service, in various directions. Max Heindel did so much so well, that his followers often conclude that he said all that needed to be said. One consequence of this is that his followers have not been a fountain of the fresh, living water, of Christian mysticism. Because of this, the outward expression of the philosophy of *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* has fallen behind the times along with the book. Few people read books these days; fewer still read books from one hundred years ago. It is obvious to Rosicrucian aspirants from experience, that the principles of *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* are true and applicable, to contemporary life. It is also obvious to those who have tried to share *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*, that its form, and some of its references, are archaic. Correction of this lapse does not need to come in the form of new books, though that might be one avenue. Creative living, because it is live, is a much better path. As chil-

dren of fire, mystic masons, it ought to be a challenge to us, to be able to express the truths of the Rosicrucian philosophy in our own words, or, better, to live them out in our lives and works in the world, in unique new ways. If we cannot do this, it is likely that we don't really know the philosophy, but only think we do. It is dangerous to make a philosophy a thing in itself, which makes it a mere artifice, and isolates it from the ongoing stream of evolution. The function of philosophy is to point to reality. A philosophy is successful to the degree that it helps one to see and live in reality better. Living in a world apart from the greater world; a world of complicated, personal conceptions, a palace of mirrors, is often the situation of a suicide. A depressive can see how bad it all is. Redirection of attention to a greater, objective reality is part of the healing for a potential suicide. Heaping a complicated philosophic paradigm, such as the Rosicrucian philosophy (piling Ossa on Pelion) onto such an individual, is not likely to be healing. Finding the appropriate facet of that philosophy, and creatively seeing how to bring it to a potential suicide, in a way that applies to life, is much more likely to lead to healing and correction. Life, in the larger sense of the word, is thoroughly positive and self-rejuvenating, as Kirillov discovered.

These statements about suicide are true to this writer's experience. They are also meager. A thorough spiritual study of suicide, with or without astrology, would require an entire book, or perhaps several. This writer is interested in doing that, but not as much as he is interested in the purpose of these essays. That purpose is to explore topics in Christianity and Christian mysticism in a manner beneficial to fellow aspirants. Together, in doing this, we can enrich spiritual aspiration, and serve better. With that purpose in mind, the theme of this essay is a specific kind of suicide, religious suicide, i.e., martyrdom.

Martyrdom is about sacrifice. Sacrifice is the giving up of something for the sake of something else. Sacrifice isn't necessarily selfless and altruistic. A chess player may sacrifice a major piece, to obtain a greater strategic advantage. Giving up a favorite food for lent, might well be giving up something that should have been given up for better health, long before lent. If it is a sacrifice of the desire for that food, it might not be a sacrifice at all, but a benefice. Even if it is a sacrifice of the desire, it isn't a true sacrifice, because one is the better for it. Sacrifices, with the intent of self-betterment, are basically selfish. They are playing cause and consequence to their own advantage. Though such sacrifices are selfish, they aren't all bad. Most human betterment, at this

time in evolution, is accomplished by this means. It is evolutionary, but it isn't Christian. Christ introduced a new kind of sacrifice.

The old kind of sacrifice is about self. The Self, the focus of the threefold spirit, is an idea, just like all of the other ideas in the abstract subdivision of the world of thought. The differentiating factor of the Self, as an idea from all of the other ideas, is that it is a divinely conceived idea about divinity, a reflection of God, the spirit. Among all those other ideas, is also the idea of the law. The attributes of the threefold godhead are: will, love-wisdom, and action. The law of cause and consequence is called the principle of action. Self, action, and the law, are mutually co-related. The Self acts. The Self is classically known as the Thinker. In self-conscious action, including sacrifice, one is always more aware of the consequences of actions, and less intent on the causes. There is always a sense of reward or recompense in self-conscious sacrifice. That is fine but, as Christian mystical aspirants, we ache in our hearts for something more than that. We ache for something beyond Self.

“Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself” is a passage worthy of careful scrutiny, with regard to Self and sacrifice. Self love is a definition of vanity. One certainly doesn't want to love one's neighbor in vanity. There must be a better interpretation of this phrase. It seems to lie in the word “thyself.” If one reads “thyself” as “thy self,” the phrase has a very different meaning, a Christian meaning. In this interpretation, the neighbor becomes not only the object of love, but also, the self. Thus the sentence becomes an excellent definition of altruism. Altruism is the love of Life Spirit, the home of Christ. Life Spirit transcends the world of thought, it transcends the law. Life Spirit is the universal selfness, out of which the Self, the law, and all other principles and ideas are conceived. Sacrifices made for the Christ's sake, take one beyond self—“my burden is light.” Christian sacrifice is of a different world. It cannot be completely comprehended by the world of the self. Acting for the Christ's sake, elevates one out of personal problems, and even considerations of the individuality. It may be argued that, even if one acts for the Christ's sake, the acts will still have reactions, consequences. That cannot be denied, BUT if one is in Christ, one's evaluations are in Christ and not in Self; personal consequences aren't as important. In transition to that ideal, one yearns to do things with no return, which is impossible. One respects one's responsibilities, and sees and strengthens the beauty in all things, but one's heart is with love, and for the other, and one is unmoved even by positive pride. Clearly,

this is a distant ideal. We want something a bit more practical to our present lives as we grow into that ideal. Our Elder Brothers provide an excellent example.

In a serious study of astrology and destiny, one realizes we have far less freedom than we think we do. Our lives are not completely destined, but they certainly aren't completely free either. In some little things we have freedom, but not so much in the big things. Our spouses, our friends, major events, almost all, are determined before we come to rebirth. In many unpleasant things, we can try to minimize suffering by learning from the experiences, and getting the most out of them. It will continue to be this way, until we can decrystallize our attitudes, which have been hardened into materialism, and redeem our burden of destiny, by regenerating destiny into positivity, through creative activities. Gradually, lifetime by lifetime, we master ourselves, control our destiny, and become more free. As we do so, we sense purpose in Life Spirit beyond Self, and we long to live in transcendent purposefulness. Some long to be selfless, a mistake. Eons of evolution under the care of divine, creative hierarchies have helped us to establish our selfhood. Our selfhood, and the waking self-consciousness it brings to the creation, are a good part of our service, and part of our purpose. To dissolve selfhood, were it possible, would be far more egregious than suicide. Recognition of the perspective of self in eternity, is a kind of survival instinct in eternity. We preserve and treasure our individual perspective as much as we do our life here on earth. If we don't neglect selfhood, and we certainly don't destroy it, what do we do? We maintain and grow it, with respect for it, and we surrender it to the purpose of it found in Life Spirit, to Christ, without abandoning it. These are high sounding words but what do they mean?

When we probe deeply into our selves, we find in their emptiness, something common to all, an essence of being, a selfness which is the same for all. It is as if the self is an eternal, eddy, among innumerable others, in an ocean of selfness, in an ocean of purpose. In this ocean, we vainly try to draw manifest matter into the emptiness of our eddies to fulfill that purpose. We do have responsibility in our material work, and are intent in ourselves in our work, but not to the clogging loss of purpose. We are preoccupied with ourselves and our work. We endue it with independent reality. We even identify with it, instead of the greater reality of the unified selfness, which some call the Over-Self. When we do this, we experience the pains and sorrows of the little

life, personally. We are lost to the consolidation of our emptiness. We are prisoners of the law, and of our destiny. However, as we dissolve our frozen destiny, and transmute it into soul material; as we alchemize facts into truth, we free ourselves from attachment and personalization. We do not destroy our selfhood, we actually clarify and intensify its definition, BUT we see and identify it with the selfness. We transfer attention from the emptiness, the necessary nothing, the eddy, to the fullness of the ocean. These are, again, lofty sounding words, but what do they mean in living reality?

These words mean that we live life, and everything in it, voluntarily. We call voluntary life freedom, which is a skill at living. We do not cease to live, we live for the other, for the all, for the ultimate other, Christ in the Life Spirit—not an unreal state, but a state of greater reality, a more authentic existence. Some think, in error, that such a state is blissful and free from pain and sorrow, and they seek to live exclusively in bliss. Bliss there certainly is, but not exclusively. The reality is that everything, including pain and sorrow, is vivified. The grief and agony that Christ experiences in bringing love to redeem us, is not imaginary, though the magnitude of its reality is incomprehensible to our current consciousness. It evokes inestimable compassion. It is like the compassion one feels for a drunk, who is wreaking havoc on himself and others, without knowing it. It is pitiful. The difference is in magnitude. The compassion Christ feels for our ignorant self-harm is many times more than we feel for a drunk, or a lunatic, acting in ignorance.

The life of Christ is not a passive life, it is highly active. It is a life of giving, voluntary giving of self in selfness; a giving of life, Life Spirit life. It is a giving of love, not the emotion of love in the desire world, but a love beyond words. This great giving is attractive, in an attraction that is a higher octave of the principle of attraction in the desire world. The love of Christ draws into Life Spirit the soul stuff of our sins, where they are transmuted into spirit. We certainly cannot experience the full life of Christ in our present state, but we can emulate it as well as we can. In fact, we are commanded to do so. However, we can only do so, to the degree that we are free. Whether we suffer or rejoice, we experience in our own destiny, under the law. We stagger under the burden of unredeemed destiny, and we blunt and inhibit our divine capacities, but we do get glimmers of light.

We have the shining examples of our Elder Brothers to show us the way.

They can do what we cannot do yet. Their doings are more than the magical miracles of Saint Germain and other magicians. Their greatest work is transmutation of the highest order, which can only be done in freedom. They, by loving in the way of Christ, draw into their inner being, our nasty, unregenerate thoughts and desires. These they transmute and transform into positive things, born of the same principle, at the roots of the sins. This activity both cleans and enriches the psychic atmosphere of the earth, making it easier for all to advance. Their sacrifice is to absorb enormous suffering, to the end of betterment for all. Sacrificial martyrdom, true martyrdom.

The biblical Christ tells us we will be persecuted for his name's sake. In the beatitudes we are told we are blessed when we are falsely reviled for his sake. We are specially blessed when we endure suffering, not as part of our auto-generated destiny, but in freedom in Christ; in the life of the Life Spirit. In doing this, the consequence of the acts, born in voluntary suffering, is relatively unimportant, the love and the new life is. It is relatively easy to learn to accept the suffering of our own causation; it is not so easy to suffer when it is not due by cause and consequence, but is taken on for the sake of others. When we can do this, the spiritual joy exceeds the suffering but we can only experience it when it is not for our own sake. The goal of authentic martyrdom is life, not death. Acts of love in the face of suffering are not suicide, they are not masochism; they are gestures in freedom, in new LIFE.

Perhaps Kirillov was not so far from truth after all.

What's New?

It was the extremely good fortune of this writer to have served at Mt. Ecclesia, the headquarters of the Rosicrucian Fellowship, during the mid-nineteen-sixties. The Rosicrucian philosophy was new to him, and he was filled with enthusiasm. He was young, and bursting with energy. He was also ready, willing, and eager to work. Most of his activities were menial: shipping clerk, errand boy, bindery worker, printer's devil, cafeteria cashier. It was all good to him. There was camaraderie among the workers, and often workers shared special moments. The sharings that spoke most to this writer, were when heartfelt expressions of spiritual joy, in letters from Latin America, were shared. He was so impressed with those sentiments, that he promised himself to travel to the places of origin of those letters. When he retired from his profession in 1998, he set out to fulfill that promise, but there were roadblocks and detours that frustrated the fulfillment of his dream for several years. Finally, in the autumn of 2004, he flew to Medellin, Colombia to begin his journey. The trip lasted about three months, and included every country of South America but Venezuela and the Guianas. Sometimes it was necessary to fly but most of the time the trip was by bus, and once by boat between Buenos Aires and Montevideo. Bussing gave an intimate view of the countryside, and the people. It was special.

During the trip, he met as many groups, and individuals, of the Rosicrucian Fellowship, that it was possible to meet. There was no disappointment about the character of the members. However, though there was joy in the "fellowship of the spirit", there were questions. Most of the questions were the same questions that arose when visiting Rosicrucian Fellowship groups and individuals in the United States.

Foremost among these questions is: "Why has the membership of the Rosicrucian Fellowship been falling dramatically during a time period when one would expect growth?" When this question is put before enquiring minds, another question is the usual response: "How do you know this is a time when one would expect growth?" This writer does have an answer for the second question, but only tentative answers for the first. However, the answer to the second question is long and technical, long enough to require an additional essay which is a task to which he is disinclined at the moment. Various tentative answers could be offered for the first question, but this writer is also

disinclined to do that also, peevish as he is. The reason for this disinclination is that some of the answers come too close to issues about which people have political opinions. This writer actively eschews politics, especially church politics, as much as possible. Spiritual problems cannot be solved by politics, and attempts to do so, seem to make things worse. Another reason for the disinclination to try to answer the first question, is that in delving into the issues involved, one encounters massive frustration and futility. It seems much wiser and more satisfying, to examine things of this nature in a manner more conducive to answers, about which one can do something. One such question is: "What can we do to renew the work of Christ and the Rosicrucian Order at this time?" A simple answer is so simple that it seems trite. This answer is, as Max Heindel would say, "live the life." That is certainly imperative but, as children of fire, we want precise, thorough, deep, and particular answers, relevant to the present, and the issues at hand. In seeking precise and relevant answers, we note that it is a question about renewal itself, which is at the very heart of Christianity. To get to the essence of renewal, we can ask yet another simple question: "What's new?" It may seem foolish to ask this question, but this writer has asked many foolish questions, and has found them fruitful in wisdom. The poet William Blake wrote "if a fool persists in his folly, he will become wise." This line has several interpretations, but it does provide hope in proceeding forward, with any of them.

The cosmography of the Rosicrucian philosophy, and the reality it describes, is a dualistic monism. The universe, the one thing, is indeed one. Within the universe there is a continuous pole of states of being. In *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* it is called the spirit-matter pole in Cosmic Root Substance. Proceeding along the pole from its center in one direction, one encounters increasingly rare spiritual states of being. In the other direction, one encounters progressively more concrete states of matter. Both poles stretch into potential, into the unknown. In the unknown there is potentially, something completely new to manifest being. Thus, in this internal dualism, one can see two potential kinds of newness, relative to the two directions along the spirit-matter pole.

The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception has an alternate title. It is *Mystic Christianity*. The Rosicrucian philosophy is about the reality of the cosmos, especially the inner reality, from a Christian perspective. To a Rosicrucian student, Christ is an exalted spiritual being. Speaking technically, Christ is the

Highest Initiate of the Sun Period, when our current Archangels were in the human-like stage of evolution. As the Highest Initiate, Christ became the personification of the second attribute of the Godhead, the Son. The lowest vehicle of consciousness of a Highest Initiate of any life wave, is the highest vehicle of the non initiated members of that life wave. For Christ, the lowest vehicle is Life Spirit. Christ functions in Life Spirit in a manner analogous to the way we function in our dense physical bodies—a fact almost incredible to our current human consciousness. As the Son, Christ is the living, focal representative of Life Spirit. To experience Christ, even in the lowest state, is to experience Life Spirit. The highest vehicle of consciousness of Christ is in the World of God, a state beyond our current capacity to consciously experience. Since we are seeking to understand novelty (what's new) in the spirit direction of the spirit-matter pole, the Christian Bible would seem a good place to begin.

In the book of Revelation of the Christian Bible we read: “And he that sat on the throne said, Behold I make all things new.” Some things in the Bible are symbolic, and some are not. The throne is symbolic of a state of spiritual repose; the statement made by him who sat on the throne is not symbolic. This statement is to be taken literally. However, when taking it literally, we must be careful about what it means. The words “I make” in this statement do not mean to take direct action. It is not like a stage magician waving a wand and producing a new object. In the transcendental spiritual worlds, especially in the worlds beyond the World of Human Spirit, things are done and sustained, in spirit. Waves of creation, and the intuitions within them, that are sustained in spirit, are carried out by lesser beings, though many of the lesser beings are far beyond us in evolutionary accomplishment. In the Bible we are told “by their works, ye shall know them.” In the World of Life Spirit the unity of spirit is so seamless and thorough, that being, and the works of being, are as one. To know the works is to know the being. In this “making all things new,” one experiences the newness of Life Spirit. Novelty, or newness, is an attribute, an essence of Life Spirit.

The newness of Life Spirit is something we all have experienced, usually in miniscule doses. Sometimes we read a passage in the Bible, or *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*, and we discover something new and different, even though we may have read the same passage many times before. The new thing we have discovered is not new to the book; it has been there all along.

The newness is in us. In our aspiration, we have drawn closer to Christ in Life Spirit. The discovery, the new, is an intuition in Life Spirit. It is a moment of the light of truth, as when Christ says “I am the truth.” We sense the eternal life of Life Spirit, as the truth dawns on us, and will continue to dawn on us in an eternal sunrise, as long as we can sustain the moment. A better, common experience of the newness of Life Spirit, occurs in moments of grace. When we are forgiven a sin, everything is new; everything is light and bright and free. Causes and consequences have not been voided, they continue on as always, but we are new and different. We see and do things in a new light, we are filled with the love of Christ. In this new love and light, we creatively transmute consequences into new and better causes, and we patiently bear those that we cannot change immediately. If the moment of truth is extensive, our lives are changed forever. Such an experience of novelty is called a second birth in Christ. Birth in Christ, is spoken of in several places in the Gospels, none better than in John 3:3 “Verily, verily I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

Max Heindel tells us there is a “Memory of Nature” in the World of Life Spirit. To understand what he meant, we must change our conception about the nature of memory. This memory is not like a fossil from hundreds of millions ago, nor is it like chiseled hieroglyphs from thousands of years ago, nor is it like a musty manuscript from hundreds of years ago, or a photo or a recording from moments ago. It isn’t even like energies in formation, or deformation, in the ethers. It is alive, perpetually alive, with a life well beyond our current experience of life. It is perpetually renewed in itself. It cannot be any other way, because that is the very nature of Life Spirit, and of Christ. The new religion, the religion of Christ, is not just new in comparison to the old religions of the law, though that comparison is wonderful. The religion of Christ is the religion of newness itself. It is the religion of eternal renewal. “Behold I make all things new.”

With this realization, other questions arise. These, now relevant, questions are something like: “How does this relate to renewal of the Rosicrucian Fellowship?” or “How can we apply this to our work?”

The Rosicrucian Fellowship is just past a century old. The writings of Max Heindel, which constitute the core of the Rosicrucian philosophy, are unchanged. Some would say this is bad, because few people read books from

one hundred years ago. Some would say that all that needs to be done to modernize, and renew the philosophy and the organization, is to use modern parlance and references. Others, more radical, think we should have completely new books and literature, in contemporary language and culture. Still others think that the things addressed in the writings of Max Heindel are timeless; therefore, it is okay to leave the literature as it is, because it has a strong magnetism of mystical aspiration. All of these viewpoints have merit. All of these viewpoints miss the most important point.

There is only one significant difference between the Rosicrucian Fellowship at its inception, and the Rosicrucian Fellowship now. That simple, significant, difference is Max Heindel. Stating this fact is not meant to foster nostalgia, or Max Heindel idolatry. Stating this fact is not a pitch for a new leader, which might also miss the point. Instead of these things, it seems wise to ask other questions. What was there about Max Heindel that made such a difference? What can we do about the answer to this question? One obvious answer to the first of these new questions is, Max Heindel was a Christian Initiate. As a Christian Initiate, he had the experience of Christ in the world of Life Spirit. St. Paul, in third heaven on the fringe of the world of Life Spirit, saw Christ, and from that experience, was able to set the direction of the development of Christianity for centuries. As a Christian Initiate, Max Heindel could bring the effects of the experience of Life Spirit into his personality, and his works in the world. The experience of Life Spirit was not a singular experience for Max Heindel. During his years at Mt. Ecclesia, this writer met people who knew Max Heindel in the flesh. They said that when there were healing services, people left the chapel with tears streaming down their cheeks from the experience of drawing on Life Spirit for healing.

Most of us are not likely to become Christian Initiates in the near future. This does not mean we are barred from reaching the world of Life Spirit. We are encouraged to try to do so regularly. The Rosicrucian Fellowship healing service gives us incentive, and a clear formula, to reach to Life Spirit, for healing power that fulfills the second commandment of Christ, to heal the sick. To do this, one must feel deeply and intensely, which is something anyone can do, if they care. We cannot hurt ourselves in trying. When we band together in healing prayer groups, our efficacy is significantly enhanced, and success is more likely. If only one person, in one group, anywhere, breaks through to Life Spirit, all of us will be uplifted, through the bond of our common com-

mitment. In this, the Rosicrucian emblem acts as a means, a talisman, to share in the Life Spirit surge with all.

In *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*, we learn how the law of attraction works in the desire world. When we sacrifice ourselves and give love, it attracts others. Everyone wants to be around someone who loves; however, as beautiful as that is, it speaks only of the emotion of love in the desire world. The love of Life Spirit is inestimably more attractive. The dramatic growth of the Rosicrucian Fellowship should have been no surprise with Max Heindel reaching Life Spirit. Our attractive power would again be enormous if any one of us were to reach Life Spirit, and bring it into our common spiritual bond.

As with most spiritual things, the benefits of an accomplishment are more than singular. When we sacrifice, we always receive more than we sacrificed, that is the way of evolutionary growth. In several places in his writings, Max Heindel tells us we sacrifice one ability in order to develop another, because in our present limitations, we cannot maintain both abilities at the same time. We are also told, that when we sufficiently develop the new ability, we regain the ability sacrificed, at a higher level. One example of this involves our sacrifice of the plant-like ability to extract and utilize etheric energy from sunlight. We did this to develop the animal-like ability to experience desire and emotion. Plants grow as long as they live. Animals and humans grow until desire checks etheric growth. Animals and humans need plants for vitality. Now, as humans, we can harness the desire function to drive prayer to the world of Life Spirit, from which we can draw. When we transduce the Life Spirit flux into an etheric healing panacea, we have regained the sacrificed plant-like ability at a higher level. Simultaneously, when doing this, we are bringing in the New Jerusalem of Globe E of the Earth Period. In true sacrifice, we always get much more than we gave.

In the paragraphs above, we gain a rudimentary understanding of novelty in the spirit direction of the spirit-matter pole. We also see how we can utilize our understanding in our work to fulfill the second commandment of Christ—to heal the sick—and to hasten the day of the liberation of Christ. Getting at novelty in the matter direction of the spirit-matter pole is more difficult.

To get at material novelty, we must try to do the impossible. In this case that means to speak about the Unspeakable. In mysticism, a name for the Unspeakable is the Absolute. The Absolute is everything that is ..., everything that isn't ..., andThe final, open-ended ellipsis indicates a supra-rational silence. Silence and absolute blackness (or invisibility) have always been used to designate the Absolute. Even using the definite article with the Absolute is to give it excessive, existential objectification.

In the Rosicrucian philosophy everything that “is”, is called the Supreme Being. There is no term or name for everything that “is not”, the non being in the Absolute. It is as unnamed as it is unknown. Some even name it “the Unknown.”

There is a state between what “is”, and what “is not”, in the Absolute. It is a state of potential. Potential is what could be. There has to be a potential, before something before something can be.

Potential is a capacity for receiving, bearing, or sustaining, existential relationships. Since we experience potential from within the spirit-matter pole of manifest being, potential is also polarized. The co-capacities of potential are time and space. The words time and space do not mean the same thing in mysticism, that they mean in physics. The usage of physics is certainly valid, but it is a subset of a broader view of potential. Between potential and the spirit-matter pole of manifest being is yet another state of being called Cosmic Root Substance. Cosmic Root Substance is the monistic, root, state from which both spirit and matter spring reflectively. One way to begin to conceive of the nature of Cosmic Root Substance, is to think of it as mathematical space comprised of contiguous points which have only position and no diameter. It is both infinitely rare, and infinitely dense, simultaneously.

On any level of being, from the Supreme Being down, the nature of spirit is positive. It creates and gives. For example, filled with the spirit of sharing, the Creator of our solar cosmos intuitively senses that, in potential, there could be more of itself to share with. It is analogous to the way we intuitively sense, that we could potentially be more than we currently are. With our fledgling, earthbound, human consciousness, it is difficult to understand such spiritual things as eternal, unlimited, auto-rejuvenescence. “The ways of God are strange to the ways of men.” The old adage says “where there is a will there

is a way,” and, in the deepest state of spiritual being, there is the will to be.

On any level of manifestation, spirit represents the known. It knows itself, so it is the knower and the known. In its endeavor to give, create, and share, it must do so by penetrating the unknown, that which “is not.” This is done by projecting a dream, or hypothesis, i.e., “what could be,” into the capacity of potential. Analogously, this is what an artist does in conceiving a painting or a statue. In Cosmic Root Substance, the dream is a reflection of the creator at the matter end of the spirit-matter pole, for the purpose of making the unknown known. Thus, the states of matter can be understood as being reflective, congealed, ignorance of the unknown, of what “is not.” Matter complements spirit by receiving, where spirit gives, in a manner similar to the way a mirror image complements an object in this world. In the creative interaction between spirit and matter, the unknown becomes known. It is analogous to the way we struggle with the ignorance in ourselves, materialized by our positive assertions, as we awaken in soul growth. Because there is ignorance in not knowing, there is a struggle between spirit and matter. It is perfect, creative feedback, wherein every action has its equal and opposite reaction. In the cosmic perspective, the ignorance is much less (and of a different quality) than human ignorance, which is born of willful defiance that produces inharmony. In the struggle between the known and the unknown—the realization of the dream—matter is transformed and eventually transmuted into spirit through an intermediary state called soul. It is called the spiritualization of matter. All of this is accomplished in a regular, rhythmic, creative scheme, or creative dream, which is a reflection of divine wisdom, a cosmo-logic.

In our local, solar, creative manifestation, the Creator manifests states of being (called worlds in Rosicrucian philosophy) out of Cosmic Root Substance along the spirit-matter pole. This is done within the co-potentials of time and space. Spiritual qualities are manifest in “Periods” of time, with astrological names such as the Saturn Period, the Sun Period, and so on. Material forms are manifest in “Globes” in space, named Globe A, Globe B and so on. The globes could be called the Saturn Globe, The Sun Globe and so on, but then they would be too easily confused with the planets of the same names. The spiritual, beings of various grades of consciousness, participating in the evolutionary creation, revolve into and out of the states of spirit and matter, of the periods and globes, in what are called revolutions of consciousness. These revolutions have the same planetary names as the periods and globes.

This creative scheme produces myriad experiences for evolutionary work. Part two of *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* describes the order of the process quite well.

The projection of the dream, or hypothesis, in our creative manifestation is called the materialization of spirit. Materialization of spirit is accomplished during involution. The absorbing of the new known matter into spirit, via the transitional state called soul, is called the spiritualization of matter. Spiritualization of matter occurs during evolution. Whether projecting or absorbing, the activity is accomplished through the center of being, also called the lens of mind.

Because it is a lens, there is inversion. In this physical world, we live in an inversion of transcendental reality. Because we are indwelling spiritual beings, we make corrections for inversion. Analogously, because our eyes are lenses, we see the external world inverted from its real state, and we also make corrections for the inversions. Several clever experiments have demonstrated this latter.

One of the features of the cosmic lens inversion, is that realms most distant from the lens of mind, (the creative center) on the spirit side, are reflectively projected into the realms of matter most distant from the lens on the material side. Thus, the Divine Spirit, the realm of the Father, is reflectively projected into chemical matter. In our fallen, materialistic, consciousness, we have become inverted; we see things upside-down and backwards. In coming into matter, in the way we have, we have lost our spiritual vision. Being out of touch, we are insecure. We are inverted. We seek security not in the divine Father, but in the divine Father principle sleeping in chemical matter. In this we suffocate our spiritual being. It seems we cannot get enough of chemical matter, which can never satisfy our higher spiritual hunger.

There is another problem inherent in our materialism. In our materialistic encumbrance, we have lost our sprightly, spiritual vivacity. We have become dull and numb and, because we are egoistic, we become bored. In response to boredom, we try to vivify, and identify ourselves with the newest and latest material thing, We are faddish. Though not accomplished mystics, we sense the novelty of being, *that has never been before*, an unprecedented novelty, which lies sleeping in the interactive dream, that is matter. We are fascinated

by the wonder, and the marvels, born out of interactions with the unknown that is matter. We try to distinguish and advance ourselves in this novelty. In this, we become more materialistic. It is imperative that we progress spiritually through evolution, so there is progress even in this. If we don't progress, material necessity pushes us to.

The experience of evolution is always new. We never go back to old forms. One reason for this is that our actions change evolutionary conditions so that it is impossible to go back, even if we want to. Another reason is that we improve, and want to get better.

In all of this, we can see that there are two different types of newness, one in spirit, and one in sleeping in matter. This knowledge about matter raises new questions. What does this mean for the work of the Rosicrucian Fellowship? How can this be used to rejuvenate the Rosicrucian Fellowship and attract others to share in this work?

The Rosicrucian Fellowship is an exoteric organization, a child of the Rosicrucian Order, which is an esoteric organization. The Rosicrucian Fellowship was created to introduce the philosophy of the Rosicrucian Order to the general public, and to invite whosoever will, to join and share, in what alchemists called "the Great Work." The Rosicrucian philosophy, and its work, are for children of fire. Children of fire are individuals who see life as a challenge, and who question, instead of merely following authority. They are individuals of such a nature that they would "make two blades of grass grow where only one grew before." Children of water emphasize faith more than works. They trust authority, and are more likely to believe what has been presented to them, by those who would lead them. As we advance in spiritual evolution, it is important that children of fire be the leaders and teachers of humanity. We are products of our experiences. We are better products and participants in the evolutionary creation, if we not only know what is the best course of action, but that we also know *why* it is the best course of action. Experience is imperative for evolution, knowing what experience means is superlative. This is the evolutionary work of the children of fire; this is the work of the Rosicrucian Order; this ought to be the work of the Rosicrucian Fellowship, if we want to succeed, and justify our continued existence.

The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception is the result of spiritual research by chil-

dren of fire over many millennia. It gives us a clear picture of the grand creative process, in which, it is our blessing to participate. It not only describes the divine plan, it gives the reasons behind the evolutionary activities, it answers the “whys.” It is a massive body of knowledge given to the world by the Rosicrucian Order, heirs to the earlier works of the children of fire. Max Heindel tells us that, among the earlier children of fire, Lazarus was Hiram, the master of the master builders of Solomon’s temple. In turn, Lazarus was raised by the “paw of the Lion of Judah” and was given new symbols to replace his hammer: a rose and a cross, i.e., he became Christian Rosenkreutz, founder of the Rosicrucian Order. “A massive body of knowledge” could be the words to describe *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*. A skeleton might be a better word because *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* needs to be fleshed out. It is now our duty, as Christian mystical aspirants, to do the fleshing out, and the raising the skeleton of Lazarus. The rest, of the works of Max Heindel, beyond *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*, did some of the fleshing out, to our benefit and blessing. He urged us to do the same. This does not mean that we are to write books, or to try to be the next Max Heindel. It does mean, that we are to seek insights, as we study the Rosicrucian philosophy, and to share them creatively, whenever we share our enthusiasm for Christian mystical aspiration. We do not need a new *Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* or a new Max Heindel, though such might come. We do not need to be initiates. We can help as we are now. All of us are capable of spiritual insight. It is part of our spiritual heritage. The living truth, shared individual to individual, with enthusiasm is more effective, and attractive, than any book.

“Freely have ye received, now freely give.”