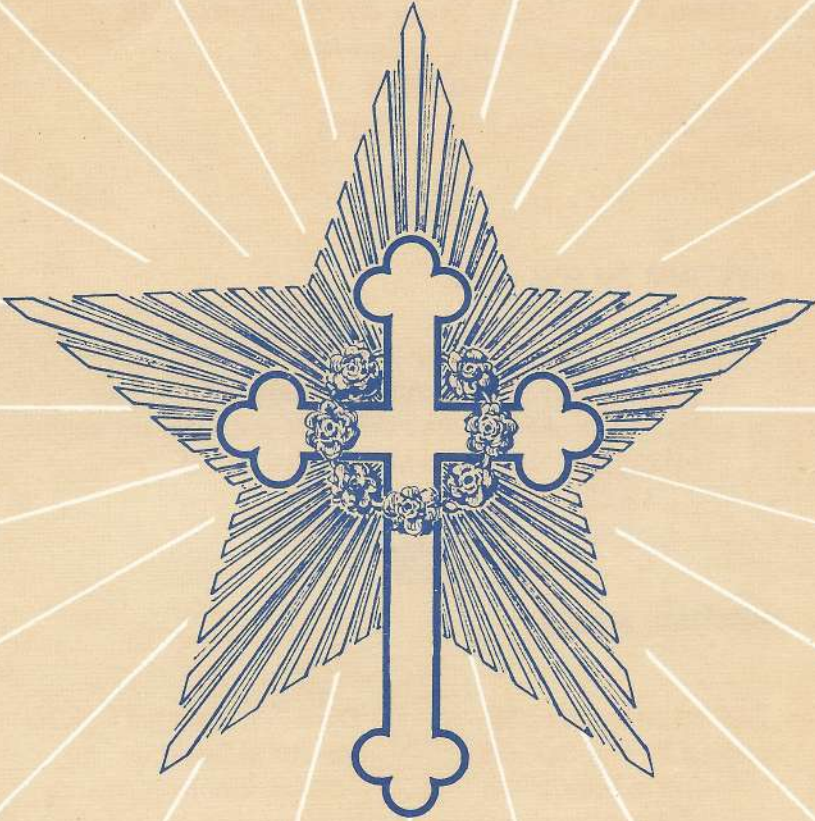
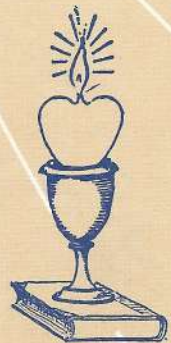


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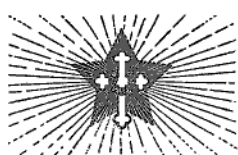
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Not Ours To Own

Nothing in this world can we own
No body, thing or gold,
Nothing is ours to unfold
But God, the Christ within.

For it is true that all we see is God's
And not our own
And all we reap
Or all we keep
Is from His law and what we've sown.

So nothing in this world can we own
No body, thing or gold,
Nothing is ours to unfold
But God, the Christ within.

We may spend all our time
Clasping, grasping, Saying mine,
But when the time
On earth has flown,
And the other side is nigh,
The world and all its glitter dies
And we reap the spirit of what we've
sown.

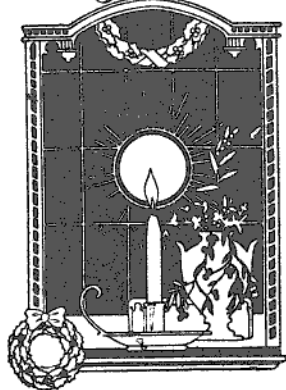
For nothing in this world can we own
No body, thing or gold,
Nothing is ours to unfold,
But God, the Christ within.

Yet all is ours
and all is His
For we are part of Him that is,
for in the spirit we keep all
That in the spirit we have grown.
This is where our reaping is:
From seeds of spirit we have sown.

Nothing in this world can we own,
No body, thing or gold,
Nothing is ours to unfold
But God, the Christ within.

—Michael Miles

Merry Christmas



Noel

Star-dust and vaporous light, —
The mist of worlds unborn, —
A shuddering in the awful night
Of winds that bring the morn.

Now comes the dawn: the circling Earth;
Creatures that fly and crawl;
And Man, that last, imperial birth;
And Christ, the flower of all.

—Richard Watson Gilder

Be At One With Him

Sift the beauty of the feathered snow!
Ease the clamour, quell the turbulence
Of nations unresolved, of peoples locked
In ideologies and iron creeds!

Absorb the blessing of the winter
stillness.

Look upon the wonder of a Babe
Asleep within the stall — the gentle One.
Center all your thoughts upon the Christ!
Be at peace, at one with Him tonight,
For He is the Answer —

He is the Love —
He is the Light.

— Marguerite Arabel Wing

EDITORIAL

The Stranger Within



We walked down the steep mountain trail in the dim greenness of closely pressing trees. "In the spring this is a mountain of flowers, these are all flowering trees," said our friend. Now we saw just ordinary trees. Lovely, but similar to many other hillsides. There was nothing to hint of the splendor that appears at the proper season.

At most seasons of our lives we too are quite ordinary. Sometimes lovely with new growth, sometimes barren and lifeless appearing in our winters of dormancy.

Our dormant periods are important too. It is then that our forces are gathered and concentrated while we consolidate our gains before entering into a new cycle of expansion.

How we love the times when new beauty bursts upon us and we feel a surge of flowering and growth within us! Such a time is our first realization that the Christ dwells within even us. This is our own true Christmas. We hear the singing of angels, while becoming aware of the lowly stable in which He is born. We alternate between adoration of Him and consternation at our unworthiness.

From this day our lives are changed. The winters are never again quite so bleak. With care and devotion we nurture this infant awareness, that the young Child may wax and grow strong. At an early age we find Him teaching in the temple, and listen in amazement at the things He reveals to us.

"If we have heretofore despaired of our ability to work for Christ, then let this despair pass, for has He not said, 'Greater works than these shall ye do'? Would He who was the Word of truth have said such things if it were not possible to realize them? All things are possible to them that love God. If we will really work in our own little sphere, not looking for the greater things until we have done the work close at hand, then we shall find that a wonderful soul growth may be attained, so that the people who are round about us shall see in us something which they may not be able to define but which will nevertheless be patent to them — they shall see that Christmas light, the light of the new-born Christ, shining within our sphere of action." *Mystical Interpretation of Christmas.*

As He grows in strength and maturity, we find that now He is caring for us. He who seemed at first a Stranger within, is now recognized as the beloved Son. And the government is upon His shoulders.

MYSTIC



LIGHT

The Legend of Christmas

The legend is told of a King and His sons. The eldest was called the White Prince because he always wore a pure white robe which shone like silver. The King was so gentle and loving it was impossible to tell how great His love was. The sons also were good and loved their Elder Brother, the White Prince, very dearly. They always looked to Him for wise counsel and help in the work they did for their Father, the King.

The King's palace shone with wondrous brightness; there were no shadows at all, because the King and His sons shed a golden light where ever they went, due to their great love for everyone. In their glorious country Light was caused by Love.

Although it may seem strange, the King of Love had countless other children. That they might live happily and work for Him, He gave them good homes, supplying all their needs. These homes were called Stars.

The King's bright palace was in

the center of all the star-homes, enabling the King and His sons to watch over and guide the younger families so dear to them. Every day the Father-King shed long rays of love-light on the star homes which gave strength to the children, helping them in their work. The King always knew when the star-children were good and tried to please Him, for then the star-homes shone brightly; but if they were disobedient and selfish, the star-homes became dim. On one of these stars, a certain family was given some important work to do. The King was most anxious that they do it well and learn to love Him dearly; He would then make princes of them and take them to live with Him in His own beautiful palace.

One day, as the King and His sons were walking upon the palace roof looking out upon the star-homes, a troubled look passed over the faces of all of them. The King said with great calmness: "Dear sons, I am afraid all is not well; one of my star-homes is not

shining so brightly today." A sad silence followed because it was the star where the important work was being done for the King. Each day they looked, but every day the star grew dimmer. Time passed and the star-home did not brighten. The faces of the King and His sons became very sad when they looked at what they now called the "Sorrowful Star."

Something had to be done to show these children they were not pleasing their Father. The King and His sons pondered how help could be sent, because the exceeding dimness of the star showed that the children had forgotten their Father-King and ceased to love Him.

One day, as the King and the Princes were sitting thinking about what could be done, the King spoke: "Beloved sons, a messenger is needed to go to the Star of Sorrow to show these children how ungrateful and forgetful they are, and to teach them how to do their work to please me. Which of you, my sons, will do this for me?" He asked sadly. Before anyone else could reply, the White Prince stood up, a lovely smile lighting up His face. On His breast, right over His heart, was a white rose. In its purity it shone like a diamond in all directions, shedding such a wondrous light that the other Princes bowed their heads in love and adoration.

Slowly He raised His arms, and as He did so His body gleamed like a cross of silver. Speaking in a sweet, calm voice He said, "Father, if it is Thy will, prepare me a body and I will go to help those erring children of the Sorrowful Star." A shade of sadness rested for a moment on the King's face, followed immediately by a glorious smile of love-light.

"Beloved son," He replied, "It is My will that you shall go, but you will stay there a long, long time. That star

will be your prison house. Love alone will set you free."

Now a very strange thing happened: while the King and the other Princes were gazing in admiration on that shining cross-like body, they saw a change come over it. The arms became two outstretched wings, and gradually there appeared before them a dove-like form of dazzling purity. Silently it floated out into space, taking its flight in the direction of the Star of Sorrow. Soft strains of wondrous music filled the air, falling upon the ears of the silent watchers as they gazed upon the beloved son and brother until He became lost to sight on His pilgrimage of Love.

Let us now look to the Sorrowful Star to see how the children there became aware of the coming of the White Prince.

"And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night.

"And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid.

"And the angel said unto them: 'Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people.

"For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

"And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger."

"And suddenly, there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying:

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men."

"And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another; 'Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.'

"And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

"And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning the child.

"And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them." *John 1:14:*

"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten Son of the Father, full of grace and truth."

Then as the years passed, the message given to the children of the Sorrowful Star was: "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you." *John 15:12*

Also: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." *John 15:13*

It is true that very few of us are called upon to make the supreme sacrifice of laying down our lives for our friends, yet we are asked to give portions of our lives each day. This we may do as our gift of Love to the Prince of Peace.

Love has so many means of expression. When passed through a spectrum we find "Love suffereth long," being expressed as Patience: Love passive; Love waiting to begin; not in a hurry; calm; ready to do its work when the summons comes, but in the meantime wearing the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. "Love suffers long; beareth all things; believeth all things; hopeth all things." For love understands and therefore waits. "And is kind." Kindness is love in action. Have you ever noticed how much of Christ Jesus' time was spent in *merely* doing kind things? He spent the greater portion of His time in helping others. The greatest thing we can do for the Prince of Peace is to be kind to others. How instantaneously it reacts, paying in superabundance. There is no debtor so honorable as Love: Love never faileth, Love is success, Love is happiness, Love is Life.

The poet Browning writes: "Love is the energy of life." Where Love is, there God is. "We shall pass this way but once. Any good thing therefore we can do, or any kindness we can show to

anyone, let us do it now. Let us not delay nor neglect it, for we shall not pass this way again" — for a long time.

"Love envieth not." That is Generosity. This is where Love competes with others. Whenever we attempt a good work we find others doing the same kind of work and probably doing it better. Envy them not, for that is a feeling of ill-will to those who are in the same line as ourselves.

"Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up." This is Humility, which teaches us to put a seal on our lips and forget what we have done. After we have been kind, after Love has stolen forth into the world and done its beautiful work, we must go back into the shade again and say nothing about it. Love hides from itself. Love even waives self-satisfaction.

"Love doth not behave itself unseemly." That is really Courtesy — Love in relation to society, to etiquette. Politeness has been defined as love in trifles. Courtesy is said to be love in little things. And the one secret of politeness is to Love. Robert Burns is referred to as the truest gentleman because he loved everything — the mouse, the daisy, and all things great and small — that God had made. Therefore, with such a passport he could mingle in any society. We know the meaning of the word gentleman — it means a gentle man, a man who does things gently with love. The gentle man cannot in the nature of things do an ungente thing.

"Love seeketh not her own." This is Unselfishness. Man is devoted to his rights, and rightly so, but there comes a time when we may exercise the higher right even by giving up our rights. Love would not have us seek our rights at all. It would have us ignore them and eliminate the personal element altogether from our calculations. It's not hard to give up our rights. The most difficult thing is to give up ourselves. "Look

not every man on his own things, but also on the things of others." The only greatness is unselfish love. Even self-denial in itself is nothing. A great purpose or a mightier love is something. Nothing is a hardship to love. The most obvious lesson in Christ's teaching is that there is no happiness in having or getting anything, but only in giving and in serving others. He who would be happy, let him remember that it is more blessed to give than to receive.

"Love is not easily provoked." This might well be expressed in the words Good Temper. We're all inclined to look upon bad temper as a harmless weakness. The Bible again and again condemns it as one of the most destructive elements in human nature. Yet it is often the one blot on an otherwise noble character. This compatibility of ill temper with a high, moral character is one of the strangest and saddest problems of ethics. Want of patience, want of kindness, want of generosity, want of courtesy, are all symbolized in one flash of temper. So it is not enough to deal with temper. We must go to the source and change the inmost nature. Then angry humors will die of themselves. Souls are made sweet by putting in something great — a great love, a new Spirit, the Spirit of Christ. Therefore, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." It is better not to live than not to love.

"Thinketh no evil." This we may speak of as being single-hearted. The possession of this trait is the great secret of personal influence. It will be found, upon reflection, that the people who influence us the most are the ones who believe in us. Love, thinking no evil, sees the bright side and puts the best construction upon every action.

"Love rejoiceth not in iniquity, but in truth." Sincerity is a great virtue. We will accept only that which is real, striving to get at facts, searching for truth with a humble and unbiased mind,

cherishing whatever is found at any sacrifice.

Our great opportunity lies in having these things fit into our lives by learning to love. Life is full of opportunities; each day finds many of them. How may we love better? Practice is the only way, just as in becoming a good artist, a good musician, or in developing any other talent. Practice is the main requirement. We've named some of the elements of Love, but Love itself cannot be defined. Love is an effect. The cause is: we love, because He first loved us. We love the Christ for showing us the way. Loving Him we become like Him and Love begets Love.

A man once walked into the room of a dying boy and, placing his hand upon the boy's head, said: "My boy, God loves you," and went away. The boy started from his bed, calling out to the people in the house: "God loves me! God loves me!" The realization that God loved him re-charged the boy and made him a new child. So also the love of God makes man a new creature — patient, humble, gentle, and unselfish. There is no other way to beget Love. There is no mystery about it. We love others, we love our enemies, we love everybody, because God first loved us.

May we enter into the Spirit of Christmas at this time by bringing more love into our own lives, as well as into the lives of others, thereby hastening the day when the White Prince may be released from His prison-house in the Sorrowful Star. Then we may take up the work assigned to us by the King.

We wish for each and every one:

The Heart of Christmas —
which is Love

The Spirit of Christmas —
which is Peace

The Gladness of Christmas —
which is Joy.



Toward Bethlehem - 1975



As the Christmas season approaches, the eyes of Christendom turn toward a small village in southern Judea. High dignitaries of the churches gather there to celebrate, with great pomp and ceremony, the birth of a Child. Yet, in the world outside and among the masses of humanity, strange paradoxes mark the general attitude toward this event. The rank materialist looks upon the story of Christmas Eve as a fable. To the merchant, it is an opportunity for business profit. Scientists speculate upon the astronomical configuration that formed the Star. The conforming religionist gives it all lip service and worships his own graven images. Most ordinary good people have a sentimental attachment to the holiday; it is, for them, a time for happy sociability and the renewing of family ties.

It is perhaps the greatest tragedy of the age that, as a whole, the Bethlehem experience is regarded as something beautiful that happened once and long ago. There appears to be little "room" in the consciousness of modern man for the Christ Mass as a personal reality or for the realization of the power of the Christ principle to permeate the being of man and there bring forth his own indwelling Christhood. However, the tide is turning. There is an ancient litany that runs:

Whenever there is a withering of the law, then I manifest myself.
Then will a newer light shine forth. . . .

Adrienne Ashley

Then will new life course through the veins of men.

Then will their vision encompass all the ways of what may be.

There are those who hold that this is word for our time. There is a growing vanguard among humanity, increasing in number all the time, who look with faith and growing certainty toward the future in this difficult period of transition between an old age that is passing and a new one that is forming. This is because they know that the relinquishment of many cherished forms and the acceptance of much that seems strange and undesirable both proceed under the auspices of the Lord of Love and according to the plan He laid down when He walked among men.

Many — more than outer evidence would indicate — are responding to a new inflow of spiritual Love and Light and permitting it to work its miracle in the life. Even a superficial study of the trend in human affairs reveals that humanity is pressing forward toward new dimensions of spiritual awareness. The Spirit of man again stands before Bethlehem's gate invoking new light upon God's continuing revelation of Himself. The Sun-Spirit, Christ, in the terminology of Max Heindel, having, for two thousand years, effectively permeated the vehicle of Earth with His redeeming power, will not be denied the consummation of His purpose. Pierre de Chardin

speaks significantly of an "explosion toward God."

Correspondences

Always, as students, we look to the past that, by use of the law of correspondence, we may better understand the present and anticipate the future. There are many similarities between the time in which we live and that which witnessed the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem. The centuries immediately preceding the Incarnation were stamped by cynical disenchantment with established religious forms. The teachings were no longer credible. They did not meet the expanding needs of man. They starved his Spirit. He stood, as it were, in a vacuum between old securities that no longer served and a new that had not yet emerged. Plutarch spoke for the Greeks, describing a mysterious voice breathing out over the waters, "The oracles are no more. In all the sacred groves, silence and sadness dwells. Great Pan is dead."

Yet, in every land there did exist widespread expectancy of a coming One who would lift the burden of despair and inspire new hope. And, in pre-Christian Mystery Schools, especially chosen neophytes celebrating the Winter Solstice were undergoing experiences with the Christ, symbolized as the Midnight Sun, that prepared them to recognize and serve Him when He appeared in physical form.

The correspondences are evident, for similar conditions call forth similar events. What the ancients mourned was the passing of outmoded concepts of God and the outmoded forms in which man worshipped Him. So it is today, and we ask, "What is passing? Is it the creedal authority of a Church Militant, dedicated to preserving its power at all costs? Is it narrow, limited and fanatical sectarianism?" If these are passing, then this world, as that other world, is content to have it so. The human

Spirit, yearning toward God, reaps the good from all forms but is greater than any of them. Being greater, it must inevitably outgrow them. Nothing can arrest its progress, and the present foment in things spiritual is but indication of this forward drive in an eternal quest for a deeper, truer relationship with Deity.

There have been many such cycles in the long evolution of man. There will be more before his goal of unity with the Source is attained. They are always marked by the human reaction to break away from exhausted forms in the endeavor to find the freedom to worship God by means of truths that the individual discovers for himself.

Pattern

Each fresh approach of man to God — and God to man — has characteristics in common. A pattern emerges. Always, the revelation is two-fold. First, there is always a revelation of some hitherto un-realized aspect of the nature of Deity, and then it follows that there always comes some new and clearer understanding of the nature of man and his purpose on Earth.

The first revelation of God with which we can identify is probably veiled in the statement that He breathed a spark of Himself into man and started him on his evolutionary journey.

Much later, God released the concept of Himself as Law. He could be reached, He could be understood, a workable relationship with Him could be established through obeying His Laws. The Lord Jehovah taught man, through Moses and inspired leaders of other ancient lands, to worship God through the Laws by which He ruled the universe. This was sufficient for a long time. It is sufficient for many today.

Still later, other divinely overshadowed Messengers taught humanity to approach God through the channel of the illumined mind. Man learned to

love and worship God as the Light of divine Wisdom.

Finally, at that most critical moment in human evolution, came Christ Jesus. Divine God and perfected Man walked the Earth. In His Being, He summed up all previous revelations of Deity and then gave the world an entirely new concept. He called God "Father" and taught that He is the loving Father God to the whole race of men. He taught that God loves the world — that it is not a jungle, nor is man a beast, rending his fellow kind in an effort to survive. Instead, He taught that man is a Spirit, potentially loving and basically good. "I am the Way," He said and gave, in precept and example, the steps man can take to become identified with God — in Love.

Love

Christ Jesus came to teach the nature of love and how to love and that love is the one ingredient that can solve all problems, reconcile all differences, end all conflict. Love is the one requisite, the one panacea. When John, Apostle of Love, grew very old, the people asked him to epitomize all wisdom. His answer was simple, "Little Children, love one another."

Let us try to realize the revolution in consciousness these concepts call forth, even today. They bestow a name of God that every man can accept and call upon. They clarify the purpose of life because they answer man's search for the one essential truth: namely, that the goal of Earth and man's highest destiny is to be fulfilled in love. Nothing less than the implementation of this high destiny called forth the Incarnation on Earth of divine Love.

Again, our eyes turn to the past. Other conditions preceding the Incarnation are strikingly similar to those in the world today. Then, too, nations walked dangerously amidst the fires they had kindled. Then, too, there was

frantic effort to balance power and establish national security by means of intrigue and unholy alliances. And then, too, in the chaotic close of that age, God spoke to the nations.

He spoke through the lips of the prophet Isaiah to warn that there was no hope in treaties, to be signed one day and broken the next. He warned that there was no security in expediency, practiced at the price of principle, for only that which was rooted in universal law would survive the crisis: "Woe unto them that go down to Egypt (the most powerful nation in the ancient world) for help but look not to the Holy One of Israel. . . for the heavens shall vanish like smoke and the earth wax old like a garment, but the word of my God shall endure forever."

But to the awakened few, in a vision that spanned two ages, the prophet spoke words of promise. He spoke of the birth of the divine Son whose teachings were to take root in one age and come to flower in the next. He spoke of a far-off time when an upsurge of love would find expression as a way of life. In this expression, the Kingdom of God, nurtured as a seed during the centuries, would come to full manifestation. Swords would be beaten into plowshares to give food and an abundance of all good things to the world of men. Justice would well up as waters and righteousness flow as a mighty stream. Men would not study war anymore but would live together in rightful brotherhood.

Even as the eyes of the neophytes in the ancient Mysteries turned to the Midnight Sun that proclaimed the coming Christ, so the eyes of aspirants today turn to the words of Isaiah. It is upon this promise that we base our hope. It is the pattern of this new upsurge that we would trace in the shadowy future. In the words of Max Heindel: "We look beyond past and present jealousies of warring sects to the shining age of

universal brotherhood which will mark the next great step of man's progress on his long and wondrous journey 'from protoplasm to conscious unity with the Father, that one far off event to which the whole creation moves.' "

Awareness

As the Angels sang at the first Nativity, "Unto you is born this day the Savior," so will the new word from heaven sound, "Unto you is born this day the living reality of the Savior as the Day Spring from on High, for that which has been night has become day." The new revelation will be exoteric in that it will be a "day" experience. Great masses of people, not a chosen few, will experience it and, by what ever name it is called, know it for what it is. Spiritual recognition of the living Christ as the basis for the whole of life will be its keynote.

Such awareness must be individual, and it cannot happen all at once. It comes gradually, and its power unfolds as, through practice, steadfast effort, and meditation, certain basic principles begin to take their rightful place as a foundation for living.

It begins as a gradual realization that the words of the Christ, "Lo, I am with you always," are not idle words. "With you always" means that He cannot come again from some far off sanctuary, because He has never left us. He lives, "closer than breathing, nearer than hands and feet" to the humanity He loves. He lives, the overshadowing Presence, in the affairs of men in every far-flung corner of the globe, and He lives as the intimate Presence in the heart of every struggling pilgrim.

Inevitably, the result of spiritual recognition of the living Christ will bring man to new recognition of his own nature. The first birth at Bethlehem lifted him out of the dust of earthy nature and revealed him to himself as a loving spirit. The new recognition will

awaken him to the truth of his immortality. Because Christ lives and lives in man can there be doubt that man, also, is immortal? And, because it is so for one, it must be for all, for are we not brothers, indeed, in Christ who lives in us?

Finally, the new birth of realization will add something vitally new to man's concept of his Creator. Man has known God as Law and Light and Love. He will now be recognized as the essence of Life – the one Spirit that is Life – pervading all things. In the Age of Aquarius, the Christ comes as water bearer of the concept of more and abundant life for a thirsty world.

When Christ Jesus said, in essence, as He wept over Jerusalem, "You will not know me again until you learn to find me in life." His words were prophetic of the coming age in which the Kingdom of Heaven will be found on Earth, rooted in recognition of God as Life, God transcendent, of such magnitude that the heavens everywhere proclaim Him; God so intimately personal that the least of the little ones can know Him.

These living principles: (1) the actuality of the Spirit that is God in all things; (2) the actuality that there is a plan and purpose for life; (3) the livingness of the Christ, eternal guardian of the souls of men; (4) the assurance that He is in us all, our hope of glory; (5) the immortal quality of the human Spirit; (6) the brotherhood of man in a common Fatherhood – these principles, so far removed from creed and controversy, form the pattern for the new humanity. It is a humanity far along the journey of which Max Heindel wrote. It now, in this Christmas Season, 1975, stands before Bethlehem's gate, pressing toward this birth into a world of universal brotherhood, higher ideals, deeper understanding, and more enduring love.



One Life's Influence



A Probationer

Some years ago, in a Los Angeles downtown cafeteria, one could step away from its bustling activity onto a lower level into a relaxed atmosphere with soft background music. Here one could meditate upon a life-like portrayal of the artist Hofman's painting, "In the Garden," in all its colorful beauty. Later, one gradually became aware that the surroundings were harmoniously attuned with the painting, and, through a nearby arch-way, there came into view a huge scroll reading somewhat like this:

"In the history of mankind, Jesus of Nazareth is truly the most important figure and, yet, none had a more lowly birth.

"For three years He wandered (never more than a few hundred miles from His birthplace), teaching and shaping people's hearts to the service of truth and love. His own people turned against this Man Who taught that evil may be overcome by good.

"He was denied by a close friend, deserted by most, and betrayed for 30 pieces of silver by one He had befriended. He gave Himself over to His enemies, was tried and condemned in mockery, spat upon and lashed, nailed to a cross between two thieves. He died asking forgiveness for His persecutors, while His executioners gambled for His single earthly possession - His robe.

"Nearly 2000 years have passed, but no one has ruled, or worked, or served, or dreamed who has so touched and influenced human life. He is the ideal - the example - Who inspired the noblest and the humblest of lives - the great, wholesome, growing influence

in a world of blood and tears.

"He Who was without friend would be Friend to all. Homeless, He dwells in countless homes. Books on His life fill libraries. His Gospels cover the Earth. Songs and music fill the heavens in His praise. Pictures, church steeples, and monuments proclaim His influence. Scholars, illiterates, rich men, beggars, rulers and slaves . . . are all measured by His life."

The Rosicrucian Fellowship Teachings reveal that Mary, the Mother of Jesus, was an exceedingly pure type, while His Father, Joseph, was an Initiate of high degree. In this life Joseph had devoted himself entirely to the occult path. When the time came for a great teacher to incarnate among us, Mary and Joseph were chosen to be His parents.

Early Life

As a boy, Jesus was placed in the school of the Essenes, people of the most devout character. They stayed in their own community and lived the holy life as they saw it. Jesus was so beautifully adapted to their way of living that He soon knew more than they did. Later, He went to a great Center of Learning in Persia, in the huge library of which He absorbed tremendous occult knowledge, thus regaining what He had learned in previous lives. At the end of thirty years, He had so cleansed and purified His body that it could be taken over by the Great Being - the Christ. While Jesus can be traced (in the Memory of Nature) through many incarnations, only one can be found of the Christ and that when He incarnated

in the body of Jesus.

It is the law of the Universe that no being, however great, can build a vehicle and function in a world that is higher or lower than the worlds in which he has learned to function. Thus it was necessary for Jesus – in order to secure the help of Christ for mankind – to give up His body so that this Higher Being could enter it. That took place when Jesus was baptized in the River Jordan by John the Baptist; for it was then that the Christ Spirit entered Jesus' body, and a voice from heaven was heard to say: "This is my well-beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased." In that way Christ Jesus came as a help to humanity.

Life Spirit

The unifying principle of our Solar System is the Life Spirit and, therefore, the Son – Christ – Who is to be the unifying principle in the world – must have that Life Spirit evolved, because only by the power of Life Spirit can the *national* tendency be overcome and *universal brotherhood* of man be realized.

The life of Jesus, the man, and his experiences, constitute the true spiritual path of every student. None can reach that high goal without paying the price through crucifixion, through great sorrow and self-denial, through service and unselfish living.

Beatitudes

Of all the object lessons given by Christ Jesus in simple language that everyone understood, nowhere do we find a more complete outline of what should be the *attitude* of those who seek to live the life than is to be found in the 5th chapter of Matthew – the Beatitudes.

In examining these great truths closely, we find:

Being poor in spirit is to be humble, willing to set aside prejudice, the present way of life if necessary, or anything that stands in the way of our finding God, which is the Kingdom of

Heaven. In so doing, we develop discrimination.

It very often happens that many of us will not seek God until driven to do so by sorrow and suffering. Then it is that sorrow becomes a good thing. When we endeavor to follow the Teachings of Christ Jesus we have the promised comfort.

As to meekness, we learn ". . . the man Moses was very meek, above all men upon the face of the earth." (*Numbers 12:3*) The history of Moses' life gives evidence of his faith in God – of his willingness to do the will of God even though it seemed new and revolutionary. We recall the marvellous work Moses did for his people, getting them out of Egyptian bondage in the face of tremendous difficulties. In fact, by his teachings and works, he influenced the entire subsequent course of history. The blessings Moses received are shown in his overcoming the old age belief through having the body of a young man when, according to the calendar, he was 120 years old and his eyesight was good. He received the Ten Commandments given by the Lord on Mt. Sinai and also had the privilege of appearing at the time of Christ Jesus' transfiguration.

Righteousness

In hungering and thirsting after righteousness, we will leave no stone unturned in our search for truth and will constantly pray for wisdom and guidance in putting off old habits of hatred, jealousy, resentment, remorse, etc., which have brought only sadness and suffering. In *James 2* we read: "Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness and he was called the friend of God. The daily use of retrospection and concentration help us to develop right thinking and right action.

All mankind is one, and when our brother does wrong, we must be merciful

in our thoughts even as we expect mercy when we are wrong. Kind and merciful actions must go along with kind and merciful thoughts in our judgment of others.

We develop purity of heart and life through daily use of retrospection and concentration, thereby gaining spiritual power for unselfish service. We need to be peaceful and serene within to render loving, self-forgetting service. In the *Christianity Lectures* we read: "The pure shall see God, said Christ, and the Teacher will quickly open our eyes when we are fit to enter into the 'Hall of Learning' – the Desire World – where we get our first experiences of conscious life without the Dense Body."

Peace

Peace comes through earnest prayer. Christ Jesus said: "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you." (*John 14:27*) So long as we have thoughts of fear, resentment, or any trouble in the heart, it is impossible to bring about the peace we so earnestly desire in the lives of others as well as ourselves. At least some degree of peace is necessary to attain true concentration.

We know it is God's will that we have harmony, peace, and joy, which are gained by righteousness or right-thinking. That is very difficult when we are tempted to hold wrong thoughts about some person or situation, or give way to fear, anger, or depression. Then it is that we are persecuted for righteousness' sake. This, then, is a blessed condition for, at such times, we make real progress or soul growth in overcoming the lower self. Christ Jesus Himself, Who was tempted just as we are, had to meet these persecutions many times. Max Heindel states: "It is necessary to soul growth that these temptations come in order to bring out our weak points. If we fail, we suffer, but pain develops conscience and gives

hatred of sin, making us strong against temptation, thus overcoming the lower self."

Self-Mastery

The statement about persecution is very startling, and yet we find it correct when we realize that the source of this persecution is none other than our own lower natures. Max Heindel tells us that desire or temper is a valuable asset, too valuable to be killed; the man without desire is like steel without temper – of no account. It takes energy to sin, and when that energy is turned in the right direction, it becomes as great a power for good as it had been for evil. Therefore, our goal is self-mastery.

There is but one Mediator between God and Man, Christ Jesus, the Righteous.

The Teachings of Christ Jesus are justified by the works He was able to do, even to overcoming death through resurrection. Further, He promises: "The works I do, ye shall do, and greater works." (*John 14:12*) Therefore, the great work before us should send every one of us in prayer and meditation to a careful study of the life of Christ Jesus. It should cause us to search every available written line given us from the pen of Max Heindel, that no link may be lost in preparing for this great work of the ages.

In closing, we quote again from the *Christianity Lectures*:

"We know that little poem about letting our light shine just where we are. Every one cannot be a star, every one cannot shine, every one cannot be a leader, but every one can do a little, just light his own candle, letting that chase away some of the darkness around him." That is all we have to do and, in so doing, we shall find that candle will become a blazing star to guide us to the Christ at His coming.

We shall be sure to know Him, for we shall find the answer from within.

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The Privilege of Service



CHRISTINE LINDEMAN



Morning and evening Chapel services at Mt. Ecclesia include this little prayer: "Father, we thank Thee for the privilege of serving Thee; we thank Thee for Thy divine Love."

The Father's divine Love is at no time more clearly manifest than during the Christmas season, when the Christ of the New Year, sent by the Father, once more reaches the center of our Earth. With this most wondrous of all gifts, the Father, in His infinite and merciful Love, insures that we are once again empowered to renew our efforts at right living and at making spiritual, as well as physical, progress.

Our thanks to the Father for this evidence of His undying Love should certainly be more intense now than at any other time of year. The more consciously we try to bathe ourselves in and utilize to best advantage the inestimably valuable high spiritual forces now infusing our planet, the better able we will be to comprehend the wonder and magnitude of His divine Love.

Much harder for humanity to understand is the concept of service as a privilege. Many among us have learned to serve well, at least intermittently, because duty or conscience demands, because pity for others calls forth from us an active response, or because we happen to respect or love certain ones of our fellow men sufficiently that we want to "do everything we can" for those particular people. Many of us, too, enjoy certain aspects of our service, and that is all to the good.

That service is also a matter of privilege, however, is by no means

widely recognized. Even many Egos who consciously aspire along the spiritual Path serve because service is a requirement for personal evolution and a means to more rapid evolution of the life-wave as a whole. Only the most highly evolved among us consider service, not only as a responsibility to be taken seriously, but also as a privilege to be assumed thankfully.

Mankind, however, is aided by great Beings who devote themselves to service precisely because they regard it as a privilege to do so. Without their continuing, loving, and voluntary help, human progress would be much more difficult to achieve. The Elder Brothers of the Rosicrucian Order are numbered among these noble Ones.

We can be sure that the greatest Servant of all, the Christ, regards His annual self-sacrifice as a high privilege, one for which He prepared during long eons of time, and one which He will not relinquish until its purpose has been fully accomplished.

The nature of service as a privilege is explained in the Temple Service of The Rosicrucian Fellowship. We are told that "Loving, self-forgetting service to others is the shortest, the safest, and the most joyful road to God." Are we not indeed privileged to have been given this avenue of access to God? Is it not comforting to know that, if we are truly intent on climbing the straight, narrow, and steep upward Path and accelerating our rate of spiritual progress, we *can* achieve through the instrument of service?

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The Babe of Bethlehem



L.G.



From time to time great painters have portrayed the birth of the child Jesus in Bethlehem, and truly beautiful have been many of the conceptions. Such is the picture by Burne-Jones, whose mother died at his birth. He never knew a mother's love, yet he has put a wonderful touch of tenderness in the face of the Babe who clings tightly to the mother's dress as he sits on her knee and turns timidly to view the three Magi who present their gifts.

"Do you really think the story of the Magi is true?" asked a friend while watching Burne-Jones painting "The Star of Bethlehem."

"It is too beautiful not to be true," was the artist's reply.

Today, unfortunately, some people are questioning the authenticity of many Bible stories, but the esoteric meaning can never be anything but true.

Every day children are born among us. Spirits young and old return to Earth life to gain more experience, to clear off old debts, and to help their brothers. Each year of their lives gives them opportunities for growth, physical and spiritual, and sometimes in their chain of lives a new, a deeper, a mysterious birth will be accomplished; the birth of the Christ within. But this can occur only when purity reigns in the heart as it did in Mary's, when all desires are for helping others, not of gain for self. At that time we will wish to offer to the newborn Saviour gold, myrrh, and frankincense, which esoterically stand for Spirit, soul, and body, all of which are given to the new King, the Christ.

Spirit is symbolized as gold. It is

thus spoken of in the Neibelungen Ring, a ring which was made from the stolen gold by Alberich. Spirit was thus debased and became the dense body. The alchemists are spoken of as transmuting base metal into gold, and we must by spiritual alchemy purify the dense body that it may again become gold (Spirit) and thus present it to the newborn Christ.

Myrrh is the extract from an aromatic plant growing in Arabia. It is rare, and stands for the soul, an essence, extracted by experiences in the physical body.

Incense was the gift of the third Magi. It is a physical substance often used in spiritual services. We find it used in the Tabernacle in the Wilderness as a vehicle for producing certain conditions and affording an avenue for spiritual forces. But incense must be handled only by a "Wise Man." (See Rev. 8:3) It was allowed to be used only by the high priest and was burned to help transmute the sins of the people.

The first gift to the newborn King, the Christ Within, is the control of the physical body. We ask that He will rule over all the kingdoms of our Earth and aid us in putting all the heathen, or erring parts, completely under His rule.

The second gift is soul, extracted from the deeds done in our physical bodies. The soul is the spiritual essence of our work on Earth, be it good or evil, but the evil will pass away and only the good be preserved to carry over from life to life.

The third gift is the sweet savor, the incense made by our pleading for

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Renunciation

—or—

The Birth of a Savior

M.H.

Sweet are the fruits of Rest and Liberation for the sake of self; but sweeter still the fruits of long and bitter duty. — The Voice of the Silence.

The Man stood before the gate called Forgetfulness of Earth, at the first of the seven portals of Heaven which is named Love and Charity. Stopping at the threshold with hand uplifted to raise the latch, the Man paused and leaned against the gate, for he had come a long journey.

The door opened to reveal a sight that almost blinded the Man with its beauty. Certain it was that his eye had never seen, nor his ear heard, nor his mind comprehended such perfection. Even outside the gate where he rested there grew flowers — a pale pink rose and a waxen lavender oleander — such as the Man had never seen before.

From out of the Everywhere a Voice spoke: "It is the law of the Heaven World that thou mayest have the desires of thy heart, even that of Forgetfulness of Earth. Dost thou desire henceforth forever to be oblivious to the world of men?"

The Man answered: "I have used all of the world's pleasure and all of its pain. What more can the world offer me? Long have I striven for that harvest of effects which would merit the bliss that is beyond the Door."

Again the Voice spoke: "Heaven has but one condition — that thou shalt desire its pleasures alone. Doth thy heart hunger only for its pleasures? Hast thou left any shadow of thyself on the Path thou hast trod?"

The Man did not answer at once.

Then he spoke slowly as though his mind was traversing two paths. "Once, long ago, a wise man told me that I would never be without desire, and only now I know that he spoke the truth. Before, I have desired to be a Master, of what I can hardly say, but now that I no longer desire to be a Master, I still have a desire. I would be a servant, for I remember that I passed many travelers on the Path who could not find their way. I think I had better go back to the cross-roads and show them the true path."

Another Voice so soft and low that it might have been a summer zephyr said, "Only the Servant is the Master."

"When thou goest back to the world, my son," continued the Voice, "tell the people only one truth: that knowledge carries its own responsibility of greater usefulness, for as the first truth is of sorrow, in sorrow's beginning is sorrow's end."

"I will give them your instructions," agreed the Man, "but I must do more. Some are fainting by the wayside, and I must lift them up."

"Verily thou art my son in whom I am well pleased," declared a Voice from the boundless deep. "Compassion is the law of laws, for in its universal essence is found eternal love. Now, open wider the door of Heaven and count the souls therein."

The Man peered within for a long time, but he could see no one. And then he knew that in compassion every Master foregoes eternal bliss so long as any life suffers in the world. And then he knew that Liberation comes not from renouncing the pleasures of the world, but of Heaven.

MAX HEINDEL'S MESSAGE

The Mystic Midnight Sun



Exoterically the Sun has been worshiped as the giver of life from time immemorial, because the multitude was incapable of looking beyond the material symbol of a great spiritual Truth. There have always been those, however, who saw and see the eternal spiritual verities behind the temporal and evanescent forms which clothe these verities in changing raiment of ceremonial. For them the legendary Star of Bethlehem shines each year as a Mystic Midnight Sun, which enters our planet at the winter solstice and radiates the three divine attributes, Life, Light, and Love, from the center of our globe.

These rays of spiritual splendor and power fill our globe with a supernal light that envelops everyone upon Earth from the least to the greatest without respect of persons. But all cannot partake of this wonderful gift in the same measure; some get more, some less, and some, alas! seem to have no share in the great love offering which the Father has prepared for us in His only begotten Son. They have not yet developed the spiritual magnet, the *Christ Child* within, which alone can guide us unto the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

Unless we have the Christ within ourselves, unless that wonderful pact of blood brotherhood has been consummated, we can have no part in the Savior, and as far as we are concerned it would not

matter though the Christmas bells never ring. But when the Christ has been formed in ourselves, when the immaculate conception has become a reality in our own hearts, when we have stood there at the birth of the Christ Child and offered our gifts, dedicating the lower nature to the service of the Higher Self, then the Christmas feast is spread for us from year to year.

The harder we have toiled in the Master's vineyard, the more clearly and distinctly shall we hear that soundless voice within our hearts issue the invitation: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. . . for my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

Then we shall hear a new note in the Christmas bells such as we have never heard before, for in all the years there is no day so glad as the day when Christ is born anew into the Earth, bringing with Him gifts to the children of men – gifts that mean the continuance of physical life. Without that vitalizing, energizing influence of the Christ Spirit the Earth would remain cold and drear. There would be no new song of spring, no little woodland choristers to gladden our hearts at the approach of summer. The icy grip of Boreas would hold the Earth fettered and mute forever, making

it impossible for us to continue our material evolution which is so necessary to teach us to use the power of thought in the proper creative channels.

The Christmas spirit is thus a living reality to all who have evolved the Christ within. The average person feels it only around the holidays, but the illumined mystic sees and feels it months before and months after the culminating point on Holy Night. In September there is a change in the Earth's atmosphere; a light begins to glow in the heavens; it seems to pervade the whole solar universe. Gradually it grows more intense and seems to envelop our globe; then it penetrates the surface of the planet and gradually concentrates itself in the center of the Earth where the group spirits of the plants make their homes. On Holy Night it attains its minimum size and maximum brilliancy. Then it begins to radiate the light concentrated, and gives new life to the Earth wherewith to carry on the activities of Nature during the coming year.



THE PRIVILEGE OF SERVICE

(Continued from page 543)

Also in the Temple Service, we are urged to consider Christ's "definition of greatness, namely: He who would be the greatest among you, let him be the servant of all." Thus, again, service is a privilege, because it is an unassailable means of increasing our evolutionary stature.

Service appears most notably to be a privilege, however, because it is the one tangible, useful, practical, and productive way in which we can give thanks to God for the divine Love with which He so unstintingly blesses us.

Service is pleasing to Him, as we know from a study of the Tabernacle in the Wilderness. On the Altar of Burnt Offerings, "the blood of the unwilling victims, the bulls and the goats, was a source of grief and displeasure to God." Conversely, "the incense symbolized by the *willing* service of devoted priests rose to heaven as a sweet savor. This, we are told in many places, was pleasing to Deity. . ." (AMI 105)

In serving His children, we serve Him. In serving His children, we please Him. In serving His children, we grow. In serving His children, we approach Him more closely. In serving His children, we emulate, in our own small way, the service continually rendered by the greatest of His children, the Christ. Surely, in all these respects, we are highly privileged.

At this sacred time of year, then, when we ourselves are being served so magnanimously from the very Fountainhead of all Life and Love, let us fervently reiterate, from the depths of our being, "Father, we thank Thee for the *privilege* of serving Thee; we thank Thee for Thy divine Love."

Studies in the Cosmo-Conception

The Spiritual Aspirant and Duty

Q. How ought spiritual aspirants to regard marriage?

A. Aspirants to the higher life, filled with an earnest desire to live a noble spiritual life, often regard the sex function with horror, because of the harvest of misery which humanity has reaped as a result of its abuse. They are apt to turn in disgust from what they regard as impurity, overlooking the fact that it is precisely such people as they who (having brought their vehicles into good condition by means of proper sanitary food, high and lofty thought, and pure spiritual lives) are best fitted to generate the dense bodies essential to the development of entities seeking incarnation.

Q. How does this affect incoming Egos?

A. It is common knowledge among occult scientists that, to the detriment of the race, many high class Egos are kept out of incarnation at the present time solely because parents cannot be found who are pure enough to provide them with the necessary physical vehicles.

Q. Are such aspirants shirking a duty?

A. Persons who, for reasons above mentioned, refrain from doing their duty to humanity, are magnifying the Sun spots to such an extent that they forget to see the Sun itself! The sex function has its great place in the economy of the world. When properly used there is no greater boon to the Ego, for it then provides pure and healthful bodies such as man needs for his development. Conversely, when abused, there is no greater curse, for it is then the source of the worst ills to which flesh is heir.

Q. To what extent ought an aspirant to consider his family?

A. No one has a right to seek the higher life without having performed his duty to his family, his country, and the human race. Selfishly to set aside everything else and live solely for one's own spiritual advancement is as reprehensible as not to care for the spiritual life at all. Nay, it is worse; for those who do their duty in the ordinary life to the best of their ability, devoting themselves to the welfare of those dependent upon them, are cultivating the essential quality of faithfulness.

Q. How important is this?

A. In due time they will certainly advance to a point where they will become awake to spiritual necessities and will carry to that work the faithfulness developed elsewhere.

Q. How far-reaching might be the effect of our conduct?

A. "No man liveth unto himself." By our words and acts we are constantly affecting others. By the proper performance or the neglect of our duty we make or mar the lives, first of those in our immediate environment, but ultimately of all the inhabitants of the Earth, and more.

Q. What can the aspirant who neglects his duties expect?

A. The man who deliberately turns his back upon his present duties to take up the spiritual life will surely be forced back into the path of duty from which he has mistakenly diverged, with no possible means of escape until the lesson has been learned. Ref. *Cosmo*, pp. 468-470

WESTERN WISDOM BIBLE STUDY

"Good Tidings of Great Joy"

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night.

And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. *Luke 2: 8-14.*

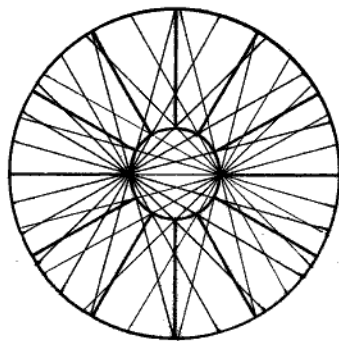
The birth of the babe Jesus, joyously heralded by angels in Palestine more than nineteen hundred years ago, remains a perpetual symbol to the Christian world of the coming of an era of "peace on earth and good will among men." Those who have embraced the teachings of the gentle Nazarene look forward to the time when His precepts will be the basis of the prevailing order of things, and Universal Brotherhood will be an accomplished fact. That this Christ Order is now coming into being is readily discernible to the occult student, whose broader perspective enables him to see beyond immediate outer conditions to the ultimate triumph of spiritual principles.

In addition to this general message of the above passage from St. Luke, there is a deeper meaning which applies to the inner life of the neophyte on the Christian Mystic Path of Initiation.

The incidents during the life of the man Jesus, and the three years' ministry of Christ Jesus, as related in the four Gospels, point the Way to spiritual attainment, each occurrence indicating a step on the Path.

On the Christian Mystic Path there are nine steps following the birth, which is preceded by the Annunciation and the Immaculate Conception. Each of these steps portrays to those who have the key that which takes place at a certain time in the consciousness of the spiritual aspirant. "All who tread this Path are Christs-in-the-making. Each in his or her turn will reach the different stations of the Via Dolorosa, or Path of Sorrow, which leads to Calvary, and experience in his or her own body the pangs and pains suffered by the Hero of the Gospels. Initiation is a cosmic process of enlightenment and evolution of power, therefore the experiences of all are similar in the main features."

To the esoteric student the Holy Birth signifies a time when in the "manger" of the lower self the Christ Consciousness is born. After a time of purification and regeneration, the lower self becomes sufficiently transmuted for the higher spiritual qualities of the Spirit, or Ego, to manifest more freely, and a new life is begun. Great is the rejoicing on the inner planes of those who observe the progress of each neophyte, and everyone who brings to birth a Christ Within hastens the glorious day when all can join the heavenly host in singing the "good tidings of great joy."



ASTROLOGY

Creative Astrological Analysis

Horoscope Interpretation

Part 1 Continued

Karl Kleinstick

Another source of apparent error in interpretation is the meaning of experience. As mentioned in the first article of this series, experiences have different meanings to different people.

Due to a subconscious pull from the past, when we all participated in a group consciousness without any individuality, there is a tendency to want to conform to a peer group. This, in turn, gives a tendency to interpret experiences in terms of the common values and to suppress differences which arise through the development of individuality. This tendency is further supported by pressure from others who are unsure of their own individuality to conform to a common belief. The tension thus created between the development of individuality and the pressure to conform often results in psychological confusion, neurosis, insecurity feelings, and fears and uncertainties about one's own self.

The astrologer, having a key to the individuality in the horoscope, may sometimes touch upon such a point of tension, where the individual indications are at odds with the values of the

common group. This may then draw an objection. But now is the time for the astrologer really to be helpful by assisting the person to understand his own self, as distinct from a group consciousness. The more people understand their own selves and their own patterns of living, the more consciously and meaningfully they can contribute to society instead of just existing as a part of it, and the more fulfillment they can experience in their actions.

Here we see another side of the coin. It has already been said that a self-seeking attitude presents the danger of projecting one's own values onto others. We now see another danger, that of projecting the values of group consciousness onto people who should be developing as individuals. Thus, again, the astrologer should be able to face his own horoscope, so that in understanding his own individuality he will be able to understand and appreciate the individuality of others.

All this conflict comes about as a

result of the transition from a group consciousness to an individual consciousness. It is the struggle between unconscious submission to the whole and conscious co-operation with the whole. During the transition period there is likely to be much confusion, selfishness, misunderstanding, and strife because of an unsettled and uncertain state of affairs. It is necessary for people first to establish their individuality, implying *temporary* separateness, before they can make an individual contribution to the whole.

Thus, let us realize that, ultimately, each person will become a law and an authority unto himself, and that each horoscope represents the pattern of an emerging individual, which must be considered relative to itself.

It is generally recognized that the horoscope does not show a person's free will. It is not so generally recognized that there is another factor which is not shown by the horoscope, and that is *the level of evolution that a person is on*. That is to say, the degree of emergence of the individual.

To take an example: let us assume a horoscope with Sun conjunct Mercury in Gemini and the 3rd house, trine to Jupiter in Aquarius and the 11th house. Traditionally, we could consider that his configuration basically indicates a sharp, inquisitive, philosophical mind that is quick on the uptake in mental pursuits, and that this person is a good writer and talker and probably at the top of his class in school.

Suppose we made such a delineation to an individual, and he replied that he was only getting C's in school, and that although he liked to read, write, and think a lot, he just did not seem to be able to do as well as others. What would we say then?

We made our error when we compared him to others by saying that he would be near the top of his class, when we had no justification for so doing. A more creative interpretation would be as follows: a sense of purpose is found

along intellectual lines, and inner strength of character manifests in light-hearted, inquisitive behavior. The mind is also of an inquiring nature and seeks knowledge along diverse lines, in co-operating with the inner strength of character and sense of purpose. The above tendencies are applied to learning about and understanding everything the person contacts. The knowledge thus gained is freely and cheerfully imparted to others, and friends and acquaintances are gained thereby. Stimulation toward further mental development comes through the encouragement of acquaintances who are also somewhat intellectual in nature, though perhaps less inquisitive and more fixed in their ideas.

When our friend now complains about his average showing in school it in no way affects the delineation. There are people who are at the top of their classes in school who have very little of an inquisitive nature or cheerful attitude; they merely follow the book and conform to the notions of the day. Our friend may have a good, clear understanding in many areas, but because he does not choose to subscribe to the same way of thinking as "the usual," he does not do as well according to the norms established at the time by others.

Discussing points such as the above can do much to reassure a person and help him understand himself and his experiences in the proper light.

In summary, the main point is that each horoscope must be interpreted relative to itself and be applied accordingly to specific experiences. Experiences should be interpreted in the perspective gained from the horoscope; the horoscope should not be interpreted relative to the experiences.

It occasionally happens that people are not ready to hear what the astrologer has to say. In this case, they may strenuously deny, object to, argue with, or in some way indicate discomfiture. If, after carefully re-examining the horoscope, the astrologer arrives at the same conclusions it is wise merely to

have stated the matter and then let it drop. Something has been brought to the surface which the person cannot presently handle, but which he may be able to deal with at some later time.

It should be made clear that a horoscope is never interpreted once and for all. The amount of information that can be gleaned from a horoscope at any particular time is limited by the astrologer's knowledge, experience, and the person's ability to relate and react to what is said. Further development of both persons will open the way for a more complete understanding of the horoscope.

Furthermore, the horoscope shows the pattern and tendencies a person has brought with him into this life. Those schools of astrology which claim that the horoscope shows what one is *supposed* to be, or what one is supposed to develop into, are not only misleading, but also deny the spiritual viewpoint. The spiritual viewpoint maintains that the horoscope shows to a great extent the material from which we build our lives, *but how we use this material is left to our own free will*. The person who ends up exactly as his horoscope portrays him has wasted his life, because he has failed to develop anything beyond what he had brought over from the past.

The astrologer must take this into account and realize that the person who takes the high road in life will tend to change the tendencies shown in his horoscope, so that as he grows older he will be ruling his stars, and his stars will no longer be ruling him.

A horoscope delineation should include both the positive and negative points, imparted impartially. Too much one-sided emphasis on the positive sounds nice but does not alert the person to difficulties that lie ahead and thus help him to prepare for them. Therefore, such an approach is naive, deceptive, and really quite useless. On the other hand, too much one-sided negative emphasis leads to undue

depression and pessimism, and gives no strength or hope with which to overcome and transmute the negative things. Admittedly, a very fine line represents a balance between these two undesirables, and it is not always easy to know when too much has been said, when not enough, and when just the right amount.

One final note is that the astrologer himself should calculate the horoscopes he intends to interpret as often as possible. Aside from the fact that others may make errors which pass completely unnoticed, the astrologer can pick up some good intuitive feelings about a chart in the process of setting it up. As he is calculating a chart, he is tracing out a symbolic pattern of a person's life, and if he is at all sensitive, he will pick up some very definite insights relative thereto, which are not so easily gained otherwise.

There are some very good computer services which do horoscope calculation and eliminate practically all possibility of mathematical error. Although these may be good for statistical research purposes, to help the beginning astrologer check his calculations, and other such matters, they should be avoided by the experienced astrologer for most interpretive purposes.

Some astrologers will complain that doing their own calculations takes too much time. But let us remember that we strive to understand a person through the horoscope and to help that person accordingly, and the extra time spent in doing calculations is well worth it in accomplishing that end. Our purpose is loving, self-forgetting service, not mass production of doubtful advice in order to make money. It is far better to be able to help a few people meaningfully than to dispense superficial information to many.

Part 2 - The Format

The most difficult problem for the aspiring astrologer is how to go about interpreting a chart. Even when he has

taken the necessary time and effort to learn the meanings of the basic astrological factors and has gathered a good sampling of horoscopes from among his friends and acquaintances, he is still almost always baffled when it comes to organizing everything into a workable system of interpretation. He stares at a horoscope, and his mind promptly goes blank, refusing to give the slightest hint as to what the thing might mean.

Several difficulties bar the way to learning horoscope interpretation. Some of these have been touched upon in past articles. Not the least difficulty is the lack of a good, systematic approach to the horoscope. To be sure, there is no system that will answer equally well for all horoscopes, but there is a definite need for some type of format which will help the student get a grasp on the information presented in the horoscope.

There are two general approaches to organizing the information in a horoscope. The first is to take each particle of information presented and tie it together with every other by means of some formula or sequence. The second method is first to try to grasp the main points in a horoscope as a whole, by means of certain patterns and planetary distributions, and then move to consideration of each part.

The former method has traditionally enjoyed the greater popularity, practically to the total exclusion of the latter, until relatively recent times. The latter method is now steadily gaining in popularity, however, and, unfortunately, has a great deal of appeal to the modern astrological mind.

That may seem a rather startling comment, but nevertheless, let us review the matter from a spiritual point of view: *to move from the whole to the parts*, as the second method does, is *contrary to the trend of evolution*. On the other hand, *to move from the parts to the whole*, which the first method does, is precisely in line with the evolutionary impulse and is therefore the method which the spiritually oriented astrologer

should use.

Why should it make any great difference which method the astrologer uses, as long as he gets results? Because, as mentioned in the previous article, a horoscope interpretation can reach right to the heart of a person and affect him accordingly. To do an interpretation that proceeds from the whole to the parts impresses a person with a tendency that leads further into materialism, which is to say, away from a *true* spiritual understanding of things. An interpretation that proceeds from the parts to the whole helps to elevate a person's consciousness to a higher level, because it is in line with natural law.

At the commencement of man's journey through matter, he was possessed of cosmic consciousness and perceived the unity of all things; but he had no self-consciousness. Thus, in a manner of speaking, we could say that he possessed cosmic *unconsciousness*, because he was not aware of his state; he merely existed in it. The purpose of man's pilgrimage through matter was to make him self-conscious, so that in regaining his cosmic state of consciousness, he could be a voluntary, creative participant in it and be aware of his participation.

The part of man's journey that led from cosmic to individual consciousness is termed *involution*. During this period, man, the Virgin Spirit, acquired his three vehicles – the dense, vital, and desire bodies – and the mind, and had his threefold Spirit – Divine, Life, and Human – awakened. This is the part of the journey that led from the whole to the parts and resulted in the full waking consciousness that we experience today. First, man was a united whole; then he associated himself in turn with a race, tribe, clan, and family, and finally, he perceived himself as an individual.

The part of our journey which now lies before us is *evolution*, wherein the awakened Spirit works through its vehicles to produce soul, which will

nourish the individual consciousness into a self-conscious, creative consciousness.

As each man becomes more of an individual, there will be less selfishness, for selfishness comes about when a person first realizes his individuality but is unsure of what it is or how to handle it. He feels the preciousness of this acquisition which he has worked so hard to attain through eons of unconscious involution, and being afraid to lose it, he finds it necessary to assert his own self, regardless of others. However, as a man who is sure of his own strength finds it unnecessary to be constantly testing it or showing it off in front of others, as a bully does, so the man who is sure of his individuality no longer finds it necessary to be selfish, self-centered, or self-assertive. Then, united in the bonds of Christ-like love and friendship, man will share a unity of purpose and interest, though the diversity of talent, creativity, and method will make possible a more glorious whole than could ever have been realized before. We shall know the joy of sharing with each other as individuals, where each has something to give to the other.

Consider the manner in which we learn how to accomplish things in the physical world: if we wish to learn how to be artists, we first learn the general principles of light, color, proportion, painting technique, etc. After this, more specific knowledge and technique are learned, until we feel confident to try doing serious art work on our own, taking the ideas we have learned and combining them in our own individual style, producing creative works of art.

There are as many different styles in art as there are individual artists, and certainly no one would advocate that all artists should conform to one style. It is the diversity of style and technique and the richness of variety in art that make it such an excellent medium of expression. Each artist makes his own particular contribution to the

field of art through his works, from which other artists may learn and profit according to their needs and inclinations.

Thus, the heritage of art grows in proportion to the development of individual artists, just as the heiritage of the human race grows in proportion to the development of individualized consciousness.

It may seem that we have made a rather lengthy digression, but it was necessary that we thoroughly understand these principles so that we can now apply them to the problems of horoscope interpretation.

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

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

But, as is so often said, the whole is more than the sum of the parts (though in astrology, the whole is built up out of a *synthesis* of the parts). In addition to involution and evolution, there is a third factor in the development of man—Epigenesis. This is the capacity to

initiate something that did not exist previously as potential. It is the power to introduce new forces and new trends that are an outgrowth of past causes. It is the power that man has to change his future no matter what the past may have been or the present may be. It is the power that can eventually raise man to the stature of the gods and free him from being the puppet of fate. It is creativity in the true sense.

Epigenesis implies free will, and as discussed in last month's article, this is exactly what the astrologer should be aiming to awaken in people. The will is generally strengthened as a direct function of evolutionary progress, for greater self-mastery brings more power to choose as the Spirit *wills* and not as the lower self desires. The astrologer who follows the natural law of evolution in his horoscope interpretation stimulates people's consciousness accordingly, and, thus, makes it possible for them to exercise more Epigenesis.

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

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

To do an interpretation from the parts to the whole creates a background impression of being "put together,"

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

It is understandable why the method of interpreting horoscopes from the parts to the whole (henceforth called the "evolutionary method") has fallen into some disfavor as of late, aside from the above reason. Just as it is not possible to have evolution without preceding involution, so also it is not possible to use the evolutionary method of chart interpretation with much success until the necessary involutionary work has been done. A good basic grasp of signs, planets, houses, aspects, elements, qualities, horoscope calculations, etc., *must* be had before any serious attempt at interpretation can be made.

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

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

persevering and imaginative of people can make a success of it.

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

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

Examples of prefabricated notions in astrology can be found in the blur among signs, houses, and planets, in which, for instance, such notions as, "the first house equals Aries, equals Mars." While these three may have a definite relationship to one another, they signify entirely different viewpoints.

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

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

horoscope interpretation.

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

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

Now let us be more specific. Assuming the calculations done, the method of building the parts into a whole is as follows: the planets are first considered separately, as they are the motivating forces in the horoscope. Each planet will tell what facet of character is being considered, such as inner strength of character (Sun), mode of thought (Mercury), mode of feeling (Venus), etc. The sign position of each planet will tell in what manner each facet of character (planet) basically is being influenced. The house position of each planet will show in what area of life the particular facet of character (planet) that is being influenced (sign) will be most active. Along with each particular planet, consider if there are any planets in the sign that it rules and what house or houses that sign covers. This will show what additional forces are affected by the first planet, and in what additional areas it tends to operate strongly.

After each planet (or, more accura-

tely, each sign-planet-house combination) thus has been considered separately, aspects showing how these different factors inter-relate with each other can be taken into account.

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

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

1. Sun - Sense of purpose and inner strength of character.
2. Moon - Self-concept.
3. Ascendent - How others see us; outward appearances and actions.
4. Mercury - Mode of thought.
5. Venus - Mode of feeling.
6. Mars - Mode of initiative.
7. Midheaven - Conduct in positions of authority; opportunities for spiritual advancement.
8. Jupiter - Spirit of helpfulness and being helped; philosophical attitudes.
9. Saturn - Mode of consideration and thoughtfulness toward and from others.
10. Uranus - Mode of intuition, inspired ideation, impartiality, and perception of the emotional states of others.
11. Neptune - Mode of heightened awareness, inspired understanding, communication with super-physical reality, and perception of the thought of others.
12. Pluto - Mode of co-operation with others as an individual for a common interest.
13. Part of Fortune - (optional)

awareness of how to handle opportunities for material advancement.

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

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

* * *

THE BABE OF BETHLEHEM

(Continued from page 544)

others, our prayers for those in whom the Christ has not yet been born.

It is significant that Jesus was born on the longest night of the year, and it is usually when all seems darkest around us and we are in despair that we offer our hearts to Christ for His throne. He comes as a sweet babe and soothes us with His loving touch, but as a babe we must nourish Him; we must tenderly care for Him or He may be forced to leave us for a time. There will come a season when the conditions around us may cause us to "hide the young child and flee into Egypt" but remember that a time came in the Bible story when all those who sought the life of the young

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The Children of Sagittarius, 1975

Birthdays: November 23 to December 21

SIGN – Sagittarius the centaur

QUALITY – Common, or fundamental

ELEMENT – Fire, or Spirit

PHYSICAL ANALOGY – Warmth

EXOTERIC ANALOGY – Structures of hips and thighs (bones, muscles, nerves, blood vessels, etc., found therein); arterial system in general.

ESOTERIC ANALOGY – The Divine Spirit.

TABERNACLE IN THE WILDERNESS – Sagittarius corresponds to the Shekinah Glory, which shines over the Mercy Seat in the westernmost part of the West Room. This is a symbol of the Divine Spirit in its stronghold at the root of the nose.

BASIC INFLUENCE – Optimistic, friendly, easy-going, idealistic.

POSITIVE INFLUENCE – Positive Sagittarius gives a great deal of resilience and buoyancy to the nature; always looking at the bright side of things and ever searching for the silver lining in the cloud. Because of this philosophical bent, there is a willingness to lend a helping

hand in worthy projects which aim to elevate conditions. Due to a warm disposition, such a person is generally liked by many and disliked by few.

NEGATIVE INFLUENCE – Negative Sagittarius is characterized by over-doing, over-confidence, extravagance, and procrastination. Often, such a person does not know when enough is enough, and continues doing to excess. This type is also philosophical in nature, but unlike the positive type, is not willing to put forth an effort to help make dreams into realities. Rather, a pseudo-philosophical attitude becomes an excuse for prodigal wastefulness, carelessness, and inactivity.

RULER – Sagittarius is ruled by Jupiter, the planet of helpfulness, of being helped, and of philosophical attitudes. Jupiter is very much at home in this sign and therefore most readily expresses its innate nature here.

EXALTATION – It is not known for sure where Pluto finds its exaltation,

but it may be in Sagittarius. For Pluto, the planet of consecration, purification, and co-operation, harmonizes well with the idealistic influences of Sagittarius and the helpful forces of Jupiter. Thus, Pluto would express its best qualities here.

DETRIMENT – Mercury, the planet of reason and communication, is in detriment in Sagittarius. Mercury usually functions through information received from the senses and communicates itself through the same. It is cold and calculating, uninvolved and unmoved by anything not amenable to reason. These forces do not express very easily in Sagittarius, where principles and ideals are primary influences.

FALL – At present, there is no planet known to be in fall in Sagittarius. But Vulcan, a planet theorized to exist between Mercury and the Sun, may eventually find its fall here.

GREEK MYTHOLOGY – Jupiter is symbolized primarily by Zeus in Greek Mythology. Zeus was the chief of the Olympian gods, signifying the highest spiritual principle in man – the Divine Spirit. In upholding justice, he shows the positive influence of Jupiter, while his own excesses and his tendency to take unfair advantage of others show the negative influence of Jupiter.

COSMIC CHRISTIANITY – As the Sun passes through Sagittarius, the Cosmic Christ works to awaken man to his higher spiritual nature. This is the time of the "Christmas Spirit" when, more than at any other time of the year, people make an effort to be friendly, hospitable, charitable, and helpful toward others. They become less self-seeking and more interested in the welfare of others.

From Nov. 23 to Dec. 3 the Sun trines Saturn in Leo, making the jovial and charitable nature of these children more steadfast and reliable than usual. This aspect favors honor and success through forbearance, acceptance of responsibility, ability to overcome outer circumstances with self-control, and a philosophical outlook on life. The Sun sextiles Pluto from Nov. 27 to Dec. 12, giving ability in the creative arts. These children will tend to have a deep sense of justice, law, and order, with the resources to accomplish their goals.

The Sun conjuncts Neptune from Nov. 26 to Dec. 10, fortifying the aspirational nature of Sagittarius and giving intuition. Caution must be taken, however, that these children do not veil their outlook on the world, thereby losing contact with real issues. There is often lack of confidence which needs to be reinforced through practical experiences. The Sun trines Jupiter in Aries from Nov. 23 to 27, favoring a benevolent and pioneering spirit – content and generous but with an inclination to avoid arduous tasks. These children should be encouraged to pursue advantages given to them and to develop their creative talents. They can do well in fields connected with government, law, theater, and education.

From Dec. 10 to 21 the Sun opposes Mars in Gemini. This aspect could give a rather cynical and critical disposition and a nature that is vacillating, impulsive, and without persistence in the face of serious difficulties. Even with these tendencies, these natives will seek challenges and encounters, learning from experience that they must not meddle in affairs that are not their concern but put their energy into worthwhile accomplishment.

Venus in Libra opposes Jupiter from Nov. 23 to 29. Venus is strong in her own sign and testifies to artistic and musical ability, but the opposition indicates tendencies toward self-indul-

gence. These children must learn to be honest in their association with other people and to be moderate in their tastes. This aspect may give an overstimulated emotional response to certain situations which clouds reason and results in unreliable judgment and evaluation. From Nov. 23 to 25 Venus conjuncts Pluto in Libra, favoring a nature which has emotional depth. These people expect a great deal from themselves and others, especially where personal feelings are concerned. They would be attracted to large groups or organizations of people and will endeavor to work with them.

Venus sextiles Neptune from Nov. 23 to 25, giving a chaste and idealistic love nature. These children should have a good imagination and try to understand others helping them with their problems. From Nov. 30 to Dec. 8, Venus trines Mars in Gemini. This tends to activate the mental faculties and at the same time give charm and attractiveness and the ability to get along with the opposite sex. These natives have an inquiring nature which also appreciates the aesthetic side of things.

Venus conjuncts Uranus in Scorpio from Dec. 6 to 16. This can give ability for magnetic healing if used in a regenerative way, but if used negatively can result in loose morals. These children should be taught moral responsibility. Venus squares Saturn in Leo from Dec. 4 to 14, which indicates difficulty in relating to others and the need to learn not to be too demanding of others. There is a tendency to be melancholy and complaining. These children must learn to be optimistic and see the best in others. They are easily hurt and tend to emotional depression yet at the same time often disregard the feelings of others.

Mercury trines Saturn from Nov. 23 to 30, giving depth to the power of concentration. This will stabilize the nature and give forethought, helping to over-

come difficult aspects. Mercury conjuncts Neptune from Nov. 28 to Dec. 6, giving a sensitive and imaginative mind with higher wisdom to handle affairs. Although these people are visionary, they must be careful lest they cling to unrealistic ideas resulting in a form of escapism from life's responsibilities.

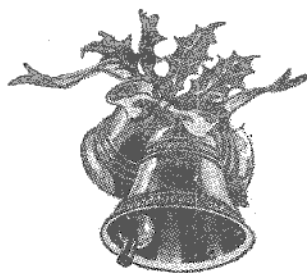
From Nov. 30 to Dec. 7 Mercury trines Jupiter, providing good judgment and integrity with high standards of behavior. These children can accomplish a great deal with their kind and affable disposition. They can see the bright side of things even when confronted with unfavorable circumstances. Mercury sextiles Pluto from Nov. 28 to Dec. 6, so these children should have an analytical and comprehensive mind. They are interested in probing inner motives.

Mercury opposes Mars from Dec. 7 to 14, inclining to self-centeredness, and these children must learn to have regard for other opinions as theirs can be a totally "me first" attitude. They have an active mind but can be argumentative and resistant, needing to learn tolerance.

Mercury in Capricorn sextiles an exalted Uranus in Scorpio from Dec. 14 to 21, giving an alert and original mind with the ability to verbalize thought in a unique and intelligent manner. There is an inventive turn to the mind which quickly picks up original ideas especially along scientific lines. These natives must learn to relax mentally as the mind is in constant motion.

From Dec. 17 to 21 Mercury squares Pluto, which could give a caustic and insensitive way of expression. These children must learn to maintain balance and poise in their thinking, otherwise they will arouse irritation and displeasure in others. They should try to be more understanding about human nature and learn how to motivate others effectively in a constructive way. Mercury sextiles Venus from Dec. 19 to 21, favoring a congenial and diplomatic manner and

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NEWS

COMMENTARY

Amazing People Who 'See' With Their Skin

In a series of remarkable experiments, Russian scientists say they are actually teaching people to "see" with their skin.

Reports of this recent breakthrough research in the Soviet Union — obtained exclusively by *The Enquirer* — reveal that both totally blind and blindfolded sighted people have learned to:

*Distinguish colors and shapes on paper by the sense of touch alone — sometimes through metal or glass, and in a few cases even from a very short distance.

*Read words and whole sentences using only the fingers.

Amazing experiments with hundreds of participants are being conducted in the Ural region of Russia, where scientists from several cities report they have come up with sensational findings.

At the Isham Pedagogical Institute, for example, five subjects have apparently learned to identify all 10 colors used in the experiments while completely blindfolded. The students, two women and three men, use only regular colored paper laid on a glass tabletop.

"They all found azure blue the most pleasant color to touch," revealed researcher Dr. D. K. Gilev.

Even more startling — at the city of Sverdlovsk researchers discovered two girls who've learned to distinguish the colors of pieces of paper sandwiched between two metal plates placed at the backs of their necks! To minimize chances of cheating, the girls are fitted with black goggles and black hoods over their heads — and yet they're right almost every time, say the scientists.

At the Institute for the Blind in Sverdlovsk, both blind and sighted teenagers reportedly learned to tell colors just by feel-

ing the light made by a color slide held up to a lamp. "We found that blind students learned in from one to three weeks, while it took the sighted blindfolded students twice as long," noted Prof. Y. R. Fishilev. Similar experiments at the City Hospital in Magnitogorsk turned up two blind men who learned to accurately distinguish seven colors of the spectrum after three months of training.

"We used up to 75 sheets of colored boards which we shuffled at random," recalled Dr. N. I. Sudakov. "We then pulled out the boards for the blind men to touch, giving them only a few seconds to identify the color. Their accuracy was about 87 percent."

Two blind subjects in Magnitogorsk learned to distinguish colored shapes on paper under a glass plate, say Soviet researchers.

"Interestingly, triangles proved more easily identifiable than circles or squares," Dr. Sudakov told *The Enquirer*.

Several blind Russian youngsters — at the Institute for the Blind in Sverdlovsk and at the Pedagogical Institute of Nizhniy Tagil — have, after considerable training, learned to slowly "read" with their hands.

"One of the youngsters, a teenage boy, gradually learned to distinguish printed letters on white paper, for example," reported Dr. Fishilev. "Then he began to put words together into sentences, holding his fingers about 3/4 of an inch above the paper."

"A blind, 14-year-old girl also progressed from identifying colors to actually reading. But the process is very slow and not one of our subjects in the Soviet Union has been able to progress to the rapid scanning of texts."

The Soviet scientists believe many

people have what they call "skin sight" but none of them knows exactly how it works. They've been conducting experiments since 1962, and the research is continuing.

"We have no conclusive theories yet," Dr. A.S. Novomeisky reported in a Soviet scientific paper. "But we believe tactile, thermal and visual images can be triggered even through metal and over a short distance."

Added Dr. Fishilev: "Our objective is to devise techniques so the blind can read by touch."

"I would estimate that it will be approximately another 10 years before we find the answer."

--by Henry Gris and William Dick,
The National Enquirer, date unknown.

In the *Cosmo-Conception* we are told that: "The extension of the sense of feeling since (the Polarian Epoch) indicates the manner in which the entire body will be improved, so that at some future time any part of it will be able to perceive all things. The senses of sight and hearing will be extended over the entire body, as the sense of feeling is now. Then man will be all eyes and ears. Specialized sense organs indicate limitation. Sense perception by the whole is comparative perfection."

The people with whom these Soviet scientists are working are apparently beginning to develop the "tactile" sight which we all eventually will have. It is quite possible that people in other parts of the world also are evolving the rudiments of this faculty and could unfold it further by working with it consciously.

Alcohol in Blood Helps Injuries Kill

A slightly intoxicated driver coming to a slow stop hits the car in front of him and bangs his chest on the steering wheel.

When the irate driver of the first car walks back to bawl him out, he finds the second driver dead. Yet there is no blood, no apparent injury.

Medical investigators, long mystified about such deaths, now think they may have it solved.

Alcohol appears to play a previously

undisclosed role in greatly increasing damage to the injured heart and brain, said Dr. William E. DeMuth Jr., professor of surgery at the Milton S. Hershey Medical Center at Hershey, Pa.

"Injuries of the central nervous system and heart of a degree usually well tolerated in the unintoxicated experimental animal have been shown to be fatal in the presence of moderate levels of blood alcohol, DeMuth reported at the recent annual meeting of the American Medical Association....

by Ronald Kotulak,
Chicago Tribune, June 26, 1975.

This article, which speaks for itself, sounds yet another warning against the consumption of alcohol. No matter how masterfully the adherents of alcoholic beverages may rationalize their use, the fact remains that, from the point of view of human well-being and evolution, these are inimical and dangerous substances which should be avoided.

* * *

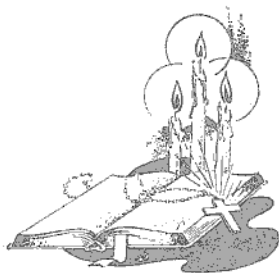
ONE LIFE'S INFLUENCE

(Continued from page 542)

It is said we shall know Him because we shall be like Him. As He has no physical body in which to come, we must build the soul body, so that when He appears we may meet Him clothed in the "golden wedding garment" made by pure living.

May God bless our every effort!





BOOK REVIEW

"Caspar David Friedrich"

Caspar David Friedrich, by Helmut Boersch-Supan, George Braziller, New York, 1974.

Caspar David Friedrich was a German landscape painter of the Romantic Period whose intensely spiritual work only in recent years has begun to receive broad international attention and acclaim. This book, initially published in Germany is the most complete work on Friedrich available to date and the first published in the United States.

Friedrich's landscapes were painted with rare poignancy and depth of feeling, and the superb full-color illustrations in this book evoke a responsive chord from the very Spirit of the sensitive observer. The work of this artist is an outstanding example of the role that inspired, creative Art can and should play in the upliftment of humanity's emotions and ideals.

Friedrich regarded painting as the expression of those experiences which link the self and the external world. He wrote: "The artist should paint not only what he sees before him, but also what he sees within him. If, however, he sees nothing within him, he should also refrain from painting that which is before him. Otherwise his pictures will be like those folding screens behind which one expects to find only the sick or the dead."

The artist's work is noteworthy for its extraordinary haunting quality, the product of an elaborate and consistent set of symbolism. For him, the perception of Nature was "an allegory of a religious (experience) in which the certainty of death and the hope of eternal life were interwoven." He did not paint a winter landscape, for instance, without connecting it with the memory of spring — if only in the depiction of shrivelled-up flowers or bleak willow trees which, because they constantly shoot up new growth from an old trunk, symbolized the Resurrection to Friedrich.

The author of this splendid volume is Professor of Art History at the University of Berlin. He has written detailed interpretive commentary about each of the illustrations and an incisive biography of Friedrich which comprises approximately the first third of the book. Both the serious art student and the reader who finds himself spellbound by the depth of spiritual force that seems to emanate from these superb paintings will find Dr. Boersch-Supan's comments illuminating and thought-provoking.

This is an expensive book (\$35.) but the superior quality of both writing and reproduction appear to justify the price.

It is certainly a worthy addition to any art library or to the library of any student of spiritual Teachings.

READERS' QUESTIONS

Eye Transplants

Question:

I am thinking of willing my eyes to the eye bank when I pass on. Please discuss the pros and cons of eye transplants from the point of view of the Rosicrucian Philosophy.

Answer:

Every atom of each physical body belongs peculiarly to the Ego inhabiting that body. The condition of the physical vehicle represents the way in which the indwelling Ego has lived his previous lives on Earth and has been able to construct the counterpart of his body during the periods between Earth lives. No Ego will accept physical insertions into his dense vehicle which are too much at variance with his own singular makeup; therefore, transplanted organs and certain types of blood are sometimes rejected by a particular Ego. The Ego must dominate the cells of foreign matter brought into his physical body if he is not to reject the substance.

To receive a transplanted, healthy organ — whether an eye or some other organ — for a hopelessly diseased or malfunctioning one may give an Ego the wherewithal and incentive to live more usefully. The use of a transplanted organ will not help that person make the archetype of a better organ for use in his next life. The ability to do this will stem from the spiritual progress he is presently able to make. If he does not correct the underlying spiritual cause of debility in the organ concerned, it is to be expected that similar or worse trouble will plague him in a forthcoming Earth life.

If a person is willing to institute

spiritual reform within himself, the use of a well-functioning transplant may provide sufficient help to enable him to review his situation more rationally and to put forth the needed spiritual, mental, and emotional effort. We can conceive of many situations, including that of an eye transplant, in which a transplant might give a helpful advantage to an Ego who otherwise would be hindered greatly in life, provided he undertakes to conform to the rules of right thinking and right living.

The situation of the donor also must be considered carefully. It is understood that eyes and other organs to be transplanted must be "fresh," and that they are removed from the donor's body as soon as possible after his death. During the first three and one-half days after the seed atom of an Ego ruptures and he is considered dead, a singularly important period in his evolution takes place. He is engaged in viewing a panorama of the life just ended — a panorama which will form the basis of his post-mortem experiences in the spiritual worlds. The degree to which he can view the panorama without distraction will ultimately determine the extent to which he will be able to learn permanently the lessons of the Earth life just passed. The importance of this particular period in an Ego's evolution cannot be over-emphasized.

While the panorama is taking place, the silver cord connecting the higher vehicles with the dense body remains intact. Thus, although the Ego is considered physically "dead," there is still a connection with the physical vehicle and the Ego is aware of disturbances to that vehicle. Furthermore, any interference with the physical body

during this period tends to disintegrate the vital body, which should be kept intact until the panorama has been fully viewed. Any tampering with the physical body during this period, therefore, such as the removal of an organ for transplant, is noticed to some extent by the Ego. This distracts him from the panorama and, to the extent that it does so, will prevent him from profiting fully from this experience.

We believe that each individual, after having weighed all facets of the situation carefully, must decide for himself whether or not to offer his eyes or any other organs for transplant purposes. Although the possibility of helping a fellow human being is great, the prospective donor also bears the responsibility for his own welfare, in the life beyond as much as during his life on Earth.

Creative Imagination

Question:

What is *creative* imagination as opposed to "ordinary" imagination?

Answer:

The mind is the least developed vehicle and, in the average person, is able to deal only with the form side of existence. The mind is in its mineral stage of evolution; in its own sphere it is as inert and lifeless as the minerals which comprise our physical environment. It contents itself with manipulating the memory-images of forms and substances already existing in the outer world. As long as the mind remains in this inert condition, it is almost wholly unresponsive to spiritual impacts. What is not of the Earth earthly remains largely uncomprehended. This manipulation of images in the mind is the common variety of imagination.

The work of our present Earth Period is the vivification of the mind preparatory to entering the Jupiter Period. As

our present state of mind corresponds to the mineral kingdom, the vivified mind of the Jupiter Period will correspond to the plant kingdom, which lives, grows, and perpetuates itself because it possesses a *vital principle* – the vital body. Sense perception is an activity of the vital body, and when the mind acquires the vital principle it can project images which are not mere reflections of external conditions, but which possess a life of their own. Then they can exist independently of the mind which sent them forth. The vitalized mind has the power of *creative* imagination.

Some individuals who have outstripped their fellow men in mental development have acquired a modicum of this Jupiterian Consciousness, which is able to create living images. This is the active principle in art, and without its vivifying influence we would have none of the immortal characters such as the master writers have produced. Artists, writers, musicians – all who conjure up vital images in the mind – say that their creations have a curious life of their own. Characters sometimes appear mentally to authors, announce their names, and run away with the plot. A musical composition seemingly will insist on unfolding in a certain pattern which guides itself to completion. A picture may "refuse" to be painted, or it may almost paint itself.

All of these quirks of the creative imagination are evidence of an interior vital principle in the mind of the artist, a vital principle which imparts independent life to his mental creations.



NUTRITION

and

HEALTH



More Trouble From Tranquilizers

A clipping of unknown date from the *National Enquirer*, recently received, concerns the harmful side-effects of certain tranquilizers. Written by William Stuckey, the article is entitled "Heavy Doses of Common Tranquilizers Cause Brain Damage and Disfigurement."

The article quotes a number of statements made by Dr. Peter R. Breggin, psychiatrist and director of the Center for the Study of Psychiatry in Washington D.C.

"Brain damage from tranquilizer overdoses afflicts 40 to 50 percent of all older hospitalized mental patients (and) a smaller number of younger ones," said Dr. Breggin. He continued: "These drugs can also create an incurable disfigurement called tardive dyskinesia, which turns the face into a grotesque, rubbery mask characterized by the involuntary protrusion of the tongue, puffing of the cheeks, puckering of the mouth and chewing movements."

"Hundreds of thousands" of hospitalized mental patients and prison inmates are afflicted with these types of damage and disfigurement, which result from administration of heavy doses of phenothiazine tranquilizers, claims Dr. Breggin. In addition, "three to seven million" non-institutionalized psychiatric patients, also being treated with these drugs, are in danger of contracting the

same ailments.

Dr. Breggin is also quoted as saying: "We have confirmed reports that inmates in prisons whom guards don't happen to like are forcibly injected with an especially powerful phenothiazine tranquilizer," one dose of which is sufficient for a two week period of sedation.

According to Dr. Breggin, people treated with these drugs are often exhausted, lose all spontaneity, and speak in monotones. He referred to the drugs, in their frequently over-prescribed doses, as "chemical strait jackets."

Much has been written about the harmful effect of tranquilizing drugs, especially when administered on a continuing basis. Nevertheless, the revelations made by Dr. Breggin are particularly shocking. It is unfortunate enough to use these unnatural substances strictly for medicinal purposes, in the sincere although misguided hope of effecting a cure. When they are deliberately used as "chemical strait jackets" for people whose prison guards "don't happen to like" them, the action is morally inexcusable.

It appears from information such as that revealed by Dr. Breggin and other knowledgeable people that tranquilizers induce a dangerous degree of lethargy and passivity, involuntary in nature. The facial deformity here described also

involves activity outside the person's control, in the form of involuntary facial gesticulations. People so "strait jacketed," whether for medical or custodial reasons, are obviously in no condition to make decisions for themselves and become increasingly amenable to being led — or pushed — by others.

It is certainly advisable to restrain dangerously violent people in the interests of society, but the form of restraint should be as humane as possible. To overdose patients or prisoners into what amounts to a state of perpetual sedation hinders them in their evolution because it affects their ability to think and act for themselves. There is little doubt that those responsible for this type of "medication" will incur heavy debts of destiny.

Pain After Amputation

A recent issue of the column "Doctor's House Call" by Lawrence E. Lamb, M.D., in the *St. Petersburg Times*, carried a question from a reader concerning pain felt in an amputated limb. Although his leg had been removed years before, he endured recurring bouts of pain resembling electric shocks in the amputated toes, and asked about possible measures for relief. He claims that doctors had suggested aspirin.

Dr. Lamb replied that "The problem of the 'phantom limb' is really a medical mystery." He continued: "Obviously the sensation is transmitted some way through the nerves. There seem to be sensitive spots. . . that, when pressed, make the limb or the sensations appear. . . No one has been successful in defining the anatomy of the pain. It is not from irritated cut nerve ends. Surgery has been tried, even by snipping off the roots of nerves at the spinal cord, without success." He said that it is possible to obtain relief from 'phantom limb' pain by injecting the proper nerve endings.

The fact that the medical profession in general finds the phenomenon of pain in an amputated limb inexplicable indicates that many medical men evidently have no inkling of man's vital, or etheric, body. The vital body infuses feeling and growth into the inert mass of the physical vehicle, and without it, we would be as insensate as are members of the mineral kingdom.

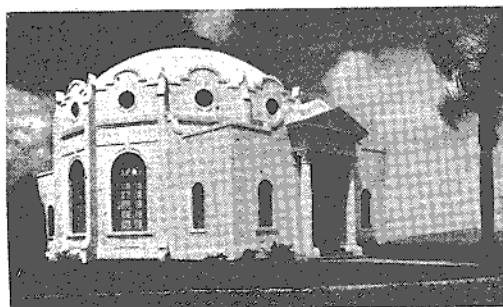
When a physical limb is amputated, the etheric limb decays synchronously with it. The process of decay sometimes takes years. As long as the etheric limb remains, the person may be subject to sensations that he describes as pain in the amputated physical limb.

Under the circumstances, it is no wonder that surgery, which only further disturbs the physical and vital bodies, is of no avail in stopping "phantom limb" pain. Although aspirin may dull the person's receptivity to pain, this effect can only be temporary. As always when taking aspirin, the person ingests a drug known to have debilitating side effects and which offers no real cure of the ailment. Nerve injection, too, is done with the use of substances unnatural to the body.

Although cremation of the physical body after death is advisable, cremation of an amputated limb would very likely cause the amputee considerable pain. It appears, then, that the amputee's wisest course is to have the removed limb buried and permit the decaying process to take its natural course.

In this connection, it is well to bear in mind the incident recorded on page 374 of *Questions and Answers*, Vol. 1. A man whose arm had recently been amputated complained of sharp pains in that arm. When the arm, which had been buried, was exhumed, it was found that a nail driven into the box had pierced the arm. When the nail was removed, the man's pain ceased.





HEALING

Perfected Channels

Christ Jesus was the greatest healer of all time. He was the most perfect channel for the healing force ever to manifest on the Earth. He was the most exalted physical instrument through which the Light, Life, and Love of the Father could find expression.

How familiar are His words: "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do. . ." His admonition to His followers that they also "heal the sick," and his promise that they — that we — would emulate and surpass the "miracles" He wrought, are sources of inspiration to us all. To follow in His footsteps and become radiant channels of light and healing should be the goal of every spiritual Aspirant.

If we are going to be healers in the true sense of the word, we must know what we are doing. Acquisition and right use of knowledge are essential steps in the healing process. Many factors are involved in the healing work. Laws that operate on the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual planes all have bearing on the well-being of patient and healer alike. As we meditate upon and try to comprehend these laws, understanding will come. Our consciousness, intuition, and inner perception will gradually be unfolded and we will in time become the self-conscious channels

of healing that we would like to be.

Knowledge, important as it is, however, is not enough. To knowledge must be added love — the leavening agent that transmutes knowledge into wisdom. Love is more than a sentiment or an emotion. It is an actual principle — the Christ Principle or Love-Wisdom Principle of the Father — and a divine power which is latent in us all. Love is the sustaining, preserving, and protecting influence of all creation. Healing is centered around and contained in love.

In proportion as we develop the love power within ourselves, we grow in grace and the ability to reach out and bless and heal others.

In *Teachings of an Initiate* (p. 161) we are told: "... certain centers which are tenuous during health in a degree varying with the spiritual development of man, become clogged in an increasing degree according to the seriousness of the disease. . . . Therein the Spirit is immured, sometimes to such an extent that it loses touch with the outer world and its progress and becomes so thoroughly centered upon its own condition that only complete rupture of the physical body can set it free. This may be a process of long years, and in the meantime the planetary inharmony which caused the initial disease may have passed by, but the sufferer is unable to take advantage of the improved condi-

tions. In such cases a spiritual outpouring of a special kind is necessary to bring to the soul its message, 'Thy sins are forgiven.' When that has been heard, it may respond to the command, 'Take up thy bed and walk.' "

Christ Jesus was able to effect His healing miracles because He embodied within Himself the synthesis of the stellar vibrations and could emit from Himself the true, corrective influence required in each particular case. He sensed the inharmony of the sick person and knew how to offset it. He knew this because of His exalted development. He obtained immediate results because He was able to substitute harmony for the discord involved in whatever disease He was treating.

Obviously, we are not yet able to accomplish such miracles of healing. Far greater wisdom must first be ours — wisdom that will be gleaned in proportion as we grow in the qualities of purity and service. The Christ powers unfold fully only in those who are channels of utmost purity, channels through which also the healing force works most effectively. The Christ powers unfold fully only in those who are willing to use them altruistically for the succor of their fellow men.

Purity underlies regeneration; regeneration underlies healing. Regeneration is accomplished with the uplifted and transmuted creative force. Regenerated humanity will someday levitate the Earth, releasing the Christ from His annual bondage. Then humanity will have become perfected channels of the healing force, and the art of healing will have been perfected among men.

* * *

Our Healing Service is held every evening in the Healing Temple at 6:30, and in the Pro-Ecclesia at 4:15 P.M. when the Moon is in a cardinal sign on the following dates:

December. . . 4---11---18---25---31

THE CHILDREN OF SAGITTARIUS, 1975

(Continued from page 560)

some ability for poetry and music which should be encouraged.

Mars trine Uranus from Nov. 23 to Dec. 1 shows creative enthusiasm and originality. These children have boundless energy and are drawn to circumstances that will give them mobility and freedom to express. They may find it difficult to stay within the bounds of strict rules and regulations because of their intense love of freedom.

Jupiter opposes Pluto from Nov. 23 to Dec. 21, the entire solar month. This gives the natives a deep desire to question and challenge every ideology and dogma as well as an inclination to assert only their own ideas on any subject that relates to religion or the occult. They will seek to gain positions of power in order to more effectively manage other people's lives. They must learn that what may seem right for them may be completely wrong for society.

Jupiter trines Neptune throughout the solar month. This aspect will help the natives work out the problems of the Jupiter — Pluto opposition. It brings inspiration and integrated knowledge to make the life full and content. It brings ability to see good where others see evil. Jupiter is growth and potential, and this force lends a great deal to the development of the native.

Saturn squares Uranus throughout the solar month. These children find difficulty in yielding to the process of change. Saturn gives a fearfulness and a feeling of a millstone around the neck. These natives must learn that there should be a purposeful use and direction for creative ideas and talents, and that dynamic energies should not be scattered.



CHILDREN'S

DEPARTMENT

The Visit of the Kings

Dagmar Frahme

Judith planted her feet firmly on the ground and tugged at the rope. "Come on, Ebenezer," she said impatiently.

The donkey planted his feet firmly on the ground and said, "Eeee-haw!"

Judith tugged and tugged as hard as she could, but the donkey stood perfectly still, saying "Eeee-haw!" over and over again. He didn't budge an inch.

"Ohh, Ebenezer, what am I going to do with you?" wailed Judith. "Don't you want to go home and get your supper?"

"Eeee-haw!" answered Ebenezer, still not budging an inch.

Judith shivered. It was bitter cold and almost dark. Wind howled around the olive trees and right through her thin shawl. She thought of the warm fire in the hearth at home, and of the hot food Mother was cooking.

How she wanted to go home and get warm! But she didn't dare leave Ebenezer,

no matter how stubborn he was. Her family had few possessions, and the donkey was their only beast of burden. Her parents would be very angry if she came home without him.

"Come on, Ebenezer," Judith tried again. "I'm so cold. *Please* come home."

"Eeee-haw!" brayed Ebenezer, as stubborn as ever.

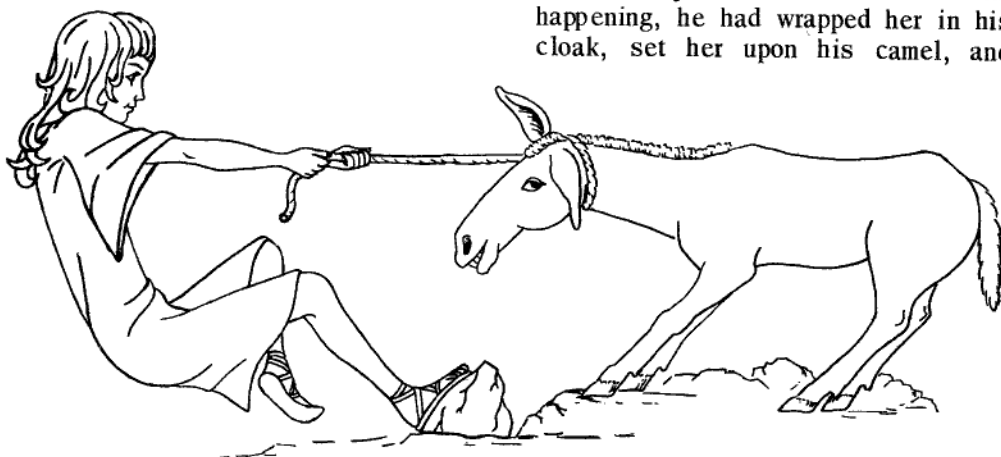
Judith gave one more half-hearted tug on the rope, and when Ebenezer still didn't move, she sat down on a cold rock and started to cry. The way it looked, she was going to have to spend the whole night outside with that miserable donkey. She was so cold and so hungry, and it all seemed too much to bear.

For a long time Judith sat with her head in her hands, sobbing bitterly. She had no idea how many minutes went by.

"What is wrong, little one?" asked

a gentle voice unexpectedly. "Why are you out here all alone? Why are you crying?"

Judith looked up, surprised to see three men standing before her. Each man wore a crown, each man was dressed in royal robes of beautiful colors, and each man was leading a camel. At first she didn't see Ebenezer at all, and was frightened. Then she noticed that he had wandered into a nearby field and seemed to be watching intently.



"Is that your donkey?" asked one of the Kings.

Judith nodded, quite unable to say anything.

The King smiled. "He was blocking the road when we came along, but once he saw our camels he certainly moved over in a hurry."

Judith giggled. Stubborn old Ebenezer had never been very stubborn around camels. She could just picture him scurrying out of the way of those three.

"Who are you?" she asked.

"We are Kings from lands far away, and we are going to visit a baby born here in Bethlehem," was the answer.

"A baby?" asked Judith, wonderingly. She knew most of the babies in Bethlehem, and, although they were sweet and fun to play with, she couldn't think why anybody as important as a King would want to visit one of them.

"Yes," the King said, smiling.

"A very special child. But you haven't answered our questions yet. Why were you crying and why are you out here alone on such a cold night?"

Judith had forgotten that she had been crying, but when the King reminded her, she started all over again. "Because Ebenezer won't go home and I can't go home without him and I'm cold," she sobbed.

"Poor child," said the King, "of course you are cold."

Before Judith realized what was happening, he had wrapped her in his cloak, set her upon his camel, and

mounted the camel himself.

"You'll freeze if you stay out here any longer," he said. "We will take you with us to visit the baby, and then we will take you home."

The King's cloak was so warm, and his arms so comforting as he held her, that Judith snuggled against him the way she often did with her father. It felt so good just to be warm again that she didn't try to think about anything else. Then suddenly, she remembered.

"But Ebenezer - I can't leave him," she said.

"Do not worry," said the King. "Ebenezer will come with us. Come, Ebenezer," he said firmly to the donkey, who was still watching from the field.

"Eeee-haw!" protested Ebenezer.

"Never mind that," the King said to him. "Come along now. You have been enough trouble for one night."

Judith stared as Ebenezer got into line behind the last camel and began to follow meekly along, even though no one was holding his rope. She had never known Ebenezer to come without being prodded.

"How did you make him do that?" she asked, wide-eyed.

"I just sent him the right thoughts," answered the King, smiling.

The little procession made its way through the town. It passed many of the houses where the babies whom Judith knew lived, and each time she wondered if this baby was the one the Kings wanted to visit. But they never stopped. After a while they passed the last house, and left the lights of town behind them.

"Where are we going?" asked Judith.

"You will see," answered the King.

"We are almost there."

The King turned his camel from the road and guided him carefully across a field of stubble and rocks. Judith, who was almost asleep, blinked her eyes and opened them wide when she saw that they had stopped in front of one of the many caves that surrounded Bethlehem.

She recognized it as the cave where travelers who stayed at the inn usually left their animals. And animals were certainly there: sheep and camels and a goat or two and the innkeeper's big yellow dog. But besides that, a number of people were in the cave, standing quietly or talking in soft voices. Then Judith was amazed to see a baby lying in the manger that was kept for baby animals. With the baby were a beautiful lady singing a lullaby, and a strange man who stood straight and tall and stern.

Most surprising of all was the fact that, even though it was dark everywhere else, it was not dark around the cave. Everything there shone with a lovely white light, and the light was strongest of all around the baby.

"Is that the baby you're going to visit?" whispered Judith. Somehow it

didn't seem right to talk loudly.

"Yes," said the King, lifting her down, "this is the child. Come, we will go in."

The King took Judith's hand and they went into the cave, the other two Kings following. Once Judith looked back and saw the camels and Ebenezer standing quietly together.

"Ebenezer?" she whispered.

"Ebenezer will stay right where he is until we are ready to leave," the King assured her.

The people in the cave made way for the three Kings and Judith. Some bowed or touched their foreheads in greeting. When the baby's father saw them, he seemed to recognize them and his face grew less stern. The baby's mother gave Judith an especially sweet smile.

The Kings knelt down in front of the manger where the baby lay. Judith had never thought that a King would kneel down in front of anybody. But it seemed the right thing to do, so she knelt, too.

The Kings, still kneeling, each put a present on the ground next to the baby. Then they bowed their heads for a long time, as if they were praying.

Judith wondered if she was supposed to pray, too. She couldn't think of anything to pray about right that minute, so she looked around instead. At first she was a little bit afraid of the baby's father, but when she saw how gentle his eyes were, she decided he must really be very kind and wasn't afraid any more. The baby's mother was so beautiful that Judith stared at her until she remembered that her own mother had told her it was not polite to stare. Then she squirmed a little and tried to look away.

The beautiful lady saw Judith squirming and said kindly, "I am so glad you have come, Judith. When little Jesus is older I will tell him of your visit, and he will be glad, too."

"Little Jesus. So that is the baby's name," thought Judith. "But how does the lady know *my* name?" So many unusual things had happened that evening, though, that she didn't wonder

about it too much.

The baby stirred in his sleep and smiled. When Judith's baby brother smiled in his sleep, her mother always said that was because the Angels were singing to him.

"Are the Angels singing to little Jesus now?" Judith asked the beautiful lady.

The lady looked tenderly at Judith. "Yes, my dear, they are. And they are singing to all of us," she said.

Judith listened as hard as she could, but she couldn't hear anything that sounded like Angels singing. But for some reason she was quite sure that the lady was right. *Something* was making her feel very warm and very good and very happy in a quiet kind of way. She was content to stay on her knees for many more minutes, looking at the baby and just being glad.

When the three Kings rose, Judith did, too.

"It is good that you are here," said the baby's father. "At last that for which we have prepared all these years has begun."

"Yes," said the King, "We met many of our brethren along the way. They, too, would have come, except that their work keeps them in their own lands. But they know and rejoice."

"And the little one?" asked the baby's father. "Is she, too, destined to be one of us?"

"Yes," answered the King, "it is no accident that we encountered her on the road this night. Long after she has forgotten her struggle with the recalcitrant donkey, she will remember the blessed child and all that has transpired here. She is puzzled now, but happy, and when she is older, she will understand. When the time comes, she will take her place among His followers."

Judith looked up at the King and smiled. She certainly *was* puzzled, but she certainly also was happy. Somehow she was sure that when she got older she *would* understand. Right now, it

seemed enough just to feel so very happy and so very good.

"And now we must take our leave. The child and the donkey must be returned to her parents, who doubtless are worried."

"Farewell then, dear friends, and God speed you on your journey," said the baby's father.

The King took Judith's hand. Before she turned to go with him she said, "good-by," very softly.

"Good-by, little Judith," said the beautiful lady. "You will always be very close to us. Grow up in purity of heart and unfold the love that lies within you. We will see each other again."

They went out into the dark, cold night, and the King again set Judith upon his camel. "Now, child, it is time we took you home. Your parents must be very worried about you, but they will



be glad to know that you have seen the baby."

"Do they know about the baby?" asked Judith.

"Yes, they know. They have known for a long time that the child Jesus would be born here in Bethlehem."

The King seemed to know the way to Judith's house without being told. The other two Kings and a still surprisingly meek Ebenezer followed along behind.



When they got to her house, the King lifted Judith down from the camel and she ran inside. Her father gathered her into his arms, squeezing her hard. "Thank God you are safe, child. Where have you been?" he said.

Judith started to tell her story, but she was so excited that it came out in a mixed-up jumble of words. Her father heard "Ebenezer," and "Kings on camels," and "baby," and "beautiful lady." But it was only when he saw the King standing in the doorway smiling at them that he began to understand what had happened.

"My friend," he said, extending his hand to the King. "How good to see you here. We had hoped that you would come."

Judith stared as the King grasped her father's hand warmly. Her father had never told her that he knew any kings. What a strange and wonderful night this was!

Seeing how surprised Judith was, her father smiled. "Yes, Judith, the King and I have long been friends. We have worked together in many lives to prepare for this glorious night."

Judith looked at them both, her eyes wide with wonder. "I'm glad," she whispered.

She couldn't think of anything else to say, and she didn't really know why she was glad, but she was. Although she did not understand many of the things she had seen and heard that night, she knew it had been the most important night of her life. There would be much for her to think about in the days ahead.

Then, once more, she remembered the donkey. "Ebenezer followed us all by himself and did just what the King told him to do without being pulled," she said shyly. "Maybe I'd better give him his supper now."

"I guess Ebenezer deserves his supper after behaving so well," her father said, laughing. "Run along then, child, and hurry back for your own."

Judith wrapped her shawl tightly around her and went outside.

"Ebenezer," she called softly. At once the donkey moved away from the camels where he had been standing and came to her.

"Come with me, Ebenezer. Come get your supper," said Judith.

She turned and, without taking his rope, led the way to the stall. Ebenezer followed, tossing his head.

"Eeee-haw!" he said, happily.

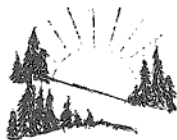
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THE BABE OF BETHLEHEM

(Continued from page 557)

child were dead. So it is with us. If we faithfully guard that which has come to birth within us we may fearlessly stand up for our beliefs; then rapidly the Child will grow till one day He will desire to "be about my Father's business" and we will hear the call, "Come work today in my vineyard." Then we may go to work, shouting to our fellowmen, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, that the King of Glory may come in. Who is this King of Glory. The Lord of Hosts, the Lord mighty in battle. He is the King of Glory. He is the King of Peace."

The Unhappy Little Pine Tree



Eleanore M. Friese

Once upon a time in a beautiful large forest there grew many lovely pine trees. Their wonderful pine scent refreshed the air all around for miles. They were all very happy together. They were all sizes and shapes. Most of them were quite tall, stately, and proud.

One small bushy pine tree, however, stood cramped among the others. It was a lovely, full little tree, but it was very unhappy to be so much different from the rest.

"Why can't I be stately and proud like the other pine trees?" sobbed the little pine tree.

A little sparrow had built its nest on top of the little pine tree and heard what it said.

"Why are you sad, little pine tree?" asked the sparrow. "Because you are not just like the other pine trees? See how full and bushy your branches are. It is such a safe and wonderful place to raise my little family. We will all sing our songs to you and make you glad."

"Dear little bird," said the unhappy pine tree, "thank you for being so good to me, but my sturdier and taller neighbor trees will be taken to the homes of people at Christmas time. They wear tinsel and beautiful stars in their crowns. Some of them make wonderful homes for people to live in. I must stay here, and may not do a thing!"

"Well," said the sparrow, "aren't we somebody, too? Aren't we living here? Isn't this a home you are making for somebody?"

"Dear little sparrow," said the pine tree, "indeed I am glad to hold you so close to my heart and hear your happy chirping all day. I know I should be so

grateful to our loving Heavenly Father for the many blessings we have. Yet, it seems so wonderful to be chosen a Christmas tree and to be dressed in tinsel and stars. I would love to make little children happy with lovely gifts lying at my side!"

"Be not too deceived, little pine tree," said the wise mother sparrow. "You do not live much longer once you are cut down to be a Christmas tree! Why not be glad you are what you are? See how the Father takes care of the sparrows, and of us all! Be glad, little pine tree, be glad."

A squirrel scampered under the branches of the little pine tree.

"Good morning," he said. "May I stay here a little while to rest? Your neighbor the tall pine tree will not let me under his branches. He said he must keep his branches shapely for Christmas."

"Of course, come in, little squirrel," said the pine tree.

Just then there were sounds of gunshot in the forest. Little squirrel crept further under the pine tree's bushy branches. Mother sparrow spread out her wings to protect her young in the nest.

Suddenly a frightened little brown rabbit came running quite out of breath and fell beneath the branches of the little pine tree.

"Oh, little pine tree," panted Mr. Brown Cotton-tail Rabbit. "Please, please let me stay here and rest. I cannot run another step and the hunters are after me with big guns! May I rest under your protecting branches a little while?"

"Why, of course, Mr. Cotton-tail,"

said the pine tree. "You lie there and take a nap. When you awake the killers will be gone. No one will find you here!"

"Ha, ha, ha," laughed the tall pine tree nearby. "That's all you'll ever be good for! Just look at you! Only squirrels and rabbits can make use of you. Ha, ha, ha!" laughed the tall, slender pine tree.

The little pine tree became very sad again. "It's true, it's true. Just look at me," it thought.

Now came the winter with its bitter winds and its heavy snowstorms. The wind blew and howled through the branches of the tall pine tree and the heavy snow bent them down. Then crack, crash, down came the branches. Then crack, crash, down came the tall pine tree and lay there cold and in pain.

The little pine tree felt very sad to see her neighbor in such terrible trouble.

"What can we do?" she asked mother sparrow.



Mother sparrow said, "There is nothing we can do. It is his punishment for being proud and selfish. He, too, must learn to be kind and good, even if he must suffer to learn."

Soon it was Christmas Eve. Woodsmen came to cut down trees for their homes.

Once again the little pine tree felt

very sad. Mother sparrow, little squirrel, and Mr. Brown Cotton-tail Rabbit were so glad the little pine tree would not be cut down, or they would surely freeze in the ice and snow.

"God has spared you for us, little pine tree," they said. "He takes care of us all."

Then came Christmas morning. Four little children came through the woods on their way to visit their grandma. They all stopped by the little pine tree. They formed a circle by joining hands.

"Let us sing," they said. They sang lovely Christmas carols as they danced around the little pine tree.

"Isn't this a darling little pine tree?" said Claribel.

"It's just big enough for us to dance around," said Elizabeth.

Then they all sang some more.

"Hush," said little Barbara, "I think I hear our echo."

They all listened for a moment. Yes, it did surely sound like their echo! They heard sweet voices from far away.

But the little girls didn't know that four little Christmas angels sang with them, way up in the clouds.

"We'll come back again next Christmas, little pine tree," said the little girls, and they all skipped happily off through the woods to grandmother's house.

"See?" chirped mother sparrow. "You made so many happy today! Aren't you glad now that you are a small bushy tree?"

"Yes, you are right, mother sparrow," said the little pine tree. "I am very glad. Merry Christmas! Little squirrel, and Mr. Brown Cotton-tail Rabbit, Merry Christmas!"

Then the little pine tree said a prayer:

"Thank you, my Heavenly Father, for all Thy blessings. Please bless all my dear little friends. I will never complain again!"

And the little pine tree never did!

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