

Western Wisdom Bible Teachings

Lessons 15 - 28



The Rosicrucian Fellowship

MOUNT ECCLESIA
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Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
LESSON 15.....	4
LESSON 16.....	8
LESSON 17.....	12
LESSON 18.....	16
LESSON 19.....	19
LESSON 20.....	22
LESSON 21.....	25
LESSON 22.....	28
LESSON 23.....	31
LESSON 24.....	35
LESSON 25.....	38
LESSON 26.....	41
LESSON 27.....	44
LESSON 28.....	47
Answers to Lessons	51

INTRODUCTION

"The Bible has been given to the Western World by the Recording Angels who give to each and all exactly what they need for their development."

--Max Heindel

Dear Friend:

During modern times there has been much argument concerning the authenticity of the Bible. Material science has been taught in our high schools and colleges, and there has arisen in the minds of inquiring students a demand for some correlation between orthodox Biblical teachings and the discoveries of science. The casual observer can find no satisfactory harmonization, but to the deeper student, there is possible a logical correlation between the findings of science and the Holy Scriptures. This series of lessons presents such a correlation.

These lessons have been compiled from the writings of Max Heindel, a trained clairvoyant and investigator of the invisible worlds. He did not claim to give all of the truth concerning any of the subjects treated, it being generally accepted that there are seven valid interpretations for every universal truth. He simply offered certain explanations and interpretations which will stand the test of logic and unbiased investigation, as well as provide a basis for broader understanding and deeper appreciation of the Scriptures. It is our pleasure to present them to the public, believing that they will fill a real need in bridging the gap between science and religion.

There are twenty-eight lessons in the Course. They are offered on a freewill offering basis and may be taken by anyone wishing to apply for them. A copy of the Bible will be needed for reference. The lessons, together with the indicated references and notes, should be carefully read several times before written answers are attempted, as careful study and concentration upon spiritual truths bring an inner understanding and revelation not obtained from a mere reading of the text.

Much of the material embodied in these lessons may present a challenge to the thoughtful student, and we would encourage individual investigation and research. However, as it is not our purpose to give our personal interpretations of material not contained in the lessons, we hope that the student will confine his work with the course entirely to the material in the lessons. **Thus, the answers to all the questions are to be found in these lessons.**

Trusting that your study of this course will bring you much inner joy and enlightenment, and with our cordial good wishes, we are

Yours in the search for truth,
The Rosicrucian Fellowship
Education Department

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--Max Heindel

Lesson No. 15 - The Star of Bethlehem

References: Matthew 2; John 13

At one time we dwelt upon the Sun; that is to say, that even in this Earth Period we were in that central fire mist, and we were there up to the time spoken of as the Hyperborean Epoch. There we crystallized until we could not respond to the high vibrations the other solar beings responded to. They could progress in solar vibrations, we could not; therefore we crystallized a part of that firemist to shield ourselves, and in consequence we had to be thrown off. Then when we had gone the proper distance away from the Sun we could crystallize again, and later we threw off that part which is now known as the Moon. Those beings who are now on the Moon were too far crystallized, they were behind us; therefore we had to throw them off. From these two sources come two sets of vibrations that enables us to hold our bodies together.

At that time man was perfectly unconscious. He used his force only to build organs inside. Then gradually the Earth crystallized more and more, until in the middle part of Atlantis the Ego had at last drawn into humanity and man had become possessed of all the vehicles that he has now. Then he became conscious of the world, but he was in a far, far different state than now. When consciousness is awakened it begins to work as a leaven in matter. Since we were in Atlantis and had our eyes fully opened, since the atmosphere cleared and we first saw things about us clearly, we have worked in the Earth in the materials of our bodies as a leaven works in the loaf and raises it. Thus we have lightened conditions and are continually lightening them.

In Lemuria man had the three lower bodies--the desire body, the vital body, and the dense body. Outside hovered the Spirit. At that time the Earth was in a condition of fire. There were masses of crust and around them seething, boiling water, and volcanic outbursts were very frequent. Man had at that time lungs that were like tubes. He had a bladder such as fish have now, wherewith he could lift himself and leap great chasms. As the Earth condensed more and more, that fire fog atmosphere of Lemuria condensed into a very dense fog in the early part of Atlantis. There those tubes had changed to gill-clefts, and he breathed more as the fish do. This can be seen now in embryological development, where man goes through the same stages he went through at that time. The embryo lies in the amniotic fluid and has gill-clefts, such as man had in the early part of Atlantis. He breathed in that manner in the dense watery atmosphere of Atlantis, but gradually that settled more and more, and man began to breathe as we do now.

In the early third of Atlantis there was a brotherhood; separation into nations had not begun. Mankind was a universal brotherhood, and the Rite of Baptism, which makes one a member of a holy brotherhood, is in remembrance of that time. Man was truly innocent and lovable, he had no evil in him. In the middle third of Atlantis all that changed. He began to separate into communities, for the watery atmosphere was clearing somewhat and he was beginning to breathe by means of lungs. The human Ego was very weak, and had to get help from someone else. Therefore Jehovah, the Highest Initiate, the ruler over the Angels and Archangels that work with men, breathed into man's nostrils, gave him lungs, and gave him the Race Spirit in the air that was to curb the hardening tendencies of the desire body and help him to get it under control.

The desire body has control of the voluntary muscles. Every movement we make is caused by desire, and every exertion breaks down tissue and hardens more and more every particle of our tissue. Therefore Jehovah aimed to help mankind out of their dense condition by means of law. The Race religions are all based upon law. "I am a jealous God, and if you fulfill my commandments I will bless you abundantly and make your seed as multitudinous as the sands upon the seashore," says the Race God. "But if you do not obey, I will send your enemies upon you, and they shall gain the victory over you." Jehovah is the ruler of all the Races and all the religions. He gave to each of these Races an Archangel to be their ruler, to be their special Prince. In Daniel 12:1, it is said that Michael is

Prince over the Jews, and in the tenth chapter another Race Spirit says: "I am going to fight against the Prince of Persia, and the Prince of Grecia shall go up."

Thus these Race Spirits work with man, punishing him by means of other people, and giving him rewards or punishments for his good or bad deeds. The fear of God and the desire for the material reward was pitted against the desires of the flesh, and therefore these Race religions under Jehovah are such as to build up the National-spirit. They subjected, or rather they neglected, the individual for the sake of the nation. The interests of the individual are always made subservient to the interest of the nation.

The Race Spirit took a special care of certain sects of people, for example, the Levites among the Jews, who were destined specially for priesthood and they were herded around the temples and were specially bred to be the forerunners and teachers of their brethren. Their system of mating and regulation of the sex life of these special protégés produced a more lax connection between the vital body and the dense body, which was necessary in order that Initiation might take place and help man to advance. As long as the Race Spirit works with us, we are under the law, we are only overcoming the influence of the desire body; therefore Paul says well that the law was until Christ. Not until Christ came 2,000 years ago, but "*until Christ be formed in you.*" When we release ourselves from the toils of the desire body and live up to the vibrations of the vital body, we become imbued by the Christ Spirit. Then and only then do we rise out of the national, the separating, principle. Then do we become capable of being brothers to men.

Now we see why Christ said so emphatically, "Before Abraham was, I am." The Ego was before the nation and must be exalted over the nation. To that end Christ came, because as long as there were nations, there could not be brotherhood. If we have a number of houses, and they are built of bricks, they are unavailable for building one building until torn down. When all the bricks have been separated we may begin building. When all nations have been chopped into individuals we may begin to build the grand Universal Brotherhood of Man.

That is why the Race religions failed--they separate men into antagonistic groups. So the Race religions must be abrogated. We cannot do away with nations except we separate the individual. Therefore, we have wars; therefore, we have had revolutions, where men have rebelled against kings and rulers, and have instituted republics. But they are not enough. We want to be free individually. We want to be every man a law unto himself, and this is where a great, great danger lies. We cannot be laws unto ourselves--*we cannot be free, until we have learned to respect everybody else's rights.*

So then, under the Race religion, men grew by obedience to the law. Under the Christ regime that is to come, man is to rise above law, and to be a law unto himself. As Goethe says:

"From ever power that binds the world in chains,
Man liberates himself, when self-control he gains."

That is the goal--*self-mastery*--which every one must gain before he is fit to be a law unto himself, to be above the law, for no one except the very undisciplined man will think to improve matters by having the power to shoot down people. By obeying every law, man rises above all law, and by and by he will rise above the need of all law. Then and only then can he be a law unto himself. In the Christ regime man will be impelled and guided by love, and "perfect love casteth out fear." The Race religions compel man to do right by means of *fear*, but the Christ religion will impel man through *love*. Then he cannot do otherwise than right.

All Race religions--every one of them without exception--are looking for someone to come. The Egyptian religion looked forward to Osiris, the bright Sun Spirit; the Persian looked to Mithras; and the Babylonian to Tammuz. All looked for someone to come, to free the Earth. We find the same thing in the Norse mythology. The old Norsemen looked for the "Twilight of the Gods," when the present regime must perish, and then out of the South from Muspelheim, the region of heat, should come that bright Sun Spirit, Sutar, and he should set up *a new Heaven and a new Earth*. Such we hear of in all religions, and even in the Christian religion we find them looking forward to a Sun Spirit. At one time in the ritual of the Catholic Church they used the phrase, "Our Lord the Sun." It is from the visible Sun

that every particle of physical energy comes, and it is from the Spiritual invisible Sun that all of the spiritual energy comes.

At the present time we cannot bear to look directly at the Sun. It would blind us. But we can look at the reflected sunlight that comes from the Moon. In the same way, man cannot stand the direct spiritual impulse that comes from the Sun, and therefore it had to be sent by way of the Moon, through the mediumship of Jehovah, the Regent of the Moon. That is the origin of the Race religions. Later came the time when man could take the Spiritual impulse more directly and Christ, the present Earth Spirit, came to prepare this. Before the advent of Christ all spiritual impulse came to man by way of the Moon as Race religions. Only by Initiation was it possible to get into direct touch with the spiritual solar impulse. A veil hung before the temple.

When the time arrived that the Christ Spirit could be entertained on the Earth, a ray from the Cosmic Christ came here, and incarnated in the body of our Elder Brother Jesus. After the sacrifice on Golgotha had been completed, He drew Himself into the Earth. He said, "This is my body." He showed the bread, and it is the Earth Spirit that brings forth that bread. "This is my blood." The juices that are in the plant made the wine. It was not said, "This symbolizes my body or blood." He said unequivocally, "This *is* my blood."

In John 13:18 in our New Testament, it is stated: "He that eats my bread hath lifted up his heel against me." Luther, who translated it in Germany, and was not tied up by any of the restrictions of the translators of the King James Bible, put it: "He that eats my bread trampled upon me." We do trample, at every step we take, upon the Earth Spirit, and that Spirit's body and blood is consumed among us, and that Spirit is waiting for the day of redemption, when we shall be lifted so far from our material conditions that it shall be possible for the Earth Spirit to become liberated from its present cramped and dense existence.

The Christ Spirit, then, is the first incoming of a direct spiritual impulse. We know that at the time when the Sun Spirit is in the northern regions we have all the physical impacts upon the Earth, we get all the good there is in the Sun along *physical lines*. That is the time when the grain and the grape are ripening, and when everything is bringing forth in the Physical World. Then the spiritual impulse is abrogated for the time being; but when the Sun goes into the winter solstice in December, the spiritual impulse is strongest. Also, we have the spiritual impulse stronger in the night than in the daytime, and we can see that at the time when the days are shortest and the nights are the longest--on that Holy Night that we speak of, when the Christ was born, as a Sun, who was to lighten our darkness--the spiritual influence is then strongest and can be reached most easily. It is this great truth that is at the bottom of the Star in the Holy Night, illuminating the longest and darkest night of the year.

In the olden times, before the Christ came, only a chosen few could follow the path of Initiation, such as the priests and Levites. These were brought to the temples and there herded together. They were married to one another in a certain way. Certain people were mated with a definite end in view, namely, that they might develop the proper laxity between the vital body and the dense body that is necessary to Initiation. A separation has to take place in order that we may lift the two higher ethers out and leave the other two. That could not be done with ordinary humanity. They were yet much in bondage to the desire body. They must wait until a later time.

Even with those people who were around the temples, it was very dangerous work to free them. It could be done best at certain times, and this longest night was one of those times. When the greatest spiritual impulse was here, they had a better chance to get in touch with it than at any other time of the year. So on the Holy Night, which we call Christmas, it was usual for the Wise Men (those who were beyond the ordinary humanity) to take the ones who were also becoming wise, and therefore entitled to Initiation, into the temples. Certain ceremonies were performed and the candidates were entranced. They could not at that time be given an Initiation in their full waking state, it had to be done in trance. When the spiritual perception was awakened in them, they could look through the Earth, which became transparent, as it were, and they saw the Star at midnight, the spiritual Sun.

Do not think it shone only at that time. It is easier now than then to see it, for when Christ came He altered the vibrations of the Earth and has been changing them all the time since. He "rent the temple veil"--He made the Holy of Holies, the place of Initiation, open to "Whosoever will!" From that

time on no more trance is needed, no more subjective states in order to go through Initiation. There is a conscious going forth into the Temple by everyone who wills to come.

We have one more thing to consider: the gifts these wise men brought--the gifts that were to be laid at the feet of the Savior. The legend tells us that one brought gold, one brought myrrh, and the third brought frankincense.

The gold we always hear spoken of in symbology is the emblem of the Spirit. The Spirit is symbolized thus in the Niebelungen Ring, for instance. There in the opening scene we see the Rhinegold. The river Rhine is taken as the emblem of water, and there the gold is seen shining on the rock, symbolizing the Universal Spirit in its perfect purity. Later it is stolen and *made into a ring* by Alberich, representing mankind in the middle of Atlantis, when the Spirit had drawn into them. Then the gold became debased, was lost, and was the cause of all sorrow on the Earth. Later still we hear of the alchemists who tried to transmute base metal into gold; that is the spiritual way of saying that they wanted to purify the dense body, to refine it and extract the spiritual essence.

Therefore, the gift of one wise man is the Spirit. The next one brings myrrh. Myrrh is the extract of an aromatic plant that grows in Arabia, a very rare plant, very rare indeed. Therefore, it symbolizes the thing that man extracts when he cleanses himself. When he has cleansed his blood of passion he becomes plant-like, chaste and pure. Then his body is an aromatic essence. It is an actual fact that there are men and women so holy that they emit an aroma. It is said of some of the saints, and it is true. Therefore, the myrrh stands for that soul essence that is drawn out of the experience of the body. It is the soul.

The third gift was incense. Incense is a physical substance of a very light character that is often used in religious services. It serves as an embodiment for the ministering unseen forces, and thus symbolizes the body.

This is the key to the three gifts that were offered up by the Wise Men--the Spirit, the soul, and the body. As Christ said, "If you want to follow me, you must sell all you have. *You are not to keep anything for yourself.*" You are to give up body, soul, and Spirit, everything for the higher life, everything for the Christ. Not to an exterior Christ, however, but to the Christ *within*. The three Wise Men are said in the legend to be yellow, black, and white, representatives of the three races that we have on Earth: the Mongolian, the Negro, and the Caucasian. Therefore we see that it is very well shown in the legend that eventually they will all come into this beneficent Christ religion. "To Him every knee shall bow." To Him each one will in time be led by the Star.

Questions:

- 1] What help did Jehovah and the archangels render man in the middle third of Atlantis?
- 2] Why was it necessary that the Race religions be abrogated and the Christ come?
- 3] How can man be a law unto himself?
- 4] Explain the difference between the spiritual influences from Jehovah and those from the Christ.
- 5] What vital difference did the coming of the Christ make in regard to Initiation?
- 6] State the difference between Initiation prior to the coming of Christ and afterward.
- 7] Explain the symbology of the Wise Men and their gifts.

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Lesson No. 16 - The Mystery of Golgotha

References: Matthew 27, 28; Mark 15, 16; Luke 23, 24; John 19, 20, 21

During the last 2,000 years much has been said about "the cleansing blood." The blood of Christ has been extolled from the pulpit as the sovereign remedy for sin; the only means of redemption and salvation.

But if the laws of Rebirth and Consequence work in such a way that evolving beings reap as they have sown, and if the evolutionary impulse is constantly bringing humanity higher and higher, ultimately to attain perfection--where then is the need for redemption and salvation? Even if the need existed, how can the death of one individual help the rest? Would it not be nobler to suffer the consequences of one's acts than to hide behind another? These are some of the objections to the doctrine of vicarious atonement and redemption by the blood of Christ Jesus. We will try to answer them before showing the logical harmony between the operation of the law of Consequence and the Atonement of Christ.

In the first place, it is absolutely true that the evolutionary impulse does work to achieve ultimate perfection for all; yet there are some who are constantly straggling behind. At the present time, we have just passed the extreme point of materiality and are going through the sixteen Races. We are treading "the sixteen paths to destruction," and are consequently in graver danger of falling behind than at any other part of the evolutionary journey.

In the abstract, time is nothing. A number of entities may fall behind so far that they must be abandoned, to take up their further evolution in another scheme, where they can continue their journey to perfection. Nevertheless, that was not the evolution originally designed for them and it is reasonable to suppose that the exalted Intelligences in charge of our evolution use every means to bring through in safety as many as possible of the entities under their charge.

In ordinary evolution, the laws of Rebirth and Consequence are perfectly adequate for bringing the major portion of the life wave up to perfection, but they do not suffice in the case of stragglers, who are lagging behind in the various Races. During the stage of individualism, which is the climax of the illusion of separateness, all mankind needs extra help, but for the stragglers some additional special aid must be provided.

To give that special aid, to redeem the stragglers, was the mission of Christ. He said that He came to seek and to save that which was lost. He opened up the way of Initiation for all who are willing to seek it.

But not all are in need of salvation. Christ knew that there is a very large class who do not require salvation in this way, but just as surely as there are the ninety-and-nine who are well taken care of by the laws of Rebirth and Consequence and will reach perfection in that way, so there are the "sinners" who have become "bogged" in matter and cannot escape without a rope. Christ came to save them and to bring peace and good will to all, by raising them to the necessary point of spirituality, causing a change in their desire bodies, which will make the influence of the Life Spirit in the heart more potent.

His younger brother Sun Spirits, the Archangels, had worked as Race Spirits on the desire bodies of man, but their work had been from without. It was simply a reflected Spiritual Sun-force and came through the Moon--as moonlight is reflected sunlight. Christ, the Chief Initiate of the Sun Spirits, entered directly into the dense body of the Earth and brought the direct Sun-force, thus enabling Him to influence our desire bodies from *within*.

So it is with the spiritual impulses which help man to evolve. The reason why the Earth was thrown off from the Sun was because our humanity could not endure the Sun's tremendous physical and spiritual impulses. Even after an enormous distance had been placed between the Earth and the Sun, the spiritual impulse would still have been too strong had it not been sent first to the Moon, to be used by Jehovah, the Regent of the Moon, for man's benefit. A number of Archangels were given

Jehovah as helpers in reflecting these spiritual impulses from the Sun upon humanity of the Earth, in the form of Jehovistic or Race religions.

The lowest vehicle of the Archangels is the desire body. Our desire body was added in the Moon Period, at which time Jehovah was the highest Initiate. Therefore Jehovah is able to deal with man's desire body. Jehovah's lowest vehicle is the Human Spirit and its counterpart is the desire body. The Archangels are His helpers because they are able to manage the spiritual Sun forces, and the desire body is their lowest vehicle. Thus they are able to work with and prepare humanity for the time when it can receive the spiritual impulses directly from the Solar Orb, without the intervention of the Moon.

Upon Christ, as the highest Initiate of the Sun Period, is laid the task of sending out this impulse. The impulse which Jehovah reflected was sent out by Christ, Who thus prepared both the Earth and humanity for His direct ingress.

The expression, "prepared the Earth," means that all evolution on a planet is accompanied by the evolution of *that planet itself*. Had some observer gifted with spiritual sight watched the evolution of our Earth from some distant star, he would have noticed a gradual change taking place in the Earth's desire body.

Under the old dispensation the desire bodies of people in general were improved by means of the law. This work is still going on in the majority of people, who are thus preparing themselves for the higher life.

The higher life (Initiation) does not commence, however, until the work on the vital body begins. The means used for bringing that into activity is Love, or rather Altruism. The former word has been so abused that it no longer conveys the meaning here required.

During the old dispensation of the path of Initiation was not free and open, except to a chosen few. The Hierophants of the Mysteries collected certain families about the Temples, setting them apart from all the other people. These chosen families were then rigorously guarded as to certain rites and ceremonies. Their marriages and sexual intercourse were regulated by the Hierophants.

The effect of this was to produce a race having the proper degree of laxity between the dense and vital bodies, also, to wake the desire body from its state of lethargy during sleep. Thus a special few were made fit for Initiation and were given opportunities that could not be given to all.

The Mission of Christ, in addition to saving the lost, was to make Initiation possible to all; therefore, Jesus came from the common people, and though not of the teacher class. His teaching was higher than that of Moses.

Christ Jesus did not deny Moses, the law, nor the prophets. On the contrary, He acknowledged them all and showed the people that they were His witnesses, as they all pointed to One Who was to come. He told the people that those things had served their purpose and that henceforth Love must supersede Law.

Christ Jesus was killed. In connection with this fact, we come to the supreme and fundamental difference between Him and the previous teachers, through whom the Race Spirits worked. They all died and must be reborn again and again to help their peoples bear their destiny. The Archangel Michael raised up Moses, who was taken up to Mount Nebo to die. He was reborn Elijah. Elijah returned as John the Baptist; Buddha died and was reborn as Shankaracharya. Shri Krishna says, "Whenever there is decay of Dharma... and... exaltation of Adharma, then I myself come forth for the protection of good, for the destruction of evildoers, for the sake of firmly establishing Dharma. I am born from age to age."

When death came, Moses' face *shone* and Buddha's body became *alight*. They all reached the stage when the Spirit begins to shine from within--but then they died.

Christ Jesus reached that stage on the Mount of Transfiguration. It is of the very highest significance that His *real work took place subsequent to that event*. He suffered, was *killed*--and *resurrected*.

Being killed is a very different thing from dying. The blood that had been the vehicle of the Race Spirit must *flow* and be cleansed of that contaminating influence. Love of father and mother, exclusive of other fathers and mothers, must go--otherwise Universal Brotherhood and an all-embracing Altruistic Love could never become an actuality.

When the Savior Christ Jesus was crucified, His body was pierced in five places, in the five centers where the currents of the vital body flow; and the pressure of the crown of thorns caused a flow from the sixth also.

When the blood flowed from these centers, the great Sun Spirit Christ was liberated from the physical vehicle of Jesus and found Himself *in the Earth*, with His individual vehicles. The already existing planetary vehicles He permeated with His own vehicles, and in the twinkling of an eye diffused His own desire body over the planet, which has enabled Him thenceforth to work upon the Earth and its humanity from *within*.

At that moment a tremendous wave of spiritual sunlight flooded the Earth. It rent the veil which the Race Spirit had hung before the Temple to keep out all but the chosen few, and it made the Path of Initiation free thenceforth to whomsoever will. So far as concerned the Spiritual Worlds, this wave transformed the conditions of Earth like a flash of lightning, but the dense, concrete conditions are, of course, much more slowly affected.

Like all rapid and high vibrations of light, this great wave blinded the people by its dazzling brilliance, therefore it was said that "the Sun was darkened." The very opposite was what actually occurred. The Sun was not darkened, but shone out in glorious splendor. It was the excess of light that blinded the people, and only as the entire Earth absorbed the desire body of the bright Sun Spirit did the vibration return to a more normal rate.

The expression, "the cleansing blood of Christ Jesus," means that as the blood flowed on Calvary, it bore with it the great Sun Spirit Christ, Who by that means secured admission to the Earth itself, and since that moment has been its Regent. He diffused His own desire body throughout the planet, thereby cleansing it from all the vile influences which had grown up under the regime of the Race Spirit.

Under the law all sinned; nay, more, they could not help it. They had not evolved to where they could do right for Love's sake. The desire nature was so strong that it was an impossibility for them to rule it altogether, therefore their debts, engendered under the law of Consequence, piled up to monstrous proportions. Evolution would have been terribly delayed, and many lost to our life wave altogether if some help had not been given.

Therefore Christ did come "to seek and to save that which was lost." He took away the sin of the world by His cleansing blood, which gave Him entrance to the Earth and its humanity. He purified the conditions, and we owe it to Him that we are able to gather for our desire bodies purer desire stuff than formerly, and He continues working to help us, by making our external environment constantly purer.

That this is and was done at the expense of great suffering to Himself, no one can doubt who is able to form the least conception of the limitations endured by that Great Spirit in entering the hampering conditions of physical existence, even in the best and purest vehicle possible; nor is His present limitation as Regent of the Earth much less painful. True, He is also Regent of the Sun, and therefore only partially confined to the Earth, yet the limitations set by the crampingly low vibrations of our dense planet must be almost unendurable.

Had Christ Jesus simply died, it would have been impossible for Him to have done this work, but the Christians have a *risen* Savior, One Who is ever present to help those who call upon His Name. Having suffered like unto ourselves in all things and knowing fully our needs, He is lenient toward our mistakes and failures, so long as we continue trying to live the good life. We must ever keep before our eyes the fact that *the only failure is ceasing to try*. Upon the death of the dense body of Christ Jesus, the seed atom was returned to the original owner, Jesus of Nazareth, who for some time afterward, while functioning in a vital body which he had gathered temporarily, taught the nucleus of the new faith which Christ had left behind. Jesus of Nazareth has since had the guidance of the esoteric branches which sprang up all over Europe.

In many places the Knights of the Round Table were high Initiates in the Mysteries of the New Dispensation. So were the Knights of the Grail--to whom was finally confided Joseph of Arimathea's Grail Cup, which was used by Christ Jesus at the Last Supper. They were afterward entrusted also with the Lance which pierced His side, and the receptacle which received the blood from the wound.

The Druids of Ireland and the Trottes of Northern Russia were esoteric schools through which the Master Jesus worked during the so-called "Dark Ages," but dark though they were, the spiritual impulse spread, compared to the growing materialism of the last three hundred years, which has increased physical knowledge immensely, but has almost extinguished the Light of the Spirit.

Questions:

- 1] What is meant by "the sixteen paths to destruction"?
- 2] For whose "salvation" in particular did Christ come?
- 3] Explain how the coming of Christ made Initiation, or the higher life, possible for all.
- 4] What is the reason for the crucifixion of Christ Jesus.
- 5] Explain what actually took place at the crucifixion.
- 6] What has been the work of Jesus since the crucifixion?
- 7] What has been the great danger of humanity for the past three hundred years?

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 --Max Heindel

Lesson No. 17 - The Lord's Prayer

References: Matthew 6:9-13; Luke 11:1-4; Acts 6:4; 12-5; Romans 12:12; James 5:16

Prayer may be said to be an opening up of a channel along which the divine Life and Light may flow into the Spirit, in the same way that the turning of a switch opens the way for the electric current to flow from the powerhouse into our house. Faith in prayer is like the energy which turns the switch. Without muscular force we cannot turn the switch to obtain physical light, and without faith we cannot pray in such a manner as to secure spiritual illumination. If we pray for worldly ends, for that which is contrary to the law of love and universal good, our prayers will prove as unavailing as a glass switch in an electric circuit. Glass is a nonconductor, a bar to electric power, and selfish prayers are, likewise bars to divine purposes and must therefore remain unanswered. To pray to a purpose we must pray aright, and in the Lord's Prayer we have a most wonderful pattern, for it caters to the needs of man as no other formula could do. Within a few short sentences it encompasses all the complexities of the relationship of God to man.

To understand this sublime prayer properly and be able to render it understandingly and efficiently, let us recall that:

The Father is the highest Initiate of the Saturn Period.

The Son is the highest Initiate of the Sun Period.

The Holy Spirit is the highest Initiate of the Moon Period.

The Divine Spirit and the dense body of man started their evolution in the Saturn Period and are therefore under the special care of the Father.

The Life Spirit and the vital body started their evolution in the Sun Period and are consequently the particular charges of the Son.

The Human Spirit and the desire body commenced to evolve in the Moon Period and are therefore the special wards of the Holy Spirit.

The Mind was added in the Earth Period and is not cared for by other outside beings, but is to be subdued by man himself, without any outside assistance.

In the Lord's Prayer there are seven prayers; or, rather, there are three sets of two prayers and one single supplication. Each of the three sets has reference to the needs of one of the aspects of the threefold Spirit and its counterpart in the threefold body. The opening sentence, "Our Father Who art in Heaven," is merely as the address upon an envelope. The student is referred to Diagram 16 on page 465 of *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* for a key to this prayer, showing diagrammatically the relation between the Trinity, the threefold Spirit, the threefold body and the Mind, each aspect of the Spirit being connected by a line with the prayer specifically suited to its counterpart in the threefold body and addressed to its guardian aspect in the Trinity.

The Human Spirit lifts itself upon the wings of *devotion* to its parent aspect in the Holy Trinity and intones the opening incantation, "Hallowed be Thy Name."

The Life Spirit raises itself upon pinions of *love* and addresses the fount of its being, The Son, "Thy Kingdom come."

The Divine Spirit soars with superior *insight* to the fountainhead, The Father, whence it sprang at the dawn of time, and manifests its confidence in that all-embracing Intelligence in the words, "Thy Will be done."

Having thus reached the Throne of Grace, the threefold Spirit in man prefers its requests concerning the personality, the threefold body.

The Divine Spirit prays to the Father for its counterpart, the dense body, "Give us our daily bread." The Life Spirit prays to The Son for its counterpart, the vital body, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us."

The Human Spirit utters the supplication for the desire body in the words, "Lead us not into temptation."

Then all join in a concerted appeal concerning the Mind, "Deliver us from evil."

The addition, "For thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory, forever, Amen," was not given by Christ, but is very appropriate as the parting adoration of the threefold Spirit as it closes its direct address to the Deity.

Looking at the foregoing explanation from the analytical standpoint, we find that there are three religious teachings to be given to man in helping him to attain to perfection. One is the Religion of The Holy Spirit; the next is the Religion of The Son; and the last is the Religion of The Father.

Under the regime of the Holy Spirit the human race was divided into nations and peoples, segregated by their adherence to one group from fellowship with other nations. Each group was further cut off from the rest because of speaking another language. They were all put under certain laws and were taught to reverence the *name* of their God. One people worshipped him as Lao, another as Tao, others as Bel. Everywhere the name of the *Lawgiver* was holy. The method of segregation had the advantage that the Race-Spirit in chief, Jehovah, could use one people to punish another who had transgressed His law, but it has the disadvantage that it fosters egotism and separates humanity in a manner detrimental to universal good. It is an axiomatic truth that what does not benefit all cannot really benefit any. Therefore, ways and means must be found to reunite the scattered nations and weld them into one universal Brotherhood. That is to be the work of the Religion of The Son—Christianity. The warring of nations is fostered by the Race-Spirit, but the Christian Religion will eventually unite them, cause them to beat their swords into ploughshares, and bring peace and good will on earth when *the Kingdom* of The Son has superseded the tribes and races. Then a still higher religious teaching, the religion of The Father, is to unite mankind still closer. In the Kingdom of the Son there will be a universal Brotherhood of *separate* individuals having varying interests, but ready to give and take through love, sinking individual preferences for the common good, but when the religion of the Father becomes a fact in life, the self will be entirely submerged in a common purpose, a single will. *The Will of God* will then be done on Earth as it is in Heaven, where there is neither me or thee, but where God is All and in All.

In the meantime, a certain work has to be performed by the threefold Spirit upon the threefold body, to spiritualize it and extract the threefold soul.

The dense body is but an irresponsible tool, but nevertheless, it is a most valuable instrument, to be cared for and prized as a mechanic cares for and prizes a valuable tool. We hold firmly before our mental vision that we are not the body, any more than the mechanic is identical with his tools, or the carpenter is the house. That is plainly evident when we consider that our body is a constantly changing aggregation of cells, while we keep our "I"-identity amid and despite all changes, which would be impossible if we were identical with our dense body. That body is to be valued and cared for. "Give us our daily bread," says the fourth prayer. Most people eat too much, and for them an occasional fast may be good, but fasting is unnecessary for those who do not feast, but live the simple life from day to day. When the body is overfed, the Spirit may be ever so willing, but the flesh will be correspondingly weak. Therefore, when a young Spirit gains ascendancy, it seeks to overcome the lower nature by fasting, tortures, etc., as best exemplified in Hindu Yogis who emaciate the body, causing the limbs to wither, etc., that the Spirit may shine.

That is a mistake, as much subversive of true Spiritual growth as is the habit of overeating. As said, where a man can control his appetite and feed his body on pure food, he need not fast, but may give to his body its daily bread.

The vital body being the storehouse of the panorama of our life, our own sins and the wrong we have suffered at the hands of others are there inscribed, hence the fifth prayer, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who have trespassed against us," enunciated the needs of the vital body and be it noted that this prayer teaches the doctrine of the remission of sins in the words, *forgive us*, and the Law of Consequence in the words, *as we forgive*, making our attitude to others the measure of our emancipation

"Lead us not into temptation," is the prayer for the desire body, which is the storehouse of energy, and furnishes incentive to action through desire. An Oriental maxim says, "Kill out desire," and the

Orientalists furnish good examples of the indolence resultant upon the attempt to do that. "Kill out your temper" is the foolish admonition sometimes given those who lose their temper. Desire or temper is a valuable asset, too valuable to be stunted or killed. The man without desire is like steel devoid of temper--of no account. In Revelation, while the six churches are praised, the seventh is utterly anathematized for being "Neither hot nor cold," a wishy-washy community. "The greater the sinner, the greater the saint," is a true adage, for it takes energy to sin, and when that energy is turned in the right direction, it is as much of a power for good as previously it was for evil. A man may be good because he cannot summon up sufficient energy to be bad: then he is so good that he is good for nothing. While we are weak, our desire nature masters us and may lead us into temptation, but as we learn to *control* our desire nature, our temper may guide in harmony with the laws of God and man.

Desire is the great tempter of mankind. It is the great incentive to all action, and insofar as the actions subserve the purposes of the Spirit, it is good; but where the desire is for something degrading, something that debases the nature, it is indeed proper that we pray not to be led into temptation.

Love, Wealth, Power, and Fame: These are the four great motives of human action. Desire for one or more of these is the motive for all that man does or leaves undone. The great Leaders of Humanity have wisely given them as incentives to action, that man may gain experience and learn thereby. They are necessary, and the aspirant may safely continue to use them as motives for action, but he must transmute them into something higher. He must overcome with nobler aspirations the selfish love which seeks the ownership of another body, and all desires for wealth, power, and fame for narrow and personal reasons.

The Love for which he must long is that only which is of the soul and embraces all beings, high and low, increasing in proportion to the needs of the recipient;

The Wealth--that which consists solely of abundance of opportunities to serve his fellow men;

The Power--that alone which makes for the upliftment of humanity;

The Fame--none save that which increases his ability to spread the good news, that all who suffer may thus quickly find solace for the heart's grief.

The guiding power which directs this energy of the desire nature is the Mind; hence, the seventh prayer, "Deliver us from evil," is made with regard to the mind.

The animals follow desire blindly and commit no sin. To them there is no evil; that only comes to our cognition by and through the discriminating mind, which enables man to see various courses of action and to choose. If he chooses to act in harmony with universal good, he cultivates virtue; if the contrary, he becomes tainted with vice. It should be noted that the much-vaunted "innocence" of a child is not by any means virtue. The child has not yet been tempted and tried, therefore it is innocent. In time, temptations from the desire nature will come to test its courage, and it depends upon the control of the mind over desire whether it will stand for the right or fall by the wayside. If the mind is strong enough to "deliver us from evil" desires, we have become virtuous, which is a positive quality, and even if we fall for a time before we realize our wrong, we acquire virtue as soon as we repent and reform. We exchange negative innocence for the positive quality of virtue.

Thus does the Lord's Prayer cover the various parts of the human constitution and enunciate the need for them all, showing the marvelous wisdom laid down in that simple formula.

Questions:

- 1] What is prayer? Why is faith important in prayer?
- 2] To what does each of the three sets of two prayers in the Lord's Prayer have reference?
- 3] Analyze the Prayer, giving passages and meanings.
- 4] What three religions are to be given man in helping him to attain perfection?

5] State the cardinal points in each.

6] What is the correct teaching in regard to desire?

7] How may we exchange the negative quality of innocence for the positive quality of virtue?

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 --Max Heindel

Lesson No. 18 - The Sacraments

References: Genesis 9:14; Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22; Luke 22:19; I Corinthians 5:7-8; 16-21

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

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

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

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

The Sacrament of Communion. To obtain a thorough understanding of the deep and far-reaching significance of the manner in which the Sacrament of Communion was instituted, it is necessary to consider the evolution of our planet and of composite man, also the chemistry of foods and their influence on humanity. For the sake of lucidity, we will briefly recapitulate the various points involved.

The Virgin Spirits, which are now mankind, commenced their pilgrimage through matter in the dawn of time, in order that, by the friction of concrete existence, their latent powers might be transmuted to kinetic energy as usable soul power. Three successive veils of increasingly dense matter were acquired by the involving Spirits during the Saturn, Sun, and Moon Periods. Thus each Spirit was separated from all other Spirits, and the consciousness which could not penetrate the prison wall of matter and communicate with others was forced to turn inwards, and in so doing it discovered-- *itself*. Thus self-consciousness was attained.

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

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

In the Polarian Epoch pure mineral matter became a constituent part of man, thus Adam was made of earth, that is, so far as his dense body was concerned.

In the Hyperborean Epoch the vital body was added, and thus his constitution became plantlike, and Cain, the man of that time, lived on the fruits of the soil.

The Lemurian Epoch saw the evolution of a desire body, which made man like the present animals. Then milk, the product of living animals, was added to human diet. *Abel* was a shepherd, but it is nowhere stated that he killed an animal.

At that time mankind lived innocently and peacefully in the misty atmosphere which enveloped the Earth during the latter part of the Lemurian Epoch. Men were then like children under the care of a

common father, until the mind was given to all in the beginning of Atlantis. Thought activity breaks down tissue, which must be replaced; the lower and more material the thought, the greater the havoc and the more pressing the need for albumen wherewith to make quick repairs. Hence necessity, the mother of invention, inaugurated the loathsome practice of flesh eating, and so long as we continue to think along purely business or material lines, we shall have to go on using our stomachs as receptacles for the decaying corpses of our murdered animal victims. Yet we shall see later that flesh food has enabled us to make the wonderful material progress achieved in the Western World.

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

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

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

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

At that point he had acquired faculties which equipped him to enter the school of experience, the phenomenal world, as a free agent to learn the lessons of life, untrammelled save by the *laws of nature*, which are his safeguards, and the reaction of his own previous acts, which becomes *destiny*.

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

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

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

The emergence from flooded Atlantis, the liberation of humanity from the absolute rulership of visible superhuman guardians, their placement *under the law of consequence and the laws of nature, and the gift of WINE* are described in the stories of Noah and Moses, which are different accounts of the same event.

Both Noah and Moses led the followers through the water. Moses calls Heaven and Earth to witness that he has placed before them the blessing and the curse, exhorts them to choose the good or take the consequence of their actions; then he leaves them.

The phenomenon of the rainbow requires that the Sun be near the horizon, the nearer the better; also a clear atmosphere, and a dark rain cloud in the opposite quarter of the heavens. When under such conditions an observer stands with his back to the Sun, he may see the Sun's rays refracted through the raindrops as a rainbow. In early Atlantean times, when there had been no rain as yet and the atmosphere was a warm, moist fog through which the Sun appeared as one of our arc lamps on a foggy day, the phenomenon of the rainbow was an impossibility. It could not have made its appearance

until the mist had condensed to rain, flooded the basins of our Earth, and left the atmosphere clear as described in the story of Noah, which thus points to *the law of alternating cycles* that brings day and night, summer and winter, in unvarying sequence, and to which man is subject in the present age.

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

Questions:

- 1] Why did the Virgin Spirits commence their pilgrimage through matter?
- 2] What was accomplished through turning man's consciousness inward?
- 3] By whom and in what ways was early humanity guided?
- 4] When was the mind given to humanity, and what did it bring about?
- 5] What important event in man's development occurred in the middle of Atlantis?
- 6] Why was wine added to man's diet?
- 7] In what condition do we find man in the latter part of Atlantis?

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 --Max Heindel

Lesson No. 19 - The Sacraments [continued]

References: John 1:16-17; Romans 5:12-13; I Corinthians 10:31

The Sacrament of Communion (Continued). "The Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it and said, Take eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also He took the cup, when He had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore, whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord... For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself... For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep." (I Cor. 11:23-30)

In the foregoing passages there is a deeply hidden esoteric meaning which is particularly obscured in the English translation, but in the German, Latin, and Greek, the student still has a hint as to what was really intended by the last parting injunction of the Savior to His disciples. Before examining this phase of the subject, let us first consider the words, "in remembrance of me." We shall then perhaps be in better condition to understand what is meant by the "cup" and the "bread."

Every one among us goes out into the world to fight the battle of existence. Under the law of necessity we forget the love which should be the ruling factor in Christian lives. Every man's hand is against his brother. Every one strives for a position, wealth, and power, that goes with these attributes. We forget on Monday what we reverently remembered on Sunday, and all the world is poor in consequence.

We also make a distinction between the bread and the wine which we drink at the so-called "Lord's Table," and the food of which we partake during the intervals between attendance at Communion. But there is no warrant in the Scriptures for any such distinction, as anyone may see, even in the English version, by leaving out the words printed in italics which have been inserted by the translators to give what they thought was the sense of a passage. On the contrary, we are told that whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, all should be done to the glory of God. (I Cor. 10:31)

Our every act should be a prayer. The perfunctory "grace" at meals is in reality a blasphemy, and the silent thought of gratitude to the Giver of daily bread is far to be preferred.

When we remember at each meal that it has been drawn from the substance of the Earth, which is the body of the indwelling Christ Spirit, we can properly understand how that body is being broken for us daily, and we can appreciate the loving kindness which prompted Him thus to give Himself for us; for let us also remember that there is not a moment, day or night, that He is not suffering because He is bound to this Earth. When we thus eat and thus realize the true situation, we are indeed declaring to ourselves the death of the Lord, whose Spirit is groaning and travailing, waiting for the day of liberation when there shall be no need of such a dense environment as we now require.

But there is another, a greater and more wonderful mystery hidden in these words of the Christ. Richard Wagner, with the rare intuition of the master musician, sensed this idea when he sat in meditation by the Zurich Sea on a Good Friday, and there flashed into his mind the thought, "What connection is there between the death of the Savior and the millions of seeds sprouting forth from the Earth at this time of the year?" If we meditate upon that life which is annually poured out in the spring, we see it as something gigantic and awe inspiring; a flood of life which transforms the globe from one of frozen death to rejuvenated life in a short space of time; and the life which thus diffuses itself in the budding of millions and millions of plants is the life of the Earth Spirit.

From that came both the wheat and the grape. They are the body and blood of the imprisoned Earth Spirit given to sustain mankind during the present phase of its evolution. We repudiate the contention of people who claim that the world owes them a living, regardless of their own efforts and

without *material* responsibility on their part, but we nevertheless insist that there is a *spiritual* responsibility on their part, connected with the bread and wine given at the Lord's Supper: *It must be eaten worthily, otherwise, under pain of ill health and even death.* This from the ordinary manner of reading would seem far-fetched, but when we bring the light of esotericism to bear, examine other translations of the Bible, and look at conditions in the world as we find them today, we shall find that it is not so far-fetched

To begin with, we must go back to the time when man lived under the guardianship of the Angels, unconsciously building the body which he now uses. That was in ancient Lemuria. A brain was needed for the evolution of thought, and a larynx for verbal expression of the same. Therefore, half of the creative force was turned upwards and used by man to form these organs. Thus mankind became single sexed and was forced to seek a complement when it was necessary to create a new body to serve as an instrument in a higher phase of evolution.

While the act of love was consummated under the wise guardianship of the angels, man's existence was free from sorrow, pain, and death. But when, under the tutelage of the Lucifer Spirits, he ate of the Tree of Knowledge and perpetuated the race without regard for interplanetary lines of force, he transgressed the law, and the bodies thus formed crystallized unduly, and became subject to death in a much more perceptible manner than had hitherto been the case. Thus he was forced to create new bodies more frequently as the span of life in them shortened. Celestial warders of the creative force drove him from the garden of *love* into the wilderness of the world, and he was made responsible for his actions under the cosmic law which governs the universe. Thus for ages he struggled on, seeking to work out his own salvation, and the Earth in consequence crystallized more and more.

Divine hierarchies, the Christ Spirit included, worked upon the Earth from without, as the Group Spirit guides the animals under its protectorate; but as Paul truly says, none could be justified under the law, for under the law all sinned, and all must die. There is in the old covenant no hope beyond the present, save a foreshadowing of *one who is to come* and restore righteousness. Thus John tells us that the *law* was given by Moses, and *grace* came by the Lord Jesus Christ. (John 1:16-17) But *what is grace?* Can grace work contrary to law and abrogate it entirely? Certainly not. The laws of God are steadfast and sure, or the universe would become chaos. The law of gravity keeps our houses in position relative to other houses, so that when we leave them we may know of a surety that we shall find them in the same place upon returning. Likewise all other departments in the universe are subject to immutable laws

As law, apart from love, gave birth to sin, so the child of law, tempered with love, is grace. Take an example from our concrete social conditions: We have laws which decree a certain penalty for a specified offense, and when the law is carried out, we call it *justice*. But long experience is beginning to teach us that justice, pure and simple, is like the Colchian dragon's teeth, and breeds strife and struggle in increasing measure. The criminal, so-called, remains criminal and becomes more and more hardened under the ministrations of law; but when the milder regime of the present day allows one who has transgressed to go under suspended sentence, then *he is under grace* and not under law. Thus, also the Christian, who aims to follow in the Master's steps, is emancipated from the law of sin by grace, provided he forsake the path of sin.

It was the sin of our progenitors in ancient Lemuria that *they scattered their seed* regardless of law and without love. But it is the privilege of the Christian to redeem himself by purity of life in remembrance of the Lord. John says, "His seed remaineth in him," and this is the hidden meaning of the bread and wine. In the English version we read simply: "This is the *cup* of the New Testament," but in the German the word for cup is *Kelch*, and in the Latin, *Calix*, both meaning the outer covering of the seed pod of the flower. In the Greek we have a still more subtle meaning, not conveyed in other languages, in the word *poterion*, a meaning which will be evident when we consider the etymology of the word "pot." This at once gives us the same idea as the chalice or calix--a receptacle capable of holding a fluid. Our English words, "potent" and "impotent," meaning to possess or to lack virile strength, further show the meaning of this Greek word, which foreshadows the evolution from man to superman.

We have already lived through a mineral, a plant, and an animal like existence before becoming human as we are today, and beyond us lie still further evolutions where we shall approach the Divine more and more. It will be readily conceded that it is our animal passions which restrain us upon the path of attainment; the lower nature is constantly warring against the higher self. At least in those who have experienced a spiritual awakening, a war is being fought silently within, and is all the more bitter for being suppressed. Goethe, with masterly art, voiced that sentiment in the words of Faust, the aspiring soul, speaking to his more materialistic friend, Wagner:

Thou by one sole impulse art possessed,
Unconscious of the other still remain.
Two souls, alas, are housed within my breast,
And struggle there for undivided reign.
One, to the earth with passionate desire,
And closely clinging organs still adheres;
Above the mists the other doth aspire,
With sacred ardor unto purer spheres.

It was the knowledge of this absolute necessity of chastity (save when procreation is the object) upon the part of those who have had a spiritual awakening which dictated the words of Christ, and the Apostle Paul stated an esoteric truth when he said that *those who partook of the communion without living the life were in danger of sickness and death*. For just as under a spiritual tutelage, purity of life may elevate the disciple wonderfully, so also unchastity has a much stronger effect upon his more sensitized bodies than upon those who are yet under the law, and have not yet become partakers of grace by the cup of the New Covenant.

Questions:

- 1] Compare the general attitude toward our daily meals with the attitude taught in the Bible.
- 2] How are the wheat and the grape the "body and blood" of Christ?
- 3] State briefly the cause of our unduly crystallized bodies.
- 4] What is "grace"?
- 5] How only may we redeem ourselves from the sin of our progenitors in ancient Lemuria?
- 6] What is the real meaning of the "cup of the New Testament"?
- 7] Give in your own words the esoteric truth voiced by Faust concerning the higher and lower natures.

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 --Max Heindel

Lesson No. 20 - The Sacraments [continued]

References: Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-22; John 1:32-33

The Sacrament of Baptism. As soon as the individual has entered upon the journey of life, the church admits him into its fold by the rite of *Baptism*, which is conferred upon him at a time when he himself is irresponsible. Later, when his mentality has been somewhat developed, he ratifies that contract and is admitted to *Communion*, where *bread* is broken and *wine* is sipped in memory of the Founder of our faith. Still farther upon life's journey comes the sacrament of *Marriage*; and at last when the race has been run and the Spirit again withdraws to God who gave it, the earth body is consigned to the dust, whence it was derived, accompanied by the blessings of the church.

In our Protestant times the spirit of protest is rampant in the extreme, and dissenters everywhere raise their voices in rebellion against the fancied arrogance of the priesthood and deprecate the sacraments as mere mummery. On account of that attitude of mind these functions have become of little or no effect in the life of the community; dissensions have arisen even among churchmen themselves, and sect after sect has divorced itself from the original apostolic congregation.

Despite all protests, the various doctrines and sacraments of the church are, nevertheless, the very keystones in the arch of evolution, for they inculcate morals of the loftiest nature; and even materialistic scientists, such as Huxley, have admitted that while self-protection brings about the survival of the fittest in the animal kingdom and is therefore the basis of animal evolution, self-sacrifice is the fostering principle of human development. When that is the case among mere mortals, we may well believe that it must be so to a still greater extent in the Divine Author of our being.

Among animals, might is right, but we recognize that the weak have a claim to the protection of the strong. The butterfly lays its eggs on the underside of a green leaf and goes off without another care for their well-being. In mammals the *mother* instinct is strongly developed, and we see the lioness caring for her cubs and ready to defend them with her life; but not until the human kingdom is reached does the *father* commence to share fully in the responsibility as a parent. Among savages the care of the young practically ends with the attainment of physical ability to care for themselves, but the higher we ascend in civilization the longer the young receive care from their parents, and the more stress is laid upon mental education so that when maturity has been reached the battle of life may be fought from the mental rather than from the physical point of vantage; for the farther we proceed along the path of development, the more we shall experience the power of mind over matter. By the more and more prolonged self-sacrifice of parents, the race is becoming more delicate, but what we lose in material ruggedness, we gain in spiritual perceptibility.

As this faculty grows stronger and more developed, the craving of the Spirit immured in this earthly body voices itself more loudly in a demand for understanding of the spirit side of development. Wallace and Darwin, Huxley and Spencer, pointed out how evolution of *form* is accomplished in nature. Ernest Haeckel attempted to solve the riddle of the universe, but none of them could satisfactorily explain away the *Divine Author* of what we see. The great goddess, *natural selection* is being forsaken by one after another of her devotees as the years go by. Even Haeckel, the arch materialist, in his last years showed an almost hysterical anxiety to make a place for God in his system, and the day will come in a not far distant future when science will have become as thoroughly religious as religion itself. The church, on the other hand, though still extremely conservative, is nevertheless slowly abandoning its autocratic dogmatism and becoming more scientific in its explanations. Thus in time we shall see the union of science and religion as it existed in the ancient Mystery Temples, and when that point has been reached, *the doctrines and sacraments of the church will be found to rest upon immutable cosmic laws of no less importance than the law of gravity* which maintains the marching orbs in their paths around the Sun. As the points of the equinoxes and solstices are turning points in the cyclic path of a planet, marked by the festivals such as Christmas

and Easter, so birth into the physical world, admission to the church, to the state of matrimony, and finally the exit from physical life, are points in the cyclic path of the Human Spirit around its central source--God, which are marked by the sacraments of baptism, communion, marriage and the *last blessing*.

We will now consider the rite of baptism. Much has been said by dissenters against the practice of taking an *infant into church and promising for it a religious life*. Heated arguments concerning *sprinkling versus plunging* have resulted in divisions of churches. If we wish to obtain the true idea of baptism, however, we must revert to the early history of the human race as recorded in the Memory of Nature. All that has ever happened is indelibly pictured in the ether as a moving picture is imprinted upon a sensitized film, which can be reproduced upon a screen at any moment. The pictures in the true Memory of Nature (the World of Life Spirit) may be viewed by the trained seer, even though millions of years have elapsed since the scenes there portrayed were enacted in life.

When we consult that unimpeachable record, it appears that there was a time when that which is now our Earth came out of chaos, dark and unformed, as the Bible states. The currents developed in this misty mass by spiritual agencies, generated *heat*, and the mass ignited at the time when we are told that God said, "Let there be light." The heat of the fiery mass and the cold space surrounding it generated *moisture*; the fire mist became surrounded by water which boiled, and steam was projected into the atmosphere; thus God...divided the waters...from the waters...--the dense water which was nearest the fire mist from the steam (which is water in suspension), as stated in the Bible.

When water containing sediment is boiled over and over, it deposits scale, and similarly the water surrounding our planet finally formed a crust around the fiery core. When that crust had been completed, there was no water upon the surface of the Earth, but, as the Bible says, "A mist went up from the surface," and no herb had yet grown upon the face of the Earth. At that time, however, vegetation began to appear and nascent humanity lived there.

They were not, however, a humanity constituted as we are today. Their form was very much different and they were not nearly as evolved as we are at the present time. They could not see things outside themselves, but they had an inner perception. They saw the soul qualities of all who lived around them and they perceived themselves as spiritual rather than material beings. At that time there were not nations at all, but humanity was one vast brotherhood. All were partially outside their bodies and therefore in touch with the Universal Spirit, which has now been obscured in the separateness of egotism, which causes each man to feel himself distinct and apart from all the rest of humanity. Brotherhood is forgotten and selfishness now rules.

When anyone has progressed so far that he appreciates the blessings of brotherhood, where he endeavors to abolish egotism and cultivate altruism, he may go through the rite of baptism. Therefore, when a person is admitted to the church, which is a *spiritual* institution where love and brotherhood are the mainsprings of action, it is appropriate to carry him *under the waters* of baptism in symbol of the beautiful condition of childlike innocence and love which prevailed when mankind dwelt *under the mist* in that bygone period. At that time the eyes of infant man had not yet been opened to the *material* advantages of this world. The little child which is brought into the church has not yet become aware of the allurements of life either, and others obligate themselves to guide it to lead a holy life according to the best of their ability, because experience gained since the Flood has taught us that the broad way of the world is strewn with pain, sorrow and disappointment; that only by following the straight and narrow way can we escape death and enter into life everlasting.

Thus we see that there is a wonderfully deep, mystic significance behind the sacrament of baptism; that it is to remind us of the blessings attendant upon those who are members of a *brotherhood* where self-seeking is put into the background and where *service* to others is the keynote and mainspring to action. While we are in the world, he is the greatest who can most successfully dominate others. In the church we have Christ's definition: "He who would be the greatest among you, let him be the servant of all."

Questions:

- 1] Why are the various doctrines and sacraments of the church the keystones in the arch of evolution?
- 2] What are some of the milestones that mark our advance in civilization?
- 3] What will be the nature of science in the future?
- 4] Upon what will the doctrines and sacraments of the church then be found to rest?
- 5] Compare man's present condition with that in the early days of evolution.
- 6] Of what is the Sacrament of Baptism the symbol?
- 7] How is true greatness achieved?

"The Bible has been given to the Western World by the Recording Angels who give to each and all exactly what they need for their development."
 --Max Heindel

Lesson No. 21 - The Sacraments [continued]

References: Matthew 22:1-14; Luke 14:16-35; Revelation 19:7

The Sacrament of Marriage. When stripped of nonessentials, the argument of the orthodox Christian religions may be said to be as follows:

First, that tempted by the devil, our first parents sinned and were exiled from their previous state of celestial bliss, placed under the law, made subject to death, and became incapable of escaping by their own efforts.

Second, that God so loved the world that He gave Christ, His only begotten Son, for its redemption and to establish the kingdom of heaven. Thus death will finally be swallowed up in immortality.

This simple creed has provoked the smiles of atheists, and of the purely intellectual who have studied transcendental philosophies which employ logic and argument, and even of some among those who study the Western Mystery Teaching.

Such an attitude of mind is entirely gratuitous. We might know that the divine leaders of mankind would not allow millions to continue in error for millennia. When the Western Mystery teaching is stripped of its exceedingly illuminating explanations and detailed descriptions, when its basic teachings are stated, they are found to be in exact agreement with the orthodox Christian teachings.

There was a time when mankind lived in a sinless state, when sorrow, pain, and death were unknown. Neither is the *personal tempter* of Christianity a myth, for the Lucifer Spirits may very well be said to be fallen Angels, and their temptation of man resulted in focusing his consciousness upon the material phase of existence, where he is under the law of decrepitude and death. Also, it is truly the mission of Christ to aid mankind by elevating them to a more ethereal state where dissolution will no longer be necessary to free them from vehicles that have grown too hard and set for further use. For this is indeed a "body of death," where only the smallest quantity of material is really alive, as part of its bulk is nutrient matter that has not yet been assimilated, another large part is already on its way to elimination, and only between those two poles may be found the material which is thoroughly quickened by Spirit.

We have in previous lessons considered the sacraments of baptism and communion, sacraments that have to do particularly with the Spirit. We shall now seek to understand the deeper side of the sacrament of marriage, which has to do particularly with the body. Paul preached in the 15th chapter of I Corinthians, starting at the 35th verse, that in addition to the body of flesh and blood we have a soul body, *soma psuchicon* (mistranslated "natural body"), and a spiritual body; that each of these bodies is grown from a different seed atom; and that there are three stages of unfoldment for Adam, or man. The first Adam was taken from the ground and was without sentient life. Soul was added to the *second Adam*; thus he had life within, a leaven laboring to elevate the clod to God. When the potential of the soul extracted from the physical body has been raised to the spiritual, the *last Adam* will become a *life-giving* Spirit, capable of transmitting the life impulse to others directly, as flame from one candle can be communicated to many without diminishing the magnitude of the original light.

In the meantime, the germ for our Earth body had to be properly placed in fruitful soil to grow a suitable vehicle, and generative organs were provided from the beginning to accomplish this purpose. (See introduction to Lesson 18.)

Like other sacraments, the institution of marriage had its beginning and will also have its end. The commencement was described by the Christ when He said, "Have ye not read that He which made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh." (Matthew 19:4-6) He also indicated the end of marriage when He said: "In the

resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.” (Matthew 22:30)

In this light the logic of the teaching is apparent, for *marriage* became necessary in order that *birth* might provide new instruments to take the place of those which had been ruptured by *death*, and when death has once been swallowed up in immortality and there is no need of providing new instruments, marriage will also be unnecessary.

Science with admirable audacity has sought to solve the mystery of fecundation, and has told us how invagination takes place in the walls of the ovary; how the little ovum is formed in the seclusion of its dark cavity; how it emerges therefrom and enters the Fallopian tube; is pierced by the spermatozoon of the male, and the nucleus of a human body is complete. We are thus supposed to be “at the fount and origin of life”! But life has neither beginning nor end, and what science mistakenly considers the fountain of life is really the source of death, as all that comes from the womb is destined sooner or later to reach the tomb. The *marriage* feast which prepares for *birth*, at the same time provides food for the insatiable jaws of *death*, and so long as marriage is necessary to generation and birth, disintegration and death must inevitably result. Therefore, it is of prime importance to know the history of marriage, the laws and agencies involved, the duration of this institution, and how it may be transcended.

When we obtained our vital bodies in Hyperborea, the Sun, Moon, and Earth were still united, and the solar-lunar forces permeated each being in even measure so that all were able to perpetuate their kind of buds and spores as do certain plants of today. The efforts of the vital body to soften the dense vehicle and keep it alive were not then interfered with, and these primal, plant like bodies lived for ages. But man was then unconscious and stationary like a plant; he made no effort or exertion. The addition of a desire body furnished incentive and desire, and consciousness resulted from the war between the vital body, which builds, and the desire body, which destroys the dense body.

Thus, dissolution became only a question of time, particularly as the constructive energy of the vital body was also necessarily divided, one part or pole being used in the vital functions of the body, the other to replace a vehicle lost by death. But as the two poles of a magnet or dynamo are requisite to manifestation, so also two single-sexed beings became necessary for generation. Thus marriage and birth were necessarily inaugurated to offset the effect of death. *Death then, is the price we pay for consciousness in the present world*; marriage and repeated births are our weapons against the king of terrors until our constitution shall change and we become as Angels.

Please mark that it is not stated that we are to become Angels, but we are to become *as Angels*. For the Angels are the humanity of the Moon Period, they belong to an entirely different stream of evolution, as different as are human spirits from those of our present animals. Paul states in his letter to the Hebrews that man was made *for a little while* inferior to the Angels; he descended lower into the scale of materiality during the Earth Period, while the Angels have never inhabited a globe denser than ether. As we build our bodies from the chemical constituents of the Earth, so do the Angels build theirs of ether. This substance is the direct avenue of all life forces, and when man has once become as the Angels and has learned to build his body of ether, naturally there will be no death and no need of marriage to bring about birth.

But looking at marriage from another point of view, looking upon it as a union of souls rather than as union of the sexes, we contact the wonderful mystery of Love. Union of the sexes might serve to perpetuate the race, of course, but the true marriage is a companionship of souls also, which altogether transcends sex. Yet those really able to meet upon that lofty plane of spiritual intimacy gladly offer their bodies as living sacrifices upon the altar of *Love of the Unborn*, to woo a waiting Spirit into an immaculately conceived body. Thus humanity may be saved from the reign of death.

This is readily apparent as soon as we consider the gentle action of the vital body and contrast it with that of the desire body in a fit of temper, where it is said that a man has “lost control” of himself. Under such conditions, the muscles become tense and nervous energy is expended at a suicidal rate, so that after such an outbreak the body may sometimes be prostrated for weeks. The hardest labor brings no such fatigue as a fit of temper; likewise, a child conceived in passion under the crystallizing tendencies of the desire nature is naturally short-lived, and it is a regrettable fact that *length of life* is

nowadays almost a misnomer; in view of the appalling infant mortality, it ought to be called *brevity of existence*.

The building tendencies of the vital body, which is the vehicle of love, are not so easily watched, but observation proves that contentment lengthens the life of anyone who cultivates this quality, and we may safely reason that a child conceived under conditions of harmony and love stands a better chance of life than one conceived under conditions of anger, drunkenness and passion.

According to Genesis it was said to the woman, "In sorrow shalt thou bear children," and it has always been a sore puzzle to Bible commentators what logical connection there may be between the eating of fruit and the pains of childbirth. But when we understand the chaste references of the Bible to the act of generation, the connection is readily perceived.

Astrology will reveal the temper and tendencies of each human being; it will enable two people to blend their characters in such a manner that a love life may be lived, and it will indicate the periods when interplanetary lines of force are most nearly conducive to painless parturition. Thus it will enable us to draw from the bosom of nature children of love, capable of living long lives in good health. Finally the day will come when these bodies will have been made so perfect in their ethereal purity that they may last throughout the coming Age, and thus make marriage superfluous. The love of soul for soul, purged of passion in the furnace of sorrow, will be our brightest gem in heaven as its shadow is on Earth.

Questions:

- 1] What are the basic arguments of the orthodox Christian religion?
- 2] How do these arguments compare with the Western Wisdom Teaching?
- 3] What is the mission of Christ?
- 4] Give the references in which Christ mentioned the beginning and the end of the institution of marriage?
- 5] Briefly summarize the origin and necessity of marriage.
- 6] In what ways is humanity to become "as Angels"?
- 7] How may Astrology be used regarding marriage?

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 --Max Heindel

Lesson No. 22 - The Immaculate Conception

References: Matthew 1:20-25; Luke 1:26-35

The Doctrine of Immaculate Conception is one of the most sublime mysteries of the Christian Religion, and perhaps for that reason it has suffered more from being dragged down into materiality than any of the other mysteries. It has suffered alike from the interpretation of its clumsy supporters and the sneers of the skeptics.

The popular, but erroneous, idea is that about 2,000 years ago an individual named Jesus Christ was born of a mother without the cooperation of an earthly father, and *this incident is regarded as unique in the history of the world*. In reality it is not unparalleled; the Immaculate Conception has taken place many times in the history of the world and will become universal in the future.

The periodical ebb and flow of the material and spiritual forces which invest the earth are the invisible causes of the physical, moral, and mental activities upon our globe. According to the hermetic axiom, "As above, so below," a similar activity must take place in man, who is but a minor edition of Mother Nature.

The animals have twenty-eight pairs of spinal nerves and are now in their Moon stage, perfectly attuned to the twenty-eight days in which the Moon passes around the zodiac. In their wild state, the group spirit regulates their mating. Therefore there is no overflow with them. Man, on the other hand, is in a transition stage; he is too far progressed for the lunar vibrations, for he has thirty-one pairs of spinal nerves. But he is not yet attuned to the solar month of thirty-one days, and he mates at all times of the year; hence the periodical flow in woman, which, under proper conditions, is utilized to form part of the body of a child more perfect than its parent. Similarly, the periodical flow in mankind becomes the sinew and backbone of racial advancement, and the periodical flow of the earth's spiritual forces, which occurs at Christmas, results in the birth of Saviors who, from time to time, give renewed impetus to the spiritual advancement of the human race.

There are two parts to our Bible, the Old and the New Testaments. After briefly reciting how the world came into being, the former tells the story of the "Fall." We understand the "Fall" to have been occasioned by man's impulsive and ignorant use of the sex forces at times when the interplanetary rays were inimical to conception of the purest and best vehicles. Thus, man became gradually imprisoned in a dense body crystallized by sinful passion and consequently an imperfect vehicle, subject to pain and death.

Then commenced the pilgrimage through matter, and for millennia we have been living in this hard and flinty shell of a body, which obscures the light of heaven from the spirit within. The spirit is like a diamond in its rough coat, and the celestial lapidaries, the Recording Angels, are constantly endeavoring to remove the coating so that the spirit may shine through the vehicle which it ensouls.

When the lapidary holds the diamond to the grindstone, the diamond emits a screech, like a cry of pain, as the opaque covering is removed; but gradually, by many successive applications to the grindstone, the rough diamond may become a gem of transcendent beauty and purity. Similarly, the celestial beings in charge of our evolution hold us closely to the grindstone of experience. Pain and suffering result, which awaken the spirit sleeping within. The man hitherto content with material pursuits, indulgent of sense and sex, becomes imbued with a divine discontent, which impels him to seek the higher life.

The gratification of that aspiration, however, is not usually accomplished without a severe struggle upon the part of the lower nature. It was while wrestling thus that Paul exclaimed with all the anguish of a devout, aspiring heart: "O wretched man that I am!... The good that I would I do not: but the evil that I would not, that I do... I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." (Romans 7:19-24)

When the flower is crushed, its scent is liberated and fills the surroundings with grateful fragrance, delighting all who are fortunate enough to be near. Crushing blows of fate may overwhelm a man or woman who has reached the stage of efflorescence; they will but serve to bring out the sweetness of the nature and enhance the beauty of the soul till it shines with an effulgence that marks the wearer as with a halo. Then he is upon the path of Initiation. He is taught how unbridled use of sex, regardless of the stellar rays, has imprisoned him in the body, how it fetters him, and how by the proper use of that same force in harmony with the stars he may gradually improve and etherealize his body and finally attain liberation from concrete existence.

A shipwright cannot build a staunch oak ship from spruce lumber; "men do not gather grapes of thorns"; like begets like, and an incoming ego of a passionate nature is drawn to parents of like nature, where its body is conceived upon the impulse of the moment in a gust of passion.

The soul who has tasted the cup of sorrow incident to the abuse of the creative force and has drunk to the dregs the bitterness thereof, will gradually seek parents of less and less passionate natures, until at length it attains to Initiation.

Having been taught in the process of Initiation the influence of the stellar rays upon parturition, the next body provided will be generated by Initiate parents without passion, under the constellation most favorable to the work which the Ego contemplates. Therefore the Gospels (which are formulae of Initiation) commence with the account of the Immaculate Conception and end with the crucifixion, both wonderful ideals to which we must sometime attain, for each of us is a Christ-in-the-making, and will sometime pass through both the mystic birth and the mystic death foreshadowed in the Gospels. By knowledge we may hasten the day, intelligently cooperating, instead of as now often stupidly frustrating through ignorance the ends of spiritual development.

In connection with the Immaculate Conception, misunderstandings prevail at every point; the perpetual virginity of the mother even after giving birth to other children; the lowly station of Joseph, the supposed foster father, etc. We will briefly view them in the light of facts as revealed in the Memory of Nature.

In some parts of Europe people of the higher classes are addressed as "wellborn," or even as "high-wellborn," meaning that they are the offspring of cultured parents in high station. Such people usually look down with scorn upon those in modest positions. We have nothing against the expression "wellborn"; we would that every child were wellborn, born to parents of high moral standing, no matter what their station in life. There is a virginity of soul that is independent of the state of the body, a purity of mind which will carry its possessor through the act of generation without the taint of passion and enable the mother to carry the unborn child under her heart in sexless love.

Previous to the time of Christ that would have been impossible. In the earlier stages of man's career upon Earth quantity was desirable and quality a minor consideration, hence the command was given to "go forth, be fruitful, and multiply." Besides, it was necessary that man should temporarily forget this spiritual nature and concentrate his energies upon material conditions. Indulgence of sex passion furthers that object, and the desire nature was given full sway. Polygamy flourished, and the larger the number of their children, the more a man and a woman were honored, while barrenness was looked upon as the greatest possible affliction.

In other directions, the desire nature was being curbed by God-given laws, and obedience to divine commands was enforced by swift punishment of the transgressor, such as war, pestilence, or famine. Rewards for dutiful observance of the mandates of the law were not wanting either; the "righteous" man's children, his cattle, and crops were numerous; he was victorious over his enemies, and the cup of his happiness was full.

Later, when the earth had been sufficiently peopled after the Atlantean Flood, polygamy became more and more obsolete, with the result that the quality of the bodies improved, and at the time of Christ, the desire nature had become so far amenable to control, in the case of the more advanced among humanity, that the act of generation could be performed without passion, out of pure love, so that the child could be immaculately conceived.

Such were the parents of Jesus. Joseph is said to have been a carpenter, but he was not a worker in wood. He was a "builder" in a higher sense. God is the Grand Architect of the Universe. Under Him are many builders of varying degrees of spiritual splendor, down even to those whom we

know as Freemasons. All are engaged in building a temple without sound of hammer, and Joseph was no exception.

It is sometimes asked why Initiates are always men. They are not. In the lower degrees there are many women, but when an Initiate is able to choose his sex, he usually takes the positive masculine body, as the life which brought him to Initiation has spiritualized his vital body and made it positive under all conditions, so that he has then an instrument of the highest efficiency.

There are times, however, when the exigencies of a case require a female body, such as, for instance, providing a body of the highest type to receive an Ego of superlatively high degree. Then a high Initiate may take a female body and go through the experience of maternity again, after perhaps having eschewed it for several lives, as was the case with the beautiful character we know as Mary of Bethlehem.

In conclusion, then, let us remember the points brought out: that we are all Christs-in-the-making; that sometime we must cultivate characters so spotless that we may be worthy to inhabit bodies that are immaculately conceived; and the sooner we commence to purify our minds of passionate thoughts, the sooner we shall attain. In the final analysis, it only depends upon the earnestness of our purpose, the strength of our wills.

Questions:

- 1] State the popular idea in regard to the Immaculate Conception.
- 2] What brings about the birth of saviors?
- 3] Explain why we are now imprisoned in a dense body.
- 4] How may we hasten the process of becoming Christ-like?
- 5] In what sense was Joseph a “carpenter”?
- 6] Why was Mary called a “virgin”?
- 7] Sum up briefly the interpretation of the Immaculate Conception as given in this lesson.

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 --Max Heindel

Lesson No. 23 - Miscellaneous Interpretations

The Forgiveness of Sins; Everlasting Salvation and Damnation; Conversion

References: Matthew 18:3; 23:14; Mark 3:29; Luke 1:69; 2:30; 22:32; John 4:22; Acts 4:12; 13:26-47; 15:3; 26:1-23; 28:28; Romans 11:11; 13:2; 1 Corinthians 11:29; Ephesians 1:1-7; Colossians 1:14; Revelation 12:10.

The Forgiveness of Sins. The inability to believe in the forgiveness of sins has caused many to believe exclusively in , as taught in Eastern countries under the name of *Karma*. There are also many who think that because Eastern religions teach that law and the Law of Rebirth more clearly than the Western religion, Christianity, these Eastern religions are better and more scientific than the Western religion, which teaches, as popularly interpreted, that the Christ died for our sins and that, in consequence, belief in Him will bring us forgiveness.

As a matter of fact, however, the Christian teaching also enunciates the doctrine that "as we sow so shall we reap," and thus it teaches both the Law of Cause and Effect and the forgiveness of sins. *Both* of these laws are vitally operative in the unfoldment of humanity, and there are good reasons why the earlier Eastern religions have only one part of *the complete teaching which is found in the Christian religion*.

In those early days, when the religions of the east were given to humanity, mankind was still more spiritual in nature than the material beings of the present-day Western World. They knew that we live many lives in different shapes and forms here upon this Earth. In the East today they are yet thoroughly imbued with that idea, and as a consequence they are exceedingly indolent. They are more concerned with thoughts of Nirvana--the invisible world where they may rest in peace and joy--than with taking advantage of their present material resources for advancement. As a consequence, their country is arid and waste, their crops are small and often destroyed by a scorching Sun and devastating floods. They suffer famine, they die by millions, but although they teach the Law of Cause and Effect, they seem to be unaware that their miserable conditions are brought about by indolence and indifference to material things. For naturally, when they have not worked here, they have nothing to assimilate in the heaven life between death and a new birth, and as a organ or limb that is disused gradually atrophies, so a country that is not developed by the Spirits incarnating therein gradually atrophies and becomes useless as a habitation for mankind. It was necessary to the evolution of humanity to enter this material world and develop all its resources.

Therefore, the Great Leaders have taken various means to cause us to forget temporarily the spiritual side of our nature. In the West, where the pioneers of the human race are found, they commanded marriage outside the family. They gave to the West a religion that did not definitely teach the doctrine of rebirth and as means of advancement. They also originated the use of alcohol, with its paralyzing effect upon the spiritual sensibilities of man. By these means we have in the West temporarily forgotten that there is more than this one life on Earth, and in consequence we apply ourselves with the utmost diligence to making the fullest possible use of what we believe to be our opportunity here. Therefore, we have developed the West into a veritable garden; we have made ourselves, *between incarnations*, a land that is exceedingly fertile and rich in the minerals which we need in our various industries, and thus we are conquering the visible material world.

It is evident, however, that the religious side of man's nature must not be entirely neglected, and as Christ, the great Ideal of the Christian religion, had been set before us for imitation, and we could not possibly hope to become Christ-like in one life, which is all that we now have any knowledge of, there must be given us a compensatory doctrine, otherwise we should in despair cease to strive, knowing that it would be futile. Therefore the Western World was taught the doctrine of the forgiveness of sins through the righteousness of Christ Jesus.

It is equally certain, however, that no doctrine which is not a truth in nature could have any uplifting power, and, therefore, there must also be a sound basis behind the doctrine of the forgiveness of sins, which seems to vitiate the Law of Causation. It is as follows:

When we look about us in the material world, we observe the different phenomena of nature, we meet other people and have various transactions with them, and all these sights, sounds, and scenes are observed by means of our sense organs. Yet not all, for we are usually exceedingly unobservant of details. It is exasperatingly true when it is said that "we have eyes and see not and ears that hear not." We lose a great deal of experience on that account. Besides, our memory is woefully lacking. While we are able to recall a little, most of our experiences are lost to us because we forget them. Our conscious memory is weak. There is another memory, however. As the ether and the air carry to the photographic plate in a camera the impression of the landscape without, omitting not the slightest detail, so also do the air and the ether which carry impressions from the outside to our sense organs carry into the lungs, and thence to the blood, an actual picture and a record of everything with which we come in contact. Those pictures are stored in the minute seed atom resting in the left ventricle of the heart, and that little atom may be considered the Book of the Recording Angels, where all our deeds are inscribed. Thence it is mirrored in the Reflecting Ether of our vital body.

In the ordinary course of life, man passes into Purgatory at death and expiates the sins inscribed upon that atom. Later he assimilates all the good stored there in the First Heaven, working upon his future environment in the Second Heaven. But a devout person realizes each day his shortcomings and failures. He examines the events of this life daily and prays from a devout heart to be forgiven for sins he has committed. Then the pictures which have recorded the sins of omission and commission fade, and are wiped out of life's record from day to day. For it is not the aim of God or nature to "get even," as it would seem under the Law of Causation, which decrees an exact retribution for every transgression, as well as a reward of compensation for every good act. It is the aim of God that we should learn by experience here to do justly and well. When we have realized that we have done wrong and determine to do better, we have learned the lesson, and there is no necessity for *punishing* us.

Thus the doctrine of the forgiveness of sins is an actual fact in nature. If we repent, make restitution and reform, the sins we have repented of are forgiven and wiped out of life's record. Otherwise, they are eradicated by corresponding pains in Purgatory after death. Thus the doctrine of Karma, or the Law of Cause and Effect, as taught in the East, does not fully meet human needs, but the Christian teaching which embodies *both* the Law of Causation and the doctrine of forgiveness of sins, gives a more complete teaching concerning the method employed by the Great Leaders to instruct us.

Everlasting Salvation and Damnation. The orthodox religions say that those who have done well in this life are saved, that is to say, they will go to a heaven not very clearly defined, and those who fail to reach this salvation are plunged into a hell of which not very much is known save that it is a place of misery. The good and the bad stay in their respective places, once they have been judged; there is no redemption for lost souls, and no danger of a fall for those once saved.

Such an interpretation is radically wrong, if the Greek dictionary is taken as authority, for obviously the meaning hinges upon the word translated "everlasting." That word is *aionian* and in the dictionary it is translated to mean "an age, an indefinite period, a lifetime," etc. What, then, is the true meaning of the passage quoted, we may ask ourselves, and in order to find that meaning it will be necessary to take a comprehensive view of life.

In the beginning of manifestation, God, a Great Flame, differentiates a vast number of incipient flames or sparks *within* Himself, not *from* Himself, for it is an actual fact that "in Him we live and move and have our being." *Nothing can exist outside God.* So, within Himself, God differentiates these countless Spirits. Each of them is *potentially* divine, each enfolds all His powers as the seed enfolds the plant. But as the seed must be buried in the ground to bring forth the plant, so it is necessary that these divine sparks should be immersed in material vehicles in order that they may learn lessons that can be mastered only in such a separative existence as there is in the world.

The world may be regarded as a training school for the evolving Spirits. Some of them started early and applied themselves diligently to the task before them; consequently, they progressed rapidly. Others started later and are laggards. They are therefore left behind in the race; but all will ultimately attain the goal of perfection. In consequence of the foregoing fact, there are a number of classes of these pilgrim Spirits, and before one set, or class, of Spirits can be moved up another step in evolution, it is necessary that they should have attained a certain standard of proficiency. They are *saved* from a lower condition which they have outgrown. Once this measure of efficiency has been acquired, they are promoted into another race, another epoch. But among a large number there are always laggards, and these are *condemned* to stay in the class where they were until they have arrived at the stage of growth required for advancement. The plan is similar to the method in which children in a school are promoted into the next higher class *at the yearly examination* if they have attained a certain standard of knowledge; if not, they are condemned to stay behind--*not forever but only until another year's examination proves that they have qualified*.

The foregoing is not a distorted or a wrong representation of the meaning of the word *aionian*. It has been used in other places in the Bible in a manner which bears out our contention. For instance, in Paul's letter to Philemon, where he returns to him the slave Onesimus with the words, "Perhaps it was well that you should lose him for a time that he might be given back to you *forever*." The word "forever" is the same word *aionian* which is translated "everlasting" in connection with damnation and salvation, and it will readily be seen that in this case it can only mean a part of a lifetime, for neither Paul or Philemon, as such, would live forever.

Conversion. There are conversions and conversions. There is the conversion which takes place in a revival meeting to the beating of drums, the clapping of hands, the singing of gospel hymns, and the insistent calling of the revivalist to "come before it is too late." All these aids to conversion produce an intense hypnotic influence, which works upon the emotional nature of many people in such a way that these "sinners," so called, can no longer remain in their seats, but are *forced* in the most literal sense to obey the command and come forward to "the mourner's bench." That kind of conversion is usually of very little worth. Revivalists find that it is extremely easy to convert people in this manner. The exasperatingly difficult problem is, as one of them expressed it, "to make it stick," for when the victim of the hypnotic revivalist leaves the meeting, the influence gradually wears off, and sooner or later he relapses into his original attitude. And though these "backsliders" may feel no pang at all when backsliding, the next revival meeting draws them to the mourner's bench again as surely as a magnet draws a needle. They are converted repeatedly and backslide regularly every time there is a revival meeting, to the disgust of the revivalist and the amusement of the community, who are unaware that it is a simple case of mild hypnotism.

There is another conversion, however, always accompanied by planetary influences, and according to the strength of these influences the conversion, or change in the life, will be more or less radical. It then shows that the soul has reached a certain point in its pilgrimage where it feels attraction to the higher life. The immediate cause of conversion may be a sermon, a lecture, or a book, a verse in the Bible, or something in nature, but that is only the physical cause of something which had already taken place spiritually. From that moment the man or the woman will commence to take a new view of life, will lay aside the old vices, will follow new lines of thought and endeavor. It may change his whole attitude toward life and also his environment. In fact, very often a journey has brought him out of the usual environment for the time being, to give the proper condition for sowing the new seed.

Questions:

- 1] What is the generally accepted understanding of the "forgiveness of sins"?
- 2] How are our "sins" really "forgiven"?

- 3] Why was the Western World taught the doctrine of the forgiveness of sins through the righteousness of Christ Jesus?
- 4] Explain why the orthodox interpretation of “everlasting” salvation and damnation is not acceptable.
- 5] Give the correct interpretation of this doctrine.
- 6] Describe the popular methods of conversion.
- 7] What is true “conversion”?

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--Max Heindel

Lesson No. 24 - Miscellaneous Interpretations [continued] Confession and Absolution; The Value of the Ritual; "I came not to send peace but a sword."

References: Matthew 10:32-33; I John 1:9; Romans 14:11; 15:9; James 5:16; Revelation 3:5; Matthew 10:34

Confession and Absolution. If one thinks of confession and absolution as practiced in the Catholic Church, it may be stated that the priest, certainly, has no power to forgive the sins of the penitent, and the practice of confession *by order of a church* is usually but an outward show of penitence, putting one in mind of the prayer of the Pharisee who went into the temple that he might be seen of men.

If, on the other hand, confession is made in the spirit of the publican, which is the spirit of true penitence, then there is a certain value, for as a little child who has committed a wrong feels conscience-smitten and sorry, so may we feel extremely penitent for our sins of omission and commission.

It is a fact, often noticed by kind parents, that penitence in silence is sometimes insufficient to the child which feels the need of going to the parent and *confessing its sin*. When the forgiveness of the parent has been obtained, its conscience is at rest. So also with the child of God. We sin and we are sorry for our sins; we determine not to commit this or that wrong again, but if we confess to someone in whom we have faith, and get their sympathy and assurance that this wrong will not be held against us, we shall feel easier in conscience.

That was the principle underlying the command of the Bible, "Confess your sins to one another." The one to whom we confess will, of course, be a person for whom we have a profound respect and love, and he or she will stand toward us at that moment as the representative of God in our own higher nature, and we shall feel very much relieved at having received his sympathy. But we shall feel also that the pact we have made with ourselves not to commit the sin in question again has been strengthened by having him as a witness. If confession is made thus, and absolution so obtained, then it has undoubtedly a very beneficial effect.

The Value of Ritual. At the present time all humanity has evolved so far that they are above law in some effects. Most people obey the law, "Thou shalt not steal," for instance.

Law is a curb on the desire nature, but where occult, or rather spiritual, advancement is contemplated, the spiritualization of the vital body must also be accomplished. And that is attained by means of art and religion, in *oft-repeated impacts*, for the keynote of the vital body is repetition, as we can see by looking at the plants which have only a dense body and a vital body. Their stem and leaf follow each other in upward succession; the plant keeps on growing them alternately. It was the vital body that built the vertebrae of the human spine, one after another, by constant repetition. And memory, for instance, which is one of the faculties of the vital body, is strengthened and developed by constant iteration and reiteration.

When the Protestants left the Catholic Church, they truly left many of the abuses behind, but they also left almost everything of value. They abandoned the ritual which everyone may know and understand regardless, of poor enunciation upon the part of the preacher. Knowing the ritual, the laity could send their thoughts in the same direction as the thought of the priest who was reading, and thus an enormous volume of identical spiritual thought was massed together and projected upon the community, for good or evil.

Nowadays the congregation in a Protestant Church listens to the extemporaneous prayer or sermon of their minister, who usually does not think so much of the spiritual work before him as he does of how he may turn out the most harmonious phrases to tickle the ears of his congregation. They

often forget what he has said before they leave the church. Those who go to a Catholic Church understanding the ritual are still today able to unite their thoughts in spiritual conclave and keep within memory that which has been gone through. Thus they are every time adding a little to the spiritualization of their vital bodies, while the Protestant church members have been affected only in their emotional natures, and that effect is soon thrown out. The Bible tells us to pray without ceasing, and many have scoffed saying that if God is omniscient, He knows whereof we have need without our prayer, and if He is not, He can hardly be omnipotent. Therefore our prayers are not granted, and it is useless to pray. But that command was written from a knowledge of the nature of the vital body, which needs that repetition in order that it may be spiritualized.

As to the use of the Latin language, it is stated in the first chapter of John that in the beginning was the word... and without it was nothing made that was made. Word is sound. If we take sand or plant spores and place them upon a brass or a glass plate, then take a violin bow and draw it across the edges, we shall produce sound. That sound will cause the spores or grains of sand to arrange themselves in geometrical figures, similar to the crystals of which all things are composed. Every sound produces a different formation. Thus, if a certain sound produces a certain effect which we wish to produce, we cannot change the sound without also changing the effect. If we emit a certain sound and say "Deum", then translate *Deum* and say "God," the sound is very different, and as the sound produces certain effects upon our invisible bodies, the effects that were produced by the original Latin ritual have been lost to the Protestant churches which changed it into English or dropped it altogether.

"I came not to send peace but a sword." It is said that the "law and the prophets were until Christ," and there are four steps whereby man lifts himself to God. At first, when he awakens to a consciousness in the physical world and is in the savage state, he finds himself surrounded by other men who, by the very stress of circumstances, are forced to fight for life, men among whom "might is right." Here he learns to rely upon his own strength to save him from the onslaughts of wild animals and other men. But he perceives around him the nature powers, and of them he is afraid, for he knows their ability to kill and his own impotence to cope with them. He therefore begins to worship, seeking to *propitiate the God he fears, by bloody sacrifice.*

Then comes the time when he begins to look to *God as the giver of things*, who will reward him here and now for obedience to His law and punish him instantly for disobedience. This God is a mighty ally against his (man's) enemies, but also a powerful enemy, therefore He is much to be feared. Man thus worships and *sacrifices animals through fear and avarice.*

Then comes the stage when he is taught to worship *a God of love and to sacrifice himself* from day to day, through his whole life, for a reward in a future state which he is to believe in by faith and which is not even clearly outlined.

Finally man will reach a stage when he will recognize his divinity and *do right because it is right*, without thought of fear or bribe.

The Jews had reached the second of these stages and were under the law. The Christian religion is gradually working through the third stage, though not yet freed from the second. All of us are yet under laws made by God and by man in order to curb our desire bodies by *fear*; but to advance us spiritually from now on, we must sensitize our vital body, which is amenable to love, while not at all cognizant of law which governs the desire nature.

In order to prepare this coming state, the priests, who were more advanced than the ordinary people, kept separate and apart from them. We hear in the East that only a certain caste, the Brahmins, were allowed to enter the temples and perform the temple services. Among the Jews, only the Levites were allowed to approach the holy place, and among other nations it was the same. The priests were always a distinct class, who were not allowed to marry among ordinary people. They were separate and apart in every respect.

That was because the leaders of humanity could use only the strain where there existed a certain laxity between the vital body and the dense body. And so they bred these priests and herded them around the temples, regulating their life in every respect. But at the time when Christ was liberated from the body of Jesus and diffused His Being throughout the whole Earth, the veil was rent, as a symbol of the fact that the need for any special condition had passed away. From that time on the

ether has been changing in the Earth. An increasingly higher rate of vibration allows for the expression of altruistic qualities. It was the starting of that enormous vibration which caused the darkness said to have attended the crucifixion. That was not darkness at all, but an intense light which blinded people for the time being until the vibrations slowed down by immersion in the dense, physical earth. A few hours later, the radiant Christ Spirit had drawn into the Earth sufficiently to restore normal conditions. But gradually the power from within is gaining ascendancy, and the etheric vibrations are being accelerated, increasing altruism and spiritual growth. Thus the conditions are now such that no special or privileged class need exist, but *each and every one may aspire to enter the path of Initiation.*

However, old conditions die hard. Under the regime of Jehovah, the Spirit of the Moon, humanity had been broken up into nations, and in order that He might guide them it was necessary that He should at times use one nation to punish another, for humanity was not then amenable to love--it would obey only under the lash of fear. Before the great Universal Brotherhood of Love can be inaugurated, it is necessary to break up these nations, on the same principle that if we have a number of buildings composed of bricks and we wish to build them into one grand structure, it is necessary first to break them to pieces so that the individual bricks will be available for use in the larger building. Therefore, the Christ said, "I came not to send peace, but a sword."

We must *outgrow patriotism* and learn to say as that great soul, Thomas Paine, "The world is my country, and to do good is my religion." On the holy night when the Christ child was born, the angels sang a song, "Peace on Earth and Good Will among Men." Later, the child grew up and said, "I came not to send peace, but a sword." and the Christian religion has been the bloodiest of all religions of humanity. It has carried desolation and sorrow with it wherever it has gone, but out of all that travail there will yet come the day when the song of the angels will become a fact and the words of the Christ uttered at other times concerning love to one's neighbor will be lived. When the sword has done its work it will be beaten into plowshares, and there will be no more nations.

Questions:

- 1] In what spirit must confession, to be of value, be made?
- 2] Describe the exercise which is better than confession.
- 3] Explain the principle underlying the value of ritual.
- 4] What are the four steps by which man lifts himself to God?
- 5] Through which of these stages is the Christian religion working?
- 6] Explain the statement: "The veil was rent."
- 7] Why must nations be abolished?

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--Max Heindel

Lesson No. 25 - Miscellaneous Interpretations [continued]

References: Luke 23:29-43; Matthew 27:38; John 10:1-18; Mark 10:15; Luke 18:17

"Today thou shalt be with me in Paradise." The New Testament was written in Greek, a language in which no punctuation marks are used. The punctuation marks in our Bible have been inserted by our later Bible translators, and punctuation often very radically changes the meaning of a sentence, as the following story will illustrate.

In a prayer meeting someone handed in a request which the pastor read thus: "A sailor going to sea, his mother-in-law desires the prayers of the congregation for his safe return to wife and child." The request was not punctuated at all, but would imply that the young man's mother-in-law was very solicitous to have him return safely to his wife and child and therefore desired the prayers of the congregation. Had the pastor read it without the comma, it would have implied that the sailor, going to see his mother-in-law, desired the prayers of the congregation for his safe return to wife and child, and one would naturally think that the lady in question must be a Tartar, when it was necessary for the young man to ask the prayers of the congregation before facing her.

In this case, if the words of the Christ are read thus: "Verily I say unto thee today, thou shalt be with me in paradise," they would imply that the thief would be with Christ at some future time not defined. But where the comma is placed before the word *today*, as in the Bible, it gives the idea ordinarily held by people.

That this idea is absolutely wrong can be seen by the remark of the Christ just after His resurrection, when He said to the woman: "Touch me not, for I have not yet ascended to my Father." If He promised the thief that he should be with Him in Paradise on the day of the crucifixion and three days later declared that He had not yet been there, the Christ would have been guilty of contradiction, which is, of course, an impossibility. Placing of the comma as suggested fully reconciles the meaning of the two passages; besides, Jude tells us that in the interval He worked with the Spirits in Purgatory.

The Two Crucified Thieves. Contrary to the ordinarily accepted opinion, the four Gospels are not merely the biography of Jesus, the Christ. They are formulae of Initiation of four different Mystery Schools, and in order to veil their esoteric meaning, the life and ministry of the Christ is also intermingled. That could be done easily as all Initiates, being cosmic characters, have similar experiences. It is truly said that unto the multitude the Christ spoke in parables, but the hidden meaning was given to His disciples in private. Paul also gave milk to the weak and meat to the strong ones. It was never intended at any time to give the hidden symbols to ordinary people, or to make the Bible "an open book of God," as people nowadays believe.

When reading in the Memory of Nature, we find that at the time of the crucifixion, there were not only two, but a number, who were crucified. The people at the time meted out capital punishment for the slightest offenses and there were always plenty to suffer those barbarous deaths. Thus, those who wanted to veil the hidden meaning of the Gospels were at no loss to find something wherewith to fill out the tale and obscure the points which are really vital in the crucifixion. The part of the story relating to the thieves, is, therefore, a true incident, without having anything to do with the esoteric meaning at all.

"All who come before me were thieves and robbers." When man first came upon this Earth, the dense body was built in the *Polarian Epoch* and was vitalized by the interpenetration of a vital body in the *Hyperborean Epoch*. At that time man was like the Angels, male-female, a complete creative unit, able to create from himself by projecting his whole creative force--which is love.

Later it became necessary for man to evolve a brain, and in order to accomplish that object one-half of his creative force was turned inward in order to build the necessary organs. From that time on,

man must seek the cooperation of someone having the other half of the sex force available for propagation. Now he loves selfishly to obtain the cooperation of another in propagation; the other half of the creative force wherewith he build his brain and larynx he also uses selfishly to think, because he desires to obtain knowledge.

Previously man had projected his whole creative force without reserve, unselfishly. Since the division of the sex force man has eventually become selfish and therefore, by attraction, a prey to others of like nature.

The Angels were the humanity of the Moon Period and have since attained to their present high development, but as in every great company there are stragglers, so also in the case of the Angels there were some who did not attain--a class of beings which were behind the Angels but above humanity. They were in a sad state, for they could not follow the present development of the Angels and neither could they sink as low into matter as man. They could not, as the Angels, dispense with a brain, yet they were incapable of building one for themselves, so when humanity evolved the brain and spinal cord, they saw an opportunity in woman, who expresses the negative pole of the creative force, *imagination*, the faculty which enables her to build a body in the womb. In order to gain access to her consciousness, this intelligence took advantage of a perplexity then disturbing the woman on account of her exercise of the imaginative faculty.

At that time the eyes of humanity had not yet been opened; they were spiritual beings, not quite conscious of the possession of a physical body. The woman was the first to observe dimly that she and others possessed such an instrument, and she had observed that at certain times some of her friends whom she had previously perceived as having this physical appendage, had lost it, so she was troubled. From the Angels she could obtain no information, but this intelligence which appeared within herself in the serpentine spinal cord, enlightened her, and "the serpent said unto the woman, 'Hath God said, ye shall not eat of every Tree in the Garden?'" to which she answered that they had been forbidden to "eat of the Tree of Knowledge" under penalty of death. But the serpent said: "Ye shall not surely die, for God knows that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."

The woman secured the cooperation of the man according to the instructions of *Lucifer, the light giver*, and since then their eyes have been opened, they have known good and evil. But prior to that time, man had been unconscious of the possession of his body; it had fallen away from him at times, as the leaf falls from the tree, without inconveniencing him or disturbing him, for his consciousness had been focused in the Spiritual World at all times. But the Lucifer Spirits desired a power over him, a foothold in his brain and spinal cord. They incited him to break away from the yoke of the Angels and take the creative function into his own hands. By the oft repeated and ignorant abuse of that faculty, the consciousness of man was withdrawn from the Spiritual Worlds and focused in the Physical World. Then came death in all its present terrible aspects, for man now regards this Earth as the only real life. When that ends, he enters an existence of which he knows nothing and which he consequently fears.

Thus, on account of listening to Lucifer, *the false light giver*, man has become subject to sorrow, pain, and death. He has been robbed of his innocence and peace. The Christ came into the world to save humanity from sin, sorrow, and death. Therefore He called Himself the *true light*, and the others, who came before, He characterized as thieves and robbers, for they had robbed man of the spiritual sight, though they had enlightened him in the physical sense.

"*Whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child shall not enter therein.*" In the world around us we see the kingdom of men, where everyone is endeavoring to maintain his own position and depends upon his own ideas and his own self-assertion to hold that position against all comers. When anything new is presented to him, his mental attitude is usually tinged with skepticism. He fears to be deceived.

The attitude of a little child with regard to what it sees or hears is exactly the reverse of the position of its elders. The little child has no overwhelming sense of its own superior knowledge, but is frankly ignorant, and therefore eminently teachable, and it was to this trait that the Savior referred in the passage quoted.

When we enter the higher life, we must first forget everything that we knew in the world. We must commence to look at things in an entirely different way, and *when a new teaching is brought before us, we must endeavor to receive it regardless of other facts previously observed*. This is in order that we may be perfectly unbiased. Of course, we are not supposed to believe off hand that “black is white,” but if someone seriously asserts that an object which we have hitherto regarded as black is really white, our mind should be sufficiently open to prevent us from passing judgment at once and saying, “Why, I know that that object is black.” We should be willing to re-examine the object to see if there may not be a point of view whence that thing which we have thought black appears to be white. Only when we have made thorough examination and have found that the thing is really black from whatever point of view may we return to our previous opinion.

There is nothing so remarkable about a child as the flexible attitude of its mind which renders it so teachable, and the pupil who endeavors to live the higher life should always aim to keep his mind in that fluidic state, for as soon as our ideas have become set and incapable of being changed, our progress ceases. That was the great truth which the Christ was endeavoring to present to His hearers when He made the remark mentioned.

Questions:

- 1] Give the correct interpretation of the Christ's promise to the thief that he would be with Him in Paradise.
- 2] What confirmation do we have of this interpretation?
- 3] What is the significance of the two crucified thieves?
- 4] What knowledge did the Lucifers impart to man?
- 5] What was their object in so doing?
- 6] Sum up the esoteric meaning of Christ's statement: “All who came before Me were thieves and robbers.”
- 7] Explain in your own words what the Christ meant when He said: Whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child shall not enter therein.”

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Lesson No. 26 - Miscellaneous Interpretations [continued]

References: Luke 24:36-43; Matt. 14:15-21; John 6:1-13; Luke 15:11-24; Matt. 9:24; John 11:11; Acts 9:36-42

"And they gave him a piece of broiled fish, and a honeycomb." After the Resurrection the Christ at one time appeared among His disciples while they were in a locked room. They did not recognize Him at once and did not believe that His was a material body. But the vehicle in which He appeared was the vital body of Jesus, and it was possible for Him, as for anyone else capable of functioning in that vehicle, to draw matter of the chemical region around Himself and build a perfectly tangible, dense body in a moment. In order to convince them that He was as usual, He asked for something to eat and was given a piece of honeycomb and some fish. It was stated that He ate, but not that He ate the fish, and one who had been brought up among strict vegetarians like the Essenes would not have eaten the fish any more than he would have eaten flesh if it had been set before him.

It is also related of the Buddha that he died after gorging himself upon boar's flesh, which is highly ridiculous to anyone aware of the fact that he taught his disciples the simple and harmless life--to sustain the body upon the purest and best foods as they come directly from the ground--and was moved to the greatest pity at the sight of suffering on the part of man or beast. The esoteric student understands that in olden times the boar was a symbol of esoteric knowledge. One may give of his knowledge; the more we give the more we have--at least, the same amount of knowledge remains. The Buddha in his Earth life had gorged himself upon this sacred knowledge, and when he died he was full thereof.

Not everyone should be a vegetarian *at once*. The vegetarian diet generates an abundance of energy, much more than flesh foods. This energy is not only physical but spiritual, so that if a man leads a sedentary life and is of a material disposition, engaged, perhaps, in sordid business transactions or in other lines of strictly material endeavor, this spiritual energy can find no vent and is apt to cause systemic disturbances. Only those who live an active, busy life, where the abundance of energy generated by the vegetarian food can be thrown off, or who transmute that energy into spiritual endeavor, can thrive on the vegetarian diet. Besides, we recognize that the heredity of many generations has made man partly carnivorous, so that, in the case of most people, the change from a mixed diet to vegetables should be gradual. The diet which suits one man is not fitted for another, as indicated in the old proverb that "one man's eat is another man's poison," and no hard and fast rules can be laid down which will apply equally to all people. Therefore, everything that we eat, as well as everything else connected with our personality, should be determined by ourselves individually.

The Bible says truly that it is not that which goeth into the mouth that defileth us. If we crave and support ourselves upon loathsome food, *it is the craving that is the sin* and not the food itself. If a man is in a place where he cannot obtain the pure foods which he desires and craves, he ought to take the food which is obtainable, even flesh food, just as thankfully as he takes the pure food. It will not defile him because of his attitude of mind.

"And when he had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and brake the loaves, and gave them to his disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all." It is the nature of a beast of prey to eat any animal that comes in its path, and its organs are such that it must have that kind of a diet to exist, but *everything is in a stage of becoming*; it is always changing to something higher. Man, in his earlier stages of unfoldment, was also like the beasts of prey in certain respects. However, he is to become Godlike and thus he must cease to destroy at some time in order that he may commence to create.

We have been taught that there is no life in the universe but the life of God, that "in Him we live and move and have our being." His life animates everything that is, and therefore we naturally

understand that as soon as we take *life*, we are destroying the *form* built by God for His manifestation. The lower animals are evolving Spirits and have sensibilities. It is their desire for experience that causes them to build their various forms, and when we take their forms away from them we deprive them of their opportunity for gaining experience. We hinder their evolution instead of helping them. It is excusable in the cannibal, who knows no better, when he eats his fellow men. We now regard cannibalism with horror, and the day will also come when we shall feel a like disgust at the thought of making our stomachs the burying ground of the carcasses of murdered animals.

It is natural that we should desire the very best of food, but every animal body has in it the poisons of decay. The venous blood is filled with carbon dioxide and other noxious products on their way to the kidneys or the pores of the skin to be expelled as urine or perspiration. These loathsome substances are in every part of the flesh, and when we eat such food we are filling our own bodies with toxic poisons. Much sickness is due to our use of flesh foods.

In a great many places where the Bible speaks of "meat," it is very plain that flesh food is not meant. The chapter in Genesis where man's food is first allotted to him says that he should eat of every tree and herb bearing seed, "and to you it shall be for *meat*." The most evolved people at all times have abstained from flesh foods. We see, for instance, Daniel, who was a holy man and a wise man, beg that he might not be forced to eat meat, but that he and his companions be given pulse. The children of Israel in the wilderness are spoken of as "*lusting* after flesh" and their God is angry with them in consequence.

There is an esoteric meaning to the feeding of the multitude where fish was used as food, but looking to the purely material aspect we may sum up the points made by reiterating that we shall some time outgrow flesh and fish eating, as we have risen above cannibalism. Whatever license may have been given in the barbaric past will disappear in the altruistic future, when more refined sensibilities shall have awakened us to a fuller sense of the horrors involved in the gratification of a carnivorous taste.

"*And he said, a certain man had two sons.*" The story of the Prodigal Son was a parable whereby the Christ intended to teach a lesson and not an actual fact. It is a story which tells of the Spirit's pilgrimage through matter. There are different classes of Spirits. Some, but not all, have gone into the school of experience, the world. They have descended from their high estate in the World of God gradually deeper and deeper into the sea of matter which blinds them. At last they find themselves enmeshed in the dense matter of the Physical World. That is the turning point where they wake up; where the unconscious path of involution ends; where self-consciousness is attained, plus a consciousness of the world without. But the Spirit within is not content to remain in this world. Reawakened to a sense of its inherent divinity, it feels drawn anew to its highest spheres, and says "I will arise and go to my Father."

Then comes the toil of stripping off the various vehicles in which it has become enmeshed and of raising itself once more to the conscious communion with God. While engaged in this arduous task "the Father meets it a long way off"; the still small voice from within begins to speak and tell of heavenly glories and, at last, when either the evolution of humanity has been completed or the single Spirit has taken *the shortcut of Initiation*, there is a reunion with God and the other brothers who have not yet gone out into the school of experience. Naturally, there is more rejoicing over the return of one who has fought the good fight and has come back to his heavenly home, than over the one who has not yet sought to improve his opportunities.

Raising the Dead. Peter did not raise Dorcas from the dead, neither did the Christ raise Lazarus or anyone else, nor did He so claim. He said "He is not dead, he sleepeth."

In order that this matter may be understood, we will explain what takes place at death and wherein death is different from the state of trance, for the persons mentioned were entranced at the time that supposed miracles took place.

During the waking state, when the Ego is functioning consciously in the Physical World, its various vehicles are concentric--they occupy the same space--but at night, when the body is laid down to sleep, a separation takes place. The Ego, clothed in the mind and desire body, extricates

itself from the dense body and the vital body, which are left upon the bed. The higher vehicles hover above or near. They are connected to the denser vehicles by the *silver cord*, a thin glistening thread which takes the shape of two figure sixes, one end being attached to the seed atom in the heart and the other to the central vortex of the desire body.

At the moment of death, this thread is ruptured at the seed atom in the heart and the forces of this atom pass along the pneumogastric nerve, through the third ventricle of the brain, and thence outward through the suture between the occipital and parietal bones of the skull, along the silver cord and into the higher vehicles. Simultaneously with this rupture, the vital body is also disengaged and joins the higher vehicles which are hovering above the dead body. There it remains from about three and one-half days. Then the higher vehicles disengage themselves from the vital body, which disintegrates synchronously with the dense body, in ordinary cases.

At the time of this last separation, the silver cord also breaks in the middle, and the Ego is freed from contact with the material world.

During sleep the Ego also withdraws from the dense body, but the vital body remains with the dense body and the silver cord is left intact.

It sometimes happens that the Ego does not enter the body in the morning to waken it as usual, but remains outside for a time varying from one to an indefinite number of days. Then we say that the body is in a natural trance. But the silver cord is not ruptured in either of the two places mentioned. Where these ruptures have once taken place, no restoration is possible. The Christ and the apostle were clairvoyants; they saw that no rupture had taken place in the cases mentioned, hence the saying, "He is not dead, he sleepeth." They also possessed the power to force the Ego into its body and restore the normal condition. Thus so-called miracles were performed by them.

Questions:

- 1] Explain the implication that the Christ ate meat.
- 2] What are the important facts to remember in regard to a vegetarian diet?
- 3] What in the nature of flesh foods makes them particularly undesirable?
- 4] What is the meaning of "meat" as used generally in the Bible?
- 5] Explain the parable of the Prodigal Son.
- 6] Describe what takes place at death.
- 7] Just what did the Christ and His disciples do when they seemed to "raise the dead"?

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 --Max Heindel

Lesson No. 27 - Miscellaneous Interpretations [continued]

References: I Corinthians 5:7; Hebrews 6:20; 7:1-28; 11:28; Job 19:26; Mark 16:15

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

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

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

As the Sun passes toward the equator, it goes through the sign Aquarius, the water-man. At that time the Earth is deluged with rain, symbolizing the baptism of the Savior. Then comes the passage of the Sun through the sign Pisces, the fishes, in the month of March. All the stores of the past year have been consumed, and the food of man is scant; hence, we have the long fast of Lent, where the eating of fish symbolizes this feature of the solar journey. Then comes the Passover, when the Sun passes over the equator. This is the time of Easter, when the Sun is at his eastern node, and this crossing of the equator is symbolized by the crossification or crucifixion, so called, of the Savior. The Sun then goes into the sign of Aries, the Ram, and becomes the Lamb of God, which is given for the salvation of the world at the time when the plants begin to sprout. In order that the sacrifice may be of benefit to man, however, he (the Sun) must ascend into the heavens where his rays will have power to ripen the grape and the corn, and so we have the feast of Whit-Sunday and the Ascension of the Savior to the Throne of the Father, which is at the summer solstice in June. There the Sun remains for three days, when the saying "Thence he shall return" takes effect, as the Sun commences his passage towards the western node. Thence he passes into the sign Leo, the Lion of Judah, and we have the feast of the *Assumption* on August 15, in Leo. Next he traverses the sign Virgo, the Virgin, the *nativity* of the virgin, who seems, as it were, to be born from the Sun.

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

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

During the times of which we have record in history, there has always been a division of the temporal and the ecclesiastical powers. Moses was the temporal ruler and leader of the Jewish people, while Aaron was the priest who looked after their spiritual welfare. Down the ages this division of the church and the state has ever been apparent, at times causing great strife and bloodshed, for

their interests seem ever to be diametrically opposite. However, at the time of this Melchizedek, king of Salem, which interpreted means "peace," there was no such division, the two offices were combined in one individual. The story of Melchizedek, a being without earthly pedigree, refers, of course, to the time in early Atlantis when humanity had not yet been divided into warring nations, but were one vast, peaceful brotherhood, and the leaders of the people were Divine Beings, who were both kings and priests.

The later division of the church and state has been one of the most fruitful sources of enmity and war among humanity, for each of these powers has striven for supremacy over the other, while in reality there should be no prejudice, for no one who is not as spiritual as a priest should be is fit to rule as a king, and no one who is not as wise and just as a king should be is fit to have the spiritual guidance of humanity as the priests have. When these qualities are combined in one leader again, the reign of universal peace and brotherhood will become a fact. The Christ has been heralded as such a leader, capable of uniting church and state as king and priest after the order of Melchizedek. His Second Coming inaugurates the millennium, the age of peace and joy, where the symbolical New Jerusalem, the city of peace (for Jerusalem means "there shall be peace") reigns over the nations of the Earth, united into one universal brotherhood.

The Apostles' Creed and the Resurrection of the Body. The Apostles' Creed was not composed until centuries after they had passed away, and then it was taken to embody what they had believed. Neither they nor the Bible teach the resurrection of the body. That phrase is not to be found in the Good Book at all. In King James' version we read (Job 19:26) that "though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God"; and this passage is the chief reliance of those who endeavor to establish that absurd doctrine. However, the translators appointed by King James were poor Hebrew scholars, and most of them died before the translation was completed. In the Revised Version you will find another interpretation as follows:

"And after my skin, even this body, is destroyed; then without my flesh shall I see God." Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; therefore, what in the world would be the use of having a body such as we have now? Furthermore, this body must be perpetuated at the present time, and we hear that in the resurrection there shall neither be marrying nor giving in marriage, another argument that shows that a vehicle of a different kind from the flesh will be used. Besides, it is a well-known, well-established scientific fact that the atoms in our bodies are constantly coming and going. Now, if there is to be a resurrection of the body, which set of atoms is to be that which shall come forth in this resurrection? Or, if every atom that ever was in our body from birth to death is to be in that resurrection body, would it not be an enormous conglomeration, for we should then have immense bodies composed of layers; in fact, it would be a scientific conundrum. Now, as Paul says, the seed is put in the ground each time to gather a new body. (I Cor. 15.)

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

At the time of Christ people did not know the whole world. We find even to this day the westernmost cape of Spain called Finisterre--*the end of the Earth*. Therefore this term at the time when Christ spoke His command could not have included the whole Earth as we know it today. The statement is, therefore, not contrary to Bible teachings. It is wrong to send missionaries out to the people we call "heathen," for their development is as yet such that they cannot understand a religion which preaches *love* to one's neighbor, a religion which even we have not yet learned to practice. Besides, if the great Recording Angels who have charge of man's evolution are capable of judging our needs, and placing each one in the environment where he will find the influences most conducive to progression, we must also believe that they have given to each nation the religion most salutary to its

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

Questions:

- 1] What is the true nature of the planets?
- 2] Explain the occult significance of the Christian feasts.
- 3] To whom did the Bible historians refer when using the term "Melchizedek"?
- 4] Describe the conditions which will exist when another "king and priest after the order of Melchizedek" comes.
- 5] Explain how it is impossible for the physical bodies of the dead to be "resurrected."
- 6] What has been the Bible reference used by advocates of foreign missionaries as a basis for their attitude?
- 7] What is the correct attitude toward foreign missionary work? Why?

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 --Max Heindel

Lesson No. 28 - Babylon and the New Jerusalem

References: Genesis 11:1-9; Isaiah 14; 2 Corinthians 15:50; I Thessalonians, 4:17; Revelation 17, 21

As stated in previous lessons, the Lucifers are a class of Beings who attained to a stage of evolution far beyond that of humanity in the Moon Period, but fell short of the development of the Angels. They are demigods, and could not take a dense body like man. But neither could they gather experience as the Angels are doing. They needed a brain and spinal cord, and so, when man had built such an instrument, it was to their advantage to prompt him in the use of it.

At that time the opening consciousness of man was turned *inwards*, and he saw his inner organs and built them with the same force that he now turns *outwards* to build houses and ships, etc., and the outside muscles of his body; so the woman, who was most advanced in that direction because of having her Imagination trained, saw the intelligence embodied in her serpentine spinal cord, and at a later stage, when man came to record this experience, the serpent appealed to him as the nearest likeness to that which he wanted to tell about.

This idea is carried out right through the Bible. In Isaiah 14 he called Lucifer (day-star), king of Babel-On (gate of the Sun), a city located upon seven hills, and having dominion over the world. There mankind ceased to act in unison and became separated into warring nations. It is the seed ground of all the ills imaginable, and is called a "harlot" in Revelation, where her fall is described.

In supreme antithesis, we hear of another "Light of the World," a "bright and morning star," a true light, Who shall arise after the fall of Babylon and reign forever in a city of peace: Jer-u-salem, that is called the "bride." It comes down from heaven, and has twelve gates, but they are never closed, although the precious tree of life is within. There is no outside illumination. The light is within and there is no night.

Truly this is a wonderful city, and the greatest imaginable antithesis to the other, as literal interpretation is out of the question in both cases. What does it mean? Allowing that a city of Babylon has existed, it was not *literally* as described, and the future "New Jerusalem" is contrary to all laws of nature as we know them. These two cities must therefore be symbols.

In order to unravel the meaning, let us consider that these cities are located upon seven hills or mountains, a position offering special advantages for observation. Moses went "into the mountain" and "saw" and "heard"; so did those on "the mount" of transfiguration. Daniel likens Babylon to the *head* of the image Nebuchadnezzar saw in a dream (Daniel 2), and on the human head there are seven places of observation: two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, and a mouth. Man is also tenfold, having a threefold spirit, a threefold soul, and a threefold body, linked together by the mind. Upon these sits the brain, where the "Light-giver," *reason*, rules the little world, the microcosm, as the Great Light-giver, God, rules the macrocosm.

Reason is the product of selfishness. It is generated by the mind given by the "Powers of Darkness" (The Lords of Mind), in a brain built by selfishly keeping half the sex force, and prompted by the selfish Lucifers. Hence, it is "the seed of the serpent," and although transmuted to *wisdom* through pain and sorrow, it must give way to something higher--*intuition*, which means *teaching from within*. That is a spiritual faculty, equally present in all Spirits, whether functioning for the time being as man or woman, but it expresses itself most prominently in those incarnated in a female organism, for there the counterpart of the Life Spirit--the vital body--is male, positive, and *intuition*, the faculty of the Life Spirit, may therefore properly be called "the woman's seed," whence all altruistic tendencies spring, and whereby all nations are being slowly but surely drawn together in a Universal Brotherhood of *Love*, regardless of race, sex, or color.

This brain of ours is not a homogeneous whole, however. It is divided into two halves, and it is a fact well known to physiologists that we use principally but one of these cerebral hemispheres--*the*

left. The right half of our brain is only partially active. The heart also is on *the left side* of our body, but is beginning to move towards “the right” place. The “right” brain, which is ruled by Mercury, will also become more and more active, and in consequence of these two physiological changes, man's whole character will appear different. *The left side* is under the sway of the Lucifers and is given over to selfishness, but the Ego will gain more and more control as *the right side* of the brain is invested with power to act upon the body as *right* judgment.

That there is a change going on in the heart which makes it an anomaly, a puzzle, is not news to physiologists. We have two sets of muscles, one set under the control of the will, as, for instance, the muscles of the arm and hand. They are striped both lengthwise and crosswise. The involuntary muscles, which cannot be moved by desire, are striped lengthwise only. *The heart is the only exception*. It is not under the control of desire, *and yet it is beginning to show cross-stripes like a voluntary muscle*.

In time those cross-stripes will develop fully and the heart will be under our control. When that time comes, we will be able to direct the blood where we will to send it. Then we may refuse to send it to the left brain, and *Babylon, the city of Lucifer, will fall*.

When the blood is sent into the right brain, we shall be building the New Jerusalem, and we are now preparing for that time by building the cross-stripes of the heart by altruistic ideals, or, in the case of the pupil of a Mystery School, by sending the sex current through the *right-hand path of the heart*.

We remember that the Cherubim awakened the Life Spirit, the seat of divine love, whose shadow is the vital body, the medium of propagation, and when man was exiled from the Etheric Region, the Garden of Eden, with its four streams of ether, for the misuse of the sex force, the Cherubim were placed before it with a flaming sword. The right use of the sex force builds an organ which will give man the key to the inner worlds and help him to create by thought. This organ is the new wine cup, the ideal for the future epoch, the New Galilee, or New Jerusalem, and is built within the head and throat. To the spiritual sight it appears as the stem of a flower ascending from the lower part of the trunk. This calyx, or seed-cup, is truly a creative organ, capable of speaking the word of life and power, to infuse vitality in substances that were hitherto inert. Service is also an important factor in building this organ, and when it is built, sorrow and pain will cease and we will have entered the path to the city of peace, the New Jerusalem.

Lemuria perished by fire; terrible cataclysms destroyed the greater part of the Lemurian continent, and in its stead rose the Atlantean continent, where the Atlantic Ocean now is. In time that was buried beneath the waves and gave way to Aryana, the Earth as we see it at present in the Aryan Epoch, but that is soon past. The salamanders are beginning to stir the fires in the forge to make “a new Heaven and a new Earth,” which the Western School of Occultism calls the “New Galilee.”

In the New Galilee humanity will be transparent also, and as a result those bodies will be more easily responsive to the spiritual impacts of *Intuition*. While we lived in ancient Atlantis in the basins of the Earth, pressure of the moisture-laden mist was very heavy. This hardened the dense body, and as a further result the vibrations of the interpenetrating finer vehicles were considerably slowed down. This was especially true of the vital body, which is made of ether, a grade of matter belonging to the physical world and subject to some of the physical laws. The solar force did not penetrate the dense mist in the same abundance as is present in the clear atmosphere of today. Add to this the fact that the vital bodies of that day were almost entirely composed of the two lower ethers, which furthered assimilation and reproduction, and we shall understand that progress was very slow. Man led mainly a vegetative existence, and his main exertions were devoted to the purpose of obtaining food and reproducing his kind.

Had such a man been removed to our atmospheric conditions, the lack of exterior pressure would have resulted in the outflowing of the vital body, which means death. Gradually the physical body grew less dense and the amount of the two higher ethers increased, so that man became fitted to live in a clear atmosphere under a decreased pressure, such as we have enjoyed since the historical event known as the “Flood,” when the mist condensed—when the Sun by precession entered the watery sign of Cancer about ten thousand years ago, as told Plato by the Egyptian Priests. Since that time we have also been able to specialize more of the solar life force. The larger proportion of the two

higher ethers now found in our vital bodies enables us to express the higher human attributes appropriate to the development of this age.

Let it now be remembered that the qualifications necessary for our emancipation from the conditions prevailing in Atlantis were partly physiological; we had to evolve lungs to breathe the pure air in which we are now immersed and which allows the vital body to vibrate at a more rapid rate than did the heavy moisture. With this in mind, we shall readily see that further advancement lies in freeing the vital body from the trammels of the dense body and letting it vibrate in pure air.

Such bodies will not get tired either, hence *there is no night*, and the twelve cranial nerves which are the gates to the seat of consciousness, then as now, are consequently never closed. Besides, New Galilee will be formed of luminous ether and transmit sunlight. It will be like unto "clear glass." Everywhere the pure and beautiful symbol of transparency has been given to designate the power of purity. We remember the Temple of Solomon that was "built without sound of hammer." The most beautiful ornament there was *the molten sea*. Hiram Abiff, the master workman, *as his final achievement*, succeeded in smelting all the metals of the Earth into an alloy *as transparent as glass*. This is, of course, the luminous soul body which we have already described, and which everyone will have to possess to function in the New Jerusalem.

The present Christianity is not even a shadow of the true religion of Christ. That will remain in abeyance until all race feeling shall have been overcome. In the Sixth Epoch, or new Galilee, there will be but one Universal Brotherhood, under the leadership of the *Returned Christ*. Love will be unselfish and Reason will approve its dictates. Each will work for the good of all, because self-seeking will be a thing of the past. Universal Brotherhood will bind all beings of all the Earth together in Love. There can be no death, for the tree of life, the faculty of generating vital force, is made possible by means of the already-mentioned ethereal organ in the head, which will be evolved in those who are even now being taken out as forebears for the humanity of that coming epoch. "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom" (I Cor. 15:50), for it would interfere with the spiritual progress of that day; so when Christ appears, we must be prepared with a soul body and thus be ready to part from our dense body to be "caught up and meet Him in the air." (I Thess. 4:17.)

"When shall these things be?" asked the disciples. If we believe Christ's words: "My kingdom is not of this world" (*kosmos*, the Greek word used for "world," meaning "order of things," rather than our planet, the Earth, which is called *ge*) we shall know better than to look for Christ today. When the heavenly time marker came into Aries by precession, a new cycle commenced, and the "glad tidings" were preached by Christ. He said by implication that the new Heaven and Earth were not ready then, when He told His disciples: "Whither I go you cannot *now* follow, but you shall follow afterwards. I go to prepare a place for you and will come again and receive you." It is perhaps presumptuous to even guess at the approximate time of the Second Advent, but as the precessional cycles, so far as they are connected with the evolution of man, seem to commence with the Sun's entrance into Capricorn, there may be a development at that time.

It is said that the Lord will appear with a mighty sound like the voice of an Archangel. We read of thunders and the blasts of trumpets in connection with the event. A sound is an atmospheric disturbance, and since the passage of a projectile made by man can lift the vital bodies of soldiers out of their dense bodies (as was observed in the World War), it needs no argument to prove that the shout of a superhuman voice could accomplish similar results more efficiently—"in the twinkling of an eye."

In the Day of Christ, when His voice sounds the Call, as the Atlanteans whose lungs were undeveloped in the flood, so will also the new age find some without the "wedding garment," and therefore not fit to enter until they shall have qualified at a later time; others will find themselves with a properly organized soul body, able to ascend above the discarded dense bodies, to meet Him and be with Him *for the age*. Paul speaks of this advent as the "Christ being formed in you," and until Christ has been formed in us we are not yet ready for the Second Coming. As Angelus Silesius tells us:

Though Christ a thousand times in Bethlehem be born,
And not within thyself, thy soul will be forlorn.
The Cross on Golgotha thou lookest to in vain,
Unless within thyself it be set up again.

Questions:

- 1] What does the city of Babylon symbolize?
- 2] What are the seven mountains upon which “the woman sitteth”?
- 3] To what do the ten horns of the beast refer?
- 4] State the symbology of the New Jerusalem.
- 5] Of what are the twelve gates the symbol?
- 6] What is to cause the fall of “Babylon” and the establishment of the New Jerusalem?
- 7] Describe the “City of Peace.”

ANSWERS

Lesson 15:

1. Jehovah, the Highest Initiate, the ruler over the Angels and Archangels that work with men, breathed into man's nostrils, gave him lungs, and gave him the Race Spirit in the air that was to curb the hardening tendencies of the desire body and help him to get it under control.

2. The Race religions are all based upon law. Now we see why Christ said so emphatically, "Before Abraham was, I am." The Ego was before the nation and must be exalted over the nation. To that end Christ came, because as long as there were nations, there could not be brotherhood. When all nations have been chopped into individuals we may begin to build the grand Universal Brotherhood of Man.

3. We cannot be laws unto ourselves, we cannot be free, until we have learned to respect everybody else's rights. By obeying every law, man rises above all law, and by and by he will rise above the need of all law.

4. At the present time, we cannot bear to look directly at the Sun. It would blind us. But we can look at the reflected sunlight that comes from the Moon. In the same way, man cannot stand the direct spiritual impulse that comes from the Sun, and therefore it had to be sent by way of the Moon, through the mediumship of Jehovah, the Regent of the Moon. That is the origin of the Race religions. Later came the time when man could take the Spiritual impulse more directly and Christ, the present Earth Spirit, came to prepare this. Before the advent of Christ all spiritual impulse came to man by way of the Moon as Race religions. Only by Initiation was it possible to get into direct touch with the spiritual solar impulse. The Christ Spirit, then, is the first incoming of a direct spiritual impulse.

5. When Christ came He altered the vibrations of the Earth and has been changing them all the time since. He "rent the temple veil"--He made the Holy of Holies, the place of Initiation, open to "Whosoever will!"

6. Prior to the coming of Christ, candidates for Initiation were entranced. They could not at that time be given an Initiation in their full waking state. From the time of Christ's coming no trance is needed, no subjective states are necessary in order to go through Initiation. There is a conscious going forth into the Temple by whosoever will.

7. The gold given by one wise man symbolizes the Spirit. The one brings myrrh, which is the extract of a rare aromatic plant. It symbolizes that which man extracts when he has cleansed his blood of passion, becoming chaste and pure as a plant. Then his body is an aromatic essence. He emits the aroma of holiness. Myrrh, then, symbolizes the soul essence drawn from physical experience, which is the soul. The third gift of incense symbolizes the body. As Christ said, "If you want to follow me, you must sell all you have. You are not to keep anything for yourself." You are to give up body, soul, and Spirit, everything for the higher life, everything for the Christ. Not to an exterior Christ, however, but to the *Christ within*.

Lesson 16:

1. At the present time, we have just passed the extreme point of materiality and are going through the sixteen Races. We are treading "the sixteen paths to destruction," and are consequently in graver danger of falling behind than at any other part of the evolutionary journey.

2. Christ came to give special aid to and redeem the stragglers. He said that He came to seek and to save that which was lost. While most are well taken care of by the laws of Rebirth and Consequence, there are "sinners" who have become "bogged" in matter and cannot escape without a rope. Christ came to save them.

3. Initiation was made possible to all through Christ Who brought Love, or rather Altruism, to Earth to begin the development of the vital body. Love must supersede Law.

4. Being killed is a very different thing from dying. The blood that had been the vehicle of the Race Spirit had to flow and be cleansed of that contaminating influence. Love of father and mother,

exclusive of other fathers and mothers, must go--otherwise Universal Brotherhood and an all-embracing Altruistic Love could never become an actuality.

5. When the Savior Christ Jesus was crucified, His body was pierced in five places; in the five centers where the currents of the vital body flow; and the pressure of the crown of thorns caused a flow from the sixth also. When the blood flowed from these centers, the great Sun Spirit Christ was liberated from the physical vehicle of Jesus and found Himself in the Earth, with His individual vehicles. The already existing planetary vehicles He permeated with His own vehicles and in the twinkling of an eye diffused His own desire body over the planet, which has enabled Him thenceforth to work upon the Earth and its humanity from within. At that moment a tremendous wave of Spiritual sunlight flooded the Earth. It rent the veil which the Race Spirit had hung before the Temple to keep out all but the chosen few, and it made the Path of Initiation free thenceforth to whomsoever will. So far as concerned the Spiritual Worlds, this wave transformed the conditions of Earth like a flash of lightning, but the dense, concrete conditions are, of course, much more slowly affected.

6. Upon the death of the dense body of Christ Jesus, the seed atom was returned to the original owner, Jesus of Nazareth, who for some time afterward, while functioning in a vital body which he had gathered temporarily, taught the nucleus of the new faith which Christ had left behind. Jesus of Nazareth has since had the guidance of the esoteric branches which sprang up all over Europe.

7. The growing materialism of the last three hundred years, which has increased physical knowledge immensely, has almost extinguished the Light of the Spirit.

Lesson 17:

1. Prayer may be said to be an opening up of a channel along which the divine Life and Light may flow into the Spirit, in the same way that the turning of a switch opens the way for the electric current to flow from the powerhouse into our house. Faith in prayer is like the energy which turns the switch. Without muscular force we cannot turn the switch to obtain physical light, and without faith we cannot pray in such a manner as to secure spiritual illumination.

2. In the Lord's Prayer there are seven prayers; or, rather, there are three sets of two prayers and one single supplication. Each of the three sets has reference to the needs of one of the aspects of the threefold Spirit and its counterpart in the threefold body.

3. The opening sentence, "Our Father Who art in Heaven," is merely as the address upon an envelope. The Human Spirit lifts itself upon the wings of devotion to its parent aspect in the Holy Trinity and intones the opening incantation, "Hallowed be Thy Name." The Life Spirit raises itself upon pinions of love and addresses the fount of its being, The Son, "Thy Kingdom come." The Divine Spirit soars with superior insight to the fountainhead, The Father, whence it sprang at the dawn of time, and manifests its confidence in that all-embracing Intelligence in the words, "Thy Will be done." The threefold Spirit in man prefers its requests concerning the personality, the threefold body. The Divine Spirit prays to the Father for its counterpart, the dense body, "Give us our daily bread." The Life Spirit prays to The Son for its counterpart, the vital body, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." The Human Spirit utters the supplication for the desire body in the words, "Lead us not into temptation." Then all join in a concerted appeal concerning the Mind, "Deliver us from evil." (The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception, pp. 465-6)

4. The three religions given to man to help him attain perfection are the Religion of The Holy Spirit, the Religion of The Son, and the Religion of The Father.

5. Under the regime of the Holy Spirit the human race was divided into nations and peoples, segregated by their adherence to one group from fellowship with other nations. To unite the scattered nations and weld them into one universal is the work of the Religion of The Son--Christianity. The warring of nations is fostered by the Race-Spirit, but the Christian Religion will eventually unite them, cause them to beat their swords into ploughshares and bring peace and good will on earth. Then a still higher religious teaching, the religion of The Father, will unite mankind still closer. Then the self will be entirely submerged in a common purpose, a single will. The Will of God will then be done on Earth as it is in Heaven, where there is neither me or thee, but where God is All and in All.

6. Desire is the great tempter of mankind. It is the great incentive to all action, and insofar as the actions subserve the purposes of the Spirit, it is good; but where the desire is for something degrading, something that debases the nature, it is indeed proper that we pray not to be led into temptation.

7. If the mind is strong enough to “deliver us from evil” desires, we have become virtuous, which is a positive quality, and even if we fall for a time before we realize our wrong, we acquire virtue as soon as we repent and reform. Then we have exchanged negative innocence for the positive quality of virtue.

Lesson 18:

1. The Virgin Spirits, which are now mankind, commenced their pilgrimage through matter in the dawn of time, in order that, by the friction of concrete existence, their latent powers might be transmuted to kinetic energy as usable soul power.

2. By turning his consciousness inward, the Spirit of man discovered--ITSELF. Thus self-consciousness was attained.

3. During the time man-in-the-making was evolving, great creative Hierarchies guided his every step. Absolutely nothing was left to chance. Even the food he ate was chosen for him so that he might obtain the appropriate material wherewith to build the various vehicles of consciousness necessary to accomplish the process of soul growth.

4. The mind was given to all in the beginning of Atlantis. Since thought activity breaks down tissue which must be replaced, there developed a pressing need for albumen to make quick repairs. Hence began the practice of flesh eating. The diet containing an excess of albumen taxed his liver beyond capacity and clogged the system, making him morose, sullen, and brutish. He was fast losing the spiritual sight.

5. In the middle of Atlantis the sun first shone upon *man* as we know him; there he was first born into the world of daylight. Until then he had been under the absolute control of great Spiritual Hierarchies, mute, without voice of choice in matters pertaining to his education, as a child is now under the control of its parents. But on the day when he finally emerged from the dense atmosphere of Atlantis, he perceived *himself* as separate and apart from all others, and was able to utter the words “*I am.*”

6. In order to aid man’s Spirit to overpower the highly individualized molecules of flesh, brace it for battle with the world, and spur it on to self-assertion, wine was added to man’s diet. As our visible bodies composed of chemical compounds can thrive only on chemical aliment, so it requires Spirit to act upon Spirit to aid in breaking up the heavy protein and in stimulating the drooping Human Spirit.

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

Lesson 19:

1. We make a distinction between the bread and the wine which we drink at the so-called “Lord’s Table” and our regular food. But there is no warrant in the Scriptures for any such distinction, as anyone may see, even in the English version. On the contrary, we are told that whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, all should be done to the glory of God. (I Cor. 10:31)

2. From the life of the Earth Spirit come both the wheat and the grape. They are the “body and blood” of Christ Who is the imprisoned Earth Spirit, given to sustain mankind during the present phase of its evolution.

3. But when, under the tutelage of the Lucifer Spirits, man ate of the Tree of Knowledge and perpetuated the race without regard for interplanetary lines of force, he transgressed the law, and the bodies thus formed crystallized unduly, and became subject to death in a much more perceptible manner than had hitherto been the case.

4. As law, apart from love, gave birth to sin, so the child of law, tempered with love is grace.

5. It was the sin of our progenitors in ancient Lemuria that they scattered their seed regardless of law and without love. But it is the privilege of the Christian to redeem himself by purity of life in remembrance of the Lord.

6. John says, "His seed remaineth in him," and this is the hidden meaning of the bread and wine. In the English version we read simply: "This is the cup of the New Testament." But in the German the word for cup is *Kelch*, and in the Latin, *Calix*, both meaning the outer covering of the seedpod of the flower, which contains its life essence.

7. Two selves or souls are housed within the breast of each person: one passionately desires what is personal and material; the other aspires to what is pure.

Lesson 20:

1. The various doctrines and sacraments of the church are the very keystones in the arch of evolution because they inculcate morals of the loftiest nature, including self-sacrifice which is the fostering principle of human development.

2. Among savages the care of the young practically ends with the attainment of physical ability to care for themselves, but the higher we ascend in civilization the longer the young receive care from their parents, and the more stress is laid upon mental education so that when maturity has been reached, the battle of life may be fought from the mental rather than from the physical point of vantage; for the farther we proceed along the path of development the more we shall experience the power of mind over matter. By the more and more prolonged self-sacrifice of parents, the race is becoming more delicate, but what we lose in material ruggedness we gain in spiritual perceptibility.

3. The day will come in a not far distant future when science will have become as thoroughly religious as religion itself.

4. In time we shall see the union of science and religion as it existed in the ancient Mystery Temples. When that point has been reached, the doctrines and sacraments of the church will be found to rest upon immutable cosmic laws of no less importance than the law of gravity.

5. Early humanity could not see things outside themselves, but they had an inner perception. They saw the soul qualities of all who lived around them and they perceived themselves as spiritual rather than material beings. At that time there were not nations at all, but humanity was one vast brotherhood. All were partially outside their bodies and therefore in touch with the Universal Spirit, which has now been obscured in the separateness of egotism which causes each man to feel himself distinct and apart from all the rest of humanity. Brotherhood is forgotten and selfishness now rules.

6. When a person is admitted to the church, which is a spiritual institution where love and brotherhood are the mainsprings of action, it is appropriate to administer the Sacrament of Baptism, which is symbolical of the condition of childlike innocence and universal love which prevailed when mankind dwelt under the mist in early Atlantis.

7. True greatness is achieved when one fulfills the words, "He who would be the greatest among you, let him be the servant of all."

Lesson 21:

1. Orthodox Christianity states that tempted by the devil, our first parents sinned and were exiled from their previous state of celestial bliss, placed under the law, made subject to death, and became incapable of escaping by their own efforts. Then God so loved the world that He gave Christ, His only begotten Son, for its redemption and to establish the kingdom of heaven. Thus death will finally be swallowed up in immortality.

2. When the Western Mystery teaching is stripped of its exceedingly illuminating explanations and detailed descriptions, when its basic teachings are stated, they are found to be in exact agreement with the orthodox Christian teachings.

3. The mission of Christ is to aid mankind by elevating them to a more ethereal state where dissolution will no longer be necessary to free them from vehicles that have grown too hard and set for further use.

4. The beginning and end of marriage was described by the Christ when He said, "Have ye not read that He which made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh." (Matthew 19:4-6) He also indicated the end of marriage when He said: "In the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven." (Matthew 22:30.)

5. Marriage became necessary in order that birth might provide new instruments to take the place of those which had been ruptured by death; and when death has once been swallowed up in immortality and there is no need of providing new instruments, marriage will also be unnecessary.

6. When man has once become as the Angels and has learned to build his body of ether, naturally there will be no death and no need of marriage to bring about birth.

7. Astrology may be used in marriage by revealing the temper and tendencies of each human being. It will enable two people to blend their characters in such a manner that a love life may be lived, and it will indicate the periods when interplanetary lines of force are most nearly conducive to painless parturition. Thus it will enable us to draw from the bosom of nature children of love, capable of living long lives in good health.

Lesson 22:

1. The popular, but erroneous, idea regarding the Immaculate Conception is that about 2,000 years ago an individual named Jesus Christ was born of a mother without the cooperation of an earthly father, and this incident is regarded as unique in the history of the world. In reality it is not unparalleled; the Immaculate Conception has taken place many times in the history of the world and will become universal in the future.

2. The periodical flow of the earth's spiritual forces, which occurs at Christmas, results in the birth of Saviors who, from time to time, give renewed impetus to the spiritual advancement of the human race.

3. We understand the "Fall" to have been occasioned by man's impulsive and ignorant use of the sex forces at times when the interplanetary rays were inimical to conception of the purest and best vehicles. Thus man gradually became imprisoned in a dense body crystallized by sinful passion, and consequently an imperfect vehicle, subject to pain and death.

4. We may hasten the process of becoming Christ-like by gaining and implementing right knowledge, intelligently cooperating instead of as now often stupidly frustrating through ignorance the ends of spiritual development.

5. Joseph is said to have been a carpenter, but he was not a worker in wood. He was a "builder" in a higher sense. God is the Grand Architect of the Universe. Under Him are many builders of varying degrees of spiritual splendor.

6. There is a virginity of soul that is independent of the state of the body, a purity of mind without the taint of passion, which enables the mother to carry the unborn child under her heart in sexless love. At the time of Christ the desire nature had become so far amenable to control in the case of the more advanced among humanity that the act of generation could be performed without passion, out of pure love, so that the child could be immaculately conceived. Jesus was so conceived by the Virgin Mary.

7. We are all Christs-in-the-making. We must cultivate characters so spotless that we may be worthy to inhabit bodies that are immaculately conceived, generated at an astrologically propitious time, without the taint of passion. The sooner we commence to purify our minds of passionate thoughts, the sooner we shall attain. In the final analysis it only depends upon the earnestness of our purpose, the strength of our wills.

Lesson 23:

1. The generally accepted understanding of the "forgiveness of sins" is that Christ died for our sins and that, in consequence, belief in Him will bring us forgiveness.

2. Our "sins" are really "forgiven" when we repent of our wrongdoing, make restitution for it, and reform. Then the sins we have repented of are forgiven and wiped out of life's record.

3. As Christ, the great Ideal of the Christian religion, has been set before us for imitation, and we can not possibly hope to become Christ-like in one life, which is all that we now have any knowledge of, there must be given us a compensatory doctrine, otherwise we should in despair cease to strive, knowing that it would be futile. Therefore the Western World was taught the doctrine of the forgiveness of sins through the righteousness of Christ Jesus.

4. The orthodox interpretation of "everlasting" salvation is radically wrong, if the Greek dictionary is taken as authority, for there the original word, *aionian*, is translated to mean "an age, an indefinite period, a lifetime," etc.

5. The world may be regarded as a training school for the evolving Spirits. Some of them started early and applied themselves diligently to the task before them; consequently they progressed rapidly. Others started later and are laggards. They are therefore left behind in the race; but all will ultimately attain the goal of perfection. In consequence of the foregoing fact, there are a number of classes of these pilgrim Spirits, and before one set, or class, of Spirits can be moved up another step in evolution, it is necessary that they should have attained a certain standard of proficiency. They are saved from a lower condition which they have outgrown. Once this measure of efficiency has been acquired, they are promoted into another race, another epoch. But among a large number there are always laggards, and these are condemned to stay in the class where they were until they have arrived at the stage of growth required for advancement. The plan is similar to the method in which children in a school are promoted into the next higher class at the yearly examination if they have attained a certain standard of knowledge; if not, they are condemned to stay behind--not forever but only until another year's examination proves that they have qualified.

6. One popular method of conversion takes place in a revival meeting to the beating of drums, the clapping of hands, the singing of gospel hymns, and the insistent calling of the revivalist to "come before it is too late." All these aids to conversion produce an intense hypnotic influence, which works upon the emotional nature of many people in such a way that these "sinners," so called, can no longer remain in their seats, but are forced in the most literal sense to obey the command and come forward to "the mourner's bench." That kind of conversion is usually of very little worth.

7. There is another kind of conversion which is always accompanied by planetary influences, and according to the strength of these influences, the conversion, or change in the life, will be more or less radical. It then shows that the soul has reached a certain point in its pilgrimage where it feels attraction to the higher life. The immediate cause of conversion may be a sermon, a lecture, or a book, a verse in the Bible, or something in nature, but that is only the physical cause of something which had already taken place spiritually. From that moment the man or the woman will commence to take a new view of life, will lay aside the old vices, will follow new lines of thought and endeavor. It may change his whole attitude toward life and also his environment.

Lesson 24:

1. If confession is made in the spirit of the publican mentioned in the Bible, which is the spirit of true penitence, then there is a certain value to confession.

2. When we sin and are truly penitent and determine not to commit the same wrongdoing again, we may also confess our sin to someone whom we respect, who, for that action, will stand as the representative of God in our own higher nature and as a witness strengthen our resolve to reform.

3. Law is a curb on the desire nature, but where spiritual advancement is contemplated, the spiritualization of the vital body must also be accomplished. And that is attained by means of art and religion, in oft-repeated impacts, for the keynote of the vital body is repetition.

4. First, man seeks to protect himself from nature powers by propitiating with bloody sacrifices a God whom he fears. Then man looks to God as the giver of things, Who will reward him here and now for obedience to His law and punish him instantly for disobedience. This God is a mighty ally against his (man's) enemies but also a powerful enemy, therefore He is much to be feared. Man thus worships and sacrifices animals through fear and avarice. Then man worships a God of love and

sacrifices himself from day to day, through his whole life, for a reward in a future. Finally, man reaches a stage when he recognizes his divinity and does right because it is right, without thought of fear or bribe.

5. The Christian religion is gradually working through the third stage, though not yet freed from the second.

6. The veil was rent as a symbol of the fact that every one may now aspire to enter the path of initiation and that it is no longer confined to a special or privileged class.

7. Before the great Universal Brotherhood of Love can be inaugurated, it is necessary to break up nations on the same principle that if we have a number of buildings composed of bricks and we wish to build them into one grand structure, it is necessary first to break them to pieces so that the individual bricks will be available for use in the larger building.

Lesson 25:

1. Christ's words to the thief, correctly punctuated, read: "Verily I say unto thee today, thou shalt be with me in paradise." They imply that the thief would be with Christ at some future time not defined.

2. If Christ promised the thief that he should be with Him in Paradise on the day of the crucifixion, yet three days later declared to Mary Magdalene that He had not yet been there, He would have been guilty of contradiction, which is, of course, an impossibility. Placing the comma as suggested fully reconciles the meaning of the two passages; besides, Jude tells us that in the interval He worked with the Spirits in Purgatory.

3. The part of the story relating to the two thieves, while factual, has no esoteric meaning.

4. The Lucifers imparted to mankind a knowledge of good and evil.

5. The Lucifer Spirits desired a power over man, to obtain a foothold in his brain and spinal cord whereby they could obtain experience and evolve.

6. Christ came into the world to save humanity from sin, sorrow, and death. Therefore He called Himself the true light, and the others, who came before, He characterized as thieves and robbers, for they had robbed man of the spiritual sight, though they had enlightened him in the physical sense.

7. The great truth Christ presented to His hearers with this remark is that there is nothing so remarkable about a child as the flexible attitude of its mind, which renders it so teachable, and the pupil who endeavors to live the higher life should always aim to keep his mind in that fluidic state, for as soon as our ideas have become set and incapable of being changed, our progress ceases.

Lesson 26:

1. The Bible passage states that Christ ate, but not that He ate the fish. One who had been brought up among strict vegetarians like the Essenes would not have eaten the fish any more than he would have eaten flesh if it had been set before him.

2. Not everyone should be a vegetarian at once. The vegetarian diet generates an abundance of energy, much more than flesh foods. This energy is not only physical but spiritual, so that if a man leads a sedentary life and is of a material disposition, this spiritual energy can find no vent and is apt to cause systemic disturbances. Only those who live an active, busy life, where the abundance of energy generated by the vegetarian food can be thrown off, or who transmute that energy into spiritual endeavor, can thrive on the vegetarian diet.

3. Every animal body has in it the poisons of decay. The venous blood is filled with carbon dioxide and other noxious products on their way to the kidneys or the pores of the skin to be expelled as urine or perspiration. These loathsome substances are in every part of the flesh and when we eat such food, we are filling our own bodies with toxic poisons. Much sickness is due to our use of flesh foods.

4. In a great many places where the Bible speaks of "meat," it is very plain that flesh food is not meant. An example of this usage is in Genesis where man is instructed to eat of every tree and herb bearing seed, "and to you it shall be for meat."

5. The parable of the Prodigal Son is a story which tells of the Spirit's pilgrimage through matter; consisting of a period of unconscious involution, a turning point where man awakens to his inherent divinity, and an evolutionary journey where man aspires to conscious communion with his heavenly Father.

6. At the moment of death, the silver cord is ruptured at the seed atom in the heart and the forces of this atom pass along the pneumogastric nerve, through the third ventricle of the brain, and thence outward through the suture between the occipital and parietal bones of the skull, along the silver cord and into the higher vehicles. Simultaneously with this rupture, the vital body is also disengaged and joins the higher vehicles which are hovering above the dead body. There it remains from about three and one-half days. Then the higher vehicles disengage themselves from the vital body, which disintegrates synchronously with the dense body, in ordinary cases.

7. The Christ and the apostle were clairvoyants; they saw that no rupture had taken place in the silver cord, hence the saying, "He is not dead, he sleepeth." They also possessed the power to force the Ego into its body and restore the normal condition. Thus so-called miracles were performed by them.

Lesson 27:

1. To the occultist the planets appear as Great Spirits, moving in space as we move in the world.

2. The Christian feasts mark the annual journey of the sun from the "Throne of the Father" at the Summer Solstice, through the Assumption and western decline, to its nadir in the southern hemisphere at Christmas, and returning over the Easter(n) equator at Spring, whenupon the feasts of Resurrection and the Ascension are celebrated.

3. Melchizedek, king of Salem, was a Divine Being, who was both king and priest of the Atlantean people.

4. The word *Melchizedek* means "peace." He ruled in Atlantis over one vast, peaceful brotherhood. The Christ has been heralded as such a leader, capable of uniting church and state as king and priest after the order of Melchizedek. His Second Coming inaugurates the millennium, the age of peace and joy, where the symbolical New Jerusalem, the city of peace (for Jerusalem means "there shall be peace") reigns over the nations of the Earth, united once more into one universal brotherhood.

5. The atoms in our bodies are constantly coming and going. Now, if there is to be a resurrection of the body, which set of atoms is to be that which shall come forth in this resurrection? Or, if every atom that ever was in our body from birth to death is to be in that resurrection body, would it not be an enormous conglomeration, for we should then have immense bodies composed of layers; in fact, it would be a scientific conundrum. Now, as Paul says, the seed is put in the ground each time to gather a new body. (I Cor. 15.)

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

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

Lesson 28:

1. In Isaiah 14 Lucifer (day-star) is called king of Babel-On (gate of the Sun), a city located upon seven hills, and having dominion over the world. There mankind ceased to act in unison and became separated into warring nations. Babylon is the seed ground of all the ills imaginable, and is called a "harlot" in Revelation, where her fall is described.

2. The seven mountains may be likened to the seven places of observation in the human head: two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, and a mouth.

3. The ten horns of the beast may refer to tenfold man, who has a threefold spirit, a threefold soul, and a threefold body, linked together by the mind.

4. The right use of the sex force builds an organ which will give man the key to the inner worlds and help him to create by thought. This organ is the new wine cup, the ideal for the future epoch, the New Galilee, or New Jerusalem, and is built within the head and throat. Service is also an important factor in building this organ, and when it is built, sorrow and pain will cease and we will have entered the path to the city of peace, the New Jerusalem.

5. The twelve gates of New Jerusalem symbolize the twelve cranial nerves which are the gates to the seat of consciousness.

6. When the cross-stripes of the heart are fully developed, the heart will be under our control. Then we will be able to direct the blood where we will to send it. Then we may refuse to send it to the left brain, and Babylon, the city of Lucifer, will fall.

7. The New Galilee, the "City of Peace," will be formed of luminous ether and transmit sunlight. It will be like unto "clear glass." Everywhere the pure and beautiful symbol of transparency has been given to designate the power of purity. We remember the Temple of Solomon that was "built without sound of hammer." The most beautiful ornament there was the molten sea. Hiram Abiff, the master workman, as his final achievement, succeeded in smelting all the metals of the Earth into an alloy as transparent as glass. This is of course the luminous soul body which we have already described, and which everyone will have to possess to function in the New Jerusalem.

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