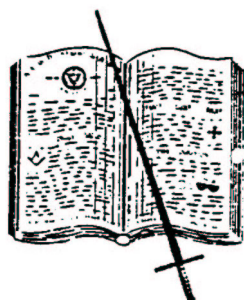


*Custodes  
Morum  
Sacrorum*

**I.C.E.S.**

# **International College of Esoteric Studies**

Incorporated as a non-profit educational institution devoted to the advancement and mystical enlightenment of Man.



*Worthing 31W  
Barbados  
West Indies*

## **LIBER 3 Symbolism, Part 2**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Dear Brothers & Sisters:

Greetings! This morning the clan is gathering and just after noon we will have roll call. In but a short time the sails will be set and our journey shall begin. The first tests will be those of the sea and land.

On looking through our registrations we notice we can divide our group in two: some of you have undertaken mystical studies before and some have never considered the higher teachings. It will therefore be necessary to begin at an easy pace and go steadily forward. You know what happens if someone is asleep and you turn on a bright light in the dead of night; we must avoid that situation at all costs.

These early Libers are general and introductory. They have been chosen to provide an overview. For those new in this work, do not be too concerned if you feel you cannot grasp all the ideas completely at first. Libers that follow throw light on the earlier ones and when you revise your views (and you must revise them), what you did not entirely understand the first time will be clearly seen a little later.

Now I know many of you are particularly interested in the Martinist teachings. These will be examined in detail after we have passed through the general introductions. It would be folly to attempt to study the Martinist Works before a basic foundation is laid down.

One of the most unfortunate things that can happen to us in this life is that of falling into boredom. We may become ill, financially bankrupt, or deserted by our friends. These are all conditions, when rightly understood, spur us on to correct our inadequacies and to betterment. But when we **lose interest and enthusiasm**, become gripped by the forces of boredom and inertia, Lord help us! For monotony leads to stagnation and to stop moving is to die.

Well! What has all this to do with matters at hand, you may ask. We would just like to say a little something about how we are attempting to compile the Libers. Obviously, to deal properly with any topic it must take on the quality of a main theme, this is necessary so it can be developed. But to keep the Libers fresh you will notice we try to add a little ancillary material to give it a nice balance; or we incorporate a variety of subject matter. The reason we do this, you guessed it, is to stave off boredom!!!

Let us take this opportunity to remind you that our curriculum is being arranged on a graded scale. Some of the brethren are taking their first steps towards the higher science, whereas some have been sojourning for a while before being led to our portals. Some have rudiments to learn, and quite a few have much to unlearn. Remember that while we have all been emanated from the same place, and we all are working our way back (the story of the Prodigal Son in The Bible), ***we do not all exist on the same level of spiritual attainment, development and comprehension.*** (For this reason we must hold in reverence all religions and denominations. Each and every one serves a worthy purpose on one of the many roads to the Beginning. None may lay a claim to having all of the **TRUTH**, yet each has some of it.)

So we must all spend a little time together and consolidate our group, and get to know each other. Later, when we have arrived at a uniform understanding, then we can weigh anchor and set sail for deeper waters. This will be soon enough. Let us proceed one step at a time.

The lectures being shared with you are shorn of useless verbiage. Do not judge these Libers by the amount of pages they contain! We take it that our members are adult and mature and do not need to be taken round and round in circles like children at kindergarten. We know of some “schools” who charge four times and more the subscription we ask send out reams of material, which, if it was reduced to its essence, could almost be put on a single sheet. We are not of that ilk! Judge our material by its quality. Also, do not compare our Libers to a magazine or a newspaper which is designed to be skimmed through and set aside until the next one comes along! The Libers must be studied and the more you revise the more you will discover. They contain gold, but you must dig for it! That is how it should be, for that is the Law.

In an effort to keep the lessons as fresh and interesting as possible we try to present a variety of topics in each Liber. You will find later, however, that what seemed to be “diversity” was in fact only branches of the same tree! We greatly value your comments, words of appreciation and encouragement.

Brothers & Sisters all: we salute you again. May that Peace which passes all human understanding abide with you always.

Sincerely yours in the Work,

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## LIBER OVERVIEW

In Liber 3, we continue our study of Symbolism. First, we complete our look at Numbers with two Lectures. This is followed by studies of the Symbolism of Letters and of the Martinist Pentacle. Then, we have two Essays; one on life and death, and the other on health. Lastly, we have the completion of the Optional article on “The Ancient Mysteries and Secret Societies”.

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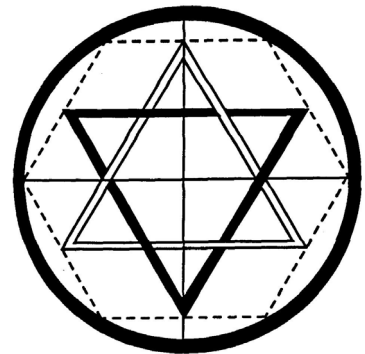
## LECTURE The Symbolism of Numbers (4)

My Brothers & Sisters:

Let us begin by recalling our last Conventicle in which we reached the Associate members stage of symbolism connected with the number FIVE. This subject brought us to the consideration of Good & Evil. If you have thought carefully about this endless metaphysical problem, from the Martinist presentation, you will know that the Good which is above all Creation, in an Absolute sense, is still in the hiddenness of Omneity; that is to say, it is occult. Anything on a lower level is “less good” and therefore relatively evil. All that we can perceive or conceive is this *relativity* which we can only interpret from our own personal standpoint. Let us take a blunt example: A cannibal might say that a piece of human flesh is good to eat, whereas we would disagree. **Free-will**, freedom of thought, is therefore in the picture.

(Think carefully about the above. Consider the relativity of Evil. Not everyone sees things in the same way. Question: Can ‘evil’ be described as something that is “less good”?)

The number FIVE is the turning point of human destiny. The Divine Spirit which is fundamental to all Being has become crucified on the cross of matter. The number FOUR has an addition at the center. Observe the equal-armed cross in our Pentacle. At its crucial point the Christ Spirit must manifest in all who tread the Path of Return. We have **five** physical senses. We have the **free-will** to spend our life merely satisfying these senses, or we may direct our will-power towards using these same senses to read the two Books of the Martinist. These are The Book of Nature and The Book of Man, which teach us the way out of the Forest of Errors, which particular Work will engage our attention in due time.



As explained at the outset, you are now being provided with the alphabet and tools of Martinism. Simultaneously, you are being given some simple exercises for training the mind to concentrate within itself. Animals use the Instinctive Mind almost entirely. Human beings, however, are more self-conscious, they can reflect. (As in Exercise #1). **CONSCIENCE** is an early development, an inner “feeling” as to which is the best or truest way to proceed.

***But the human mind is not so far removed from the animal nature as to be free from animal instincts. Discipline of the mind is essential for those who seek the way out of the Forest of Errors and onto the Path of Return.*** However, even conscience can become conditioned by conventions, or warped by limitations of the senses. Ultimately, only a **universal knowledge and Love** can solve mankind’s problems of Good & Evil. Therefore, let us travel one step at a time, conscientiously practicing our Martinist work daily.

Before we leave the subject of free-will for the present, it may be well to introduce the esoteric doctrine of Reincarnation & Karma. ***Just as all Nature renews itself in cycles, so do mystics understand the Soul, which we know as the Plastic Envelope, (and which carries our identity with it), to be subject also to the Universal Law of cyclic manifestation. That is to say, it reincarnates at intervals. Each new human body has a new brain and is therefore without memory to start with. Hence we do not recall our former existences with our normal consciousness. This is a later development when***

***Soul Memory becomes conscious in the body.*** Our concern, however, at the moment, is with the Law of Cause & Effect, ***Karma***, on the material Plane.

Free will is simply the ability of man to choose when and how he will act Free will is a function of brain activity while our prime state of consciousness is on that level, so we can only choose our ***attitude*** to circumstances while we are incarnating. Thus, as we return to Earth at each rebirth, ***we can only resume where we left off as far as advancement on the Path of Return is concerned. From this we can see that we cannot avoid our destiny, we can only delay it.*** We can wander in the Forest of Errors indefinitely if we so wish. ***Paradoxically, this is why Man is blest above all other creatures: by being privileged to know the Way of Enlightenment.***

Let us pause for a few moments to collect our thoughts and ask ourselves a few questions:

What is the value of conscience?

Give some illustrations of the way Nature renews itself in cycles.

The lecture speaks of the ***Law*** of Cause & Effect, can you recall the meaning or definition of a Universal Law?

Do we recall former existences with our normal consciousness?

How do we become aware of our former lives?

In what way is Man blest above all other creatures?

What is the essential prerequisite for those who seek the way out of the Forest of Errors?

Brothers & Sisters, our universal language of numbers has shown us how our existence as conscious beings can be represented in stages or emanations from Omneity. At Number **FIVE** we found ourselves immersed in matter with its four dimensions. From the fifth point we have the sharpest focus of Consciousness in the physical world and we can use our ***objective discernment*** for positive or negative purposes. In other words, we may apply our will towards the Path of Return, or not, just as we choose. FIVE therefore depicts the turning point of humanity, we understand that perfect Good is only in Omneity, that all parts of the Divine Whole cannot be complete in themselves and thus all stages of evolution are relative to each other. **FIVE** symbolizes the infusion of the four mundane stages by the Fifth Essence, or Quintessence, or Holy Spirit. Seen from below or in Nature, we have risen from the kingdoms of Mineral, Plant and Animal life, to our Human State. Viewed from above or from the Spiritual World, it may be described as the crucifixion of the Spirit upon the Cross of Matter. The Human Personality, which has evolved out of the interactions of preceding forces, has acquired a sense of individuality. ***It has gradually Learned of its freedom to choose its course of action.***

It is recognized that certain free choices are better than others, so the choices we make are relatively 'good' or fortunate, others are relatively "evil" or unfortunate. Let us bear in mind the Martinist teaching at Initiation about the sacrifice of the self, the petty self, for the good of the collectivity. Then we may begin to see the real significance of the Number 5 at the center of the Cross. The essential freedom of choice which objective consciousness gives us, can be used to the glory of the Sovereign Architect of the Universe, or otherwise. The Human Personality can become the Divine Personality. We can choose quite freely to discipline ourselves and our consciousness so as to attain the Christ or Perfect Consciousness. It is the final Gateway from this world on the Path of

Return to Omneity. The alternative is to wallow indefinitely among the Men of the Stream, or be lost in the Forest of Errors.

This, then, is the inherent Evil or Abomination attributed to the Number 5. It stands between 1 and 9 and signifies the turning point of human destiny. We can choose which way we wish to go. The soul of man is able to rise above the illusions of trying to satisfy the five material senses. Instead of striving after *effects*, Man is free to seek their *Cause*.

Let me quote our Ven:: M:: Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin:

‘The only Initiation which I preach and seek with all the ardors of my soul, is that by which we may enter into the heart of God and make God’s heart enter into us, there to form an indissoluble marriage, which will make us the friend, brother, and spouse of our divine Redeemer. There is no other mystery, to arrive at this holy Initiation, than to descend deeper and deeper into the depths of our being, and not desist until we can bring forth the living vivifying root, because then all the fruit which we ought to bear, according to our kind, will be produced within us and without us, naturally; as we see is the case with our earthly trees, because they are adherent to their own roots, and incessantly draw in their sap, And such is the advantage of this precious truth, that we may make it run from one end of the world to the other, and cause it to sound in every ear, without those who hear it being able to do anything with it but profit from it, or leave it alone.....”

If we strive by every means in our power to move harmoniously forward to the Number SIX, we arrive at a *balanced interpenetration* of the Physical and Astral Planes, and *we become conscious of a higher world or dimension*.

This is symbolized in our Pentacle by the Interlaced Triangles. One Triangle points upwards from the corporeal world of the brother in white with his mind held in order by his will; while the dark Triangle of the Unknown and seeming Chaos points downwards, offering fulfillment of destiny to all who are duly prepared for the great sacrifice necessary to attain this state of expanded, and less personal, consciousness.

Let us pause for a moment and check our Theosophic addition and reduction. 3, the number of the Triangle, when theosophically added, gives  $3 + 2 + 1 = 6$  (a Golden Number). 6, when added, gives  $6 + 5 + 4 + 3 + 2 + 1 = 21$ , which reduces to 3 (another Perfect Manifestation).

Before we close, let us again look at the sacred Pentacle of our Order. You will notice the regular hexagon just within the circle. This refers to the Six Days of Creation. It would be unwise to relate this concept to Time as is normally understood however, because Creation is going on all the Time, although we are conscious only at intervals. The 6 then symbolizes the balanced interpenetration of the Physical and Astral Planes when man becomes conscious of a higher World. This is the union of the microcosm and the macrocosm represented by our Pentacle with its interlaced triangles. Six, the HEXAD, is thus the symbol of coordinated Man and of the principle “As Above, so Below”.

Brothers and Sisters, please continue to practice Exercises X, 1, and 2 daily.

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## LECTURE The Symbolism of Numbers (5)

Dear Brothers & Sisters:  
Greetings!

We now come to the Number which has been regarded in all ages as the most sacred of all numbers, namely: SEVEN. This symbol, or mental working tool, *completes a series in the mystical alphabet* and represents the last attainment of the Human Master as an individual on this Earth. Following the laws of correspondence between things of the physical world and the higher worlds, Martinists convene within a Heptad which consists of seven officers who collectively focus their aspirations in order to invoke the Divine Power.

Brothers and Sisters can interest themselves in calling to mind the many examples of the Number SEVEN in the Book of Nature. Immediately we think of the seven colors of the rainbow; the seven principle notes in the musical scale; the seven periods of creation called “days” when ancient teachers expounded them to primitive peoples; the seven Elohim—gods, or sons of God; the seven sacraments; rulers of the seven planets; the seven Spirits before the Throne; etc. Do you recall any other examples of seven?

Pythagoreans consider 7 as the perfect number or *Number of Perfection* because it combines 3 and 4; three signifying the attributes of the soul and four the material body, thus composing the harmony of the complete body. *For Martinists, SEVEN symbolizes the highest attainment of Individual Man on Earth.*

This is sufficient for Brethren to remember at this step, for we do not want our intellectual approach to go too far ahead of our understanding. A spiritual brotherhood is dedicated to the task of helping one another to find the living font of knowledge which is hidden within each one of us. Many organizations offer untold quantities of information, but in this they only continue to blind the Eye of the Soul. This All-Seeing Eye can only be opened by the careful practice of meditation exercises which are designed to still the racing intellect, so as to redirect its focus towards its Origin. In this Way, or Path, we *intuitively* learn the purpose of Creation and our destiny in it.

### QUESTIONS / DISCUSSION

What is the inherent Evil or Abomination which is symbolized by the Number FIVE?

Name the Number of Perfection.

Let us now turn to the Number EIGHT. Eight is called the Ogdoad and stands for equilibrium. Nichomachus of Gerasa, who wrote a treatise on arithmetic and harmony during the First Century A.D. considers EIGHT to be the number of Universal Harmony because musical ratios are distinguishable by it. To Martinists, EIGHT implies the Cosmic Christ, the realm of the Master who has finished his work on Earth as an individual, and whose influence, apart from that transmitted to his disciples, is active on a much higher Plane of Being. In Christian Gnosticism, the rebirth in

Christ is called “the change unto the Ogdoad.” Seen from above, to use a metaphor, 8 is the Third Number down from the Apex or 1 and is therefore the Divine Sonship. (Students will kindly refer to the “Tree of Life” in Liber 2. We are presently at 10, so that counting up the Tree, eight going up puts us at the Number 3. This important point will be taken up in detail later.)

We find this Ogdoad, which is hidden from the material world, represented in our Oratory by an eighth chair unoccupied by any corporeal body. In Oriental Works of the Day, we hear of the Eightfold Path of Equilibrium (the Middle Way) taught by the Buddha. We will examine this from the Martinist viewpoint when we come round to this subject again.

The works of this day will complete for the time being our study of the universal language of Numbers. The final stages of the Return to Omneity are symbolized by the Numbers NINE and TEN.

NINE is called the Ennead and signifies *limitation*. It is the last single digit and in our theosophical reduction we have noticed that it adds nothing to nothing! It almost seems to be a nonentity. Let us refresh our minds with an example or two:  $5 + 9 = 14$  which equals 5 again!  $1 = 9 = 10 = 1$  again! NINE is therefore a negative influence. Let us take the Supreme Triangle on the Tree of Life represented by Numbers 1, 2 and 3 which represents the Holy Upper Trinity. (This Triangle is above the two interlaced in our Pentacle.) If we place 10 at the Apex of the Triangle, we may then place 9 and 8 at the base points (9 in place of 2; and 8 in place of 3). NINE is then seen as a kind of negative recipient of the First Emanation of Omneity, which does not manifest completely until it encounters EIGHT, the Realm of the Divine Sons of Light (the Elohim). We can thus obtain some brief and very limited glimpse of the *Fiat Lux* of the Sovereign Architect.

Lastly we have the Number TEN. 10, which is sometimes described as the Decad Out Of Nothing (NO THING), symbolizes the *re-absorption into the Absolute*. Theosophic numbering gives  $10 = 1$ . It is also the sum total of the Heptad (7) and the Holy Upper Trinity.

## BRIEF REVIEW OF THE TEN NUMBERS AND THEIR MEANINGS

1 is called the MONAD. It is considered to stand alone and to be independent of all other Numbers. It is *Unity*, and Unity is never called a Number although all Numbers emanate from it and it contains them all.

Number 2 is the DUAD. It is the first principle denoting separation from Unity. It stands for *opposition*, the passivity which is the opposite of activity.

Number 3 is the TRIAD. It is universally taken to represent *manifestation*. In the immaterial world, it represents the Trinity composing Omneity. In the material world, it stands for the three kingdoms of nature: mineral, vegetable and animal. (Question: How is the triad represented in Man?)

Number 4 is the TETRAD. It is the universal number of *material perfection*. It is the tetragrammaton or four-letter name of power of Omneity YOD-HE-VAU-HE). It is also the “divine tetractys” of Pythagoras’ school. For Martinists it suggests the great Quaternary Law (to be studied later). Architecture provides its main structures with four principal walls. The mystical student sees ‘4’ in the ancient classification: Air, Earth, Fire and Water, represented in modern physics as Gases, Solids, Radiant Energy and Liquids. FOUR is represented by the equal-armed cross of matter in our Martinist Pentacle. This sacred emblem, the equilateral cross, also depicts positive action by its upright line, just as in Nature living things grow upwards; and negative passivity by its horizontal line, also shown in Nature by tranquil water or sleeping creatures lying flat.

Number 5 is the PENTAD. It denotes the principle of Evil. It symbolizes humanity in its exiled state, and suggests the five leaves in the Book of Nature (to be studied in due time).

Number 6 is the HEAD, symbolical of the six acts of creation manifesting in the material world. It depicts Solomon's Seal as the interlaced triangles, interlocking the higher and lower worlds. It denotes a ***balanced interpenetration of the physical and astral Planes*** and we become conscious of a higher world or dimension.

Number 7 is the HEPTAD, the most sacred of all Numbers. It symbolizes ***divine power***. It is the Number of Perfection. For Martinists, SEVEN denotes the highest attainment of Individual Man on Earth.

Number 8 is the OGDOAD, expressive of the ***equilibrium of force***. It symbolizes the ***realm of the Master*** who has finished his work on Earth as an individual and whose influence is active on a much higher Plane of Being.

Number 10 is the DECAD. It is symbolic of the union of the heptad and the triad. It symbolizes ***re-absorption into the Absolute***.

Brothers & Sisters, we have now seen the symbolical value of Numbers to the mystical student. Meditation will unfold them even further. The Martinist is not superstitious on these matters. ***Mystical Symbols*** are a combination of Natural Symbols from the Book of Nature, and artificial symbols used by Man in Exile. This combination enshrines a heritage of knowledge belonging to the collectivity of Mankind and represents a pattern wherein the Collective Consciousness of Man evolves, degree by degree for each person from Time to Eternity.

None of the Numbers is Good or Evil in itself, but each helps us to understand ***relative states of progress on the Path***. There are 10 such Numbers, the tenth one being a point within the Circle, the beginning and end of our Pentacle. Moreover, when we conceive the pattern on each Plane or in each World, ***the tenth always stands as the first of the next stage***. Perhaps this is stepping a little too far forward for now. We will return to this interesting study in the Grand Tradition of the West which is known as the Qabala, when we shall hear of the Decad Out Of Nothing. Let us therefore prepare to absorb the remaining tools of the Martinist, and become able to meditate properly by the time we open the Book of Man.

It is hoped that all Brothers & Sisters are continuing the exercises, especially the one for disciplining the Mind with Single Awareness (Exercise 2). This is particularly designed to keep the attention from hypnotic sleep, in that actions followed are not solely repetitive. The mind should cease to drift but remain at the command of the will.

May you ever dwell in the Eternal Light of Divine Wisdom.



## LECTURE The Symbolism of Letters

My Brothers & Sisters:

In our recent discussions of the science and symbolism of Numbers, we have seen that Numbers can be used as a language to express certain mystical and philosophic ideas. This should suggest to us a closer relationship between numbers and language than we have been aware of. In other words, both Language and Numbers must have had a common origin. Both are means of communication.

Martinists hold that once there was an interior or super-sensible language, a means of communication not dependent upon outward signs or sounds. However this may be, it is true that when communication became an outward and external thing, disparity began to exist. What had been an Enochian tongue, or angelic language, was known to few and communication between men was limited like everything else on the Earth Plane.

Martinists, however, have not lost hope of Man's recovering his right to use the angelic language, and part of our study has been devoted to the languages of Man in order to recover those secret and interior elements of the tongue of the spiritual world.

Of living languages today, the Chinese is the most ancient. Sanskrit, Hebrew and Egyptian are likewise very old; but with the possible exception of Hebrew, they are no longer in use. Nevertheless, a careful examination of the structure of these tongues will give some indication of the original force of language and will show that in the beginning its powers were greater than they are today.

In Hebrew, especially, one can see something of the original force inhering in the very letters of the alphabet. In themselves, they have a meaning and purpose, a fundamental characteristic, which they carry over in the words they form. First of all, they are divided into three classifications: There are three first or fundamental elements called *mothers*, — Aleph, Mem and Shin: **א, מ, ש** (Note: Hebrew characters are read from right to left.

In the Sepher Yetzirah<sup>1</sup> or "*Book of Creation*", said to be the first Hebrew metaphysical essay, it is written: "The three fundamental letters, **א, מ, ש** signify, as **מ** (Mem) is mute like the water and **ש** (Shin) hissing like the fire, there is **א** (Aleph) among them, a breath of air which reconciles them." Next there are seven double letters, so called because they have two pronunciations. Lastly, there are twelve simple letters.

These 22 letters were established and appointed by God, according to the Sepher Yetzirah: "He combined, weighed and changed them, and formed by them all beings which are in existence, and

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<sup>1</sup> Note: The Sepher Yetzirah is spelled variously: with a "Y", "J" or "I". Martinists prefer to spell it *Ietzirah*. This is a small, inexpensive work, and every student should obtain a copy and study it! Also: Kabala is variously spelled — Kabala, Kaballah, Cabala, Qabalah, etc.. Martinists prefer to spell it *Qabala* as this is closer to the Hebrew.

all those which will be formed in all time to come.”

It is in the Dogmatic Qabala that one finds the metaphysical system developed from these Hebrew letters. In our later study of it, we shall discover the source of much that is fundamental to all true mystical teaching; and we shall, as well, bring ourselves nearer to an understanding of the strength and beauty which must have characterized the angelic tongue.

Whatever the exact nature of that spiritual tongue may have been, we must recognize the fact that, hampered as he is in his state of exile, man still struggles to speak it even though it may be but a syllable, and that imperfectly uttered. The memory of it fills his moments of aspiration and prompts him to make some effort to communicate it to others. If he must use words, they are full of beauty and vibrant with the subtle overtones of meaning. If he is an artist, his colors blend in higher hues of scintillating light. If a musician, then his chords strike deep into the soul consciousness and awaken it to recognition of infinite harmony.

Poetry, music, painting—what are these but faint echoes of that angelic tongue by which man communicated with his fellows when in his First Estate? These are no small amusements or ideal occupations as the mystic knows them. They are the remnants of a divine speech which momentarily break through the fog of ignorance which surround man in his exile in the Forest of Errors and inspire him with memories of that life he once knew and may know again.

Poetry comes not from corruption, nor is it born in frivolity. It is one of the most sublime among the gifts of Men. It expresses something which recalls man’s lost language and First Estate and lifts him from the sordid thoughts in which he has engulfed himself. This is why so many mystics in times past expressed their most sublime thoughts in poetic form.

The same is true of painting and music. Painting is the science of mystical sight. Viewing sensible objects in nature, the true mystical painter transcends them to find subjects in the realm of spiritual imagination. Even in copying what is seen, the painter strives to see that which is real and lasting and to prefigure the values and dimensions of the higher world. He is never content to limit his work to reproducing only what the physical eye beholds; it strives to infuse into his creation something of the eternal principles toward which man aspires, which are invariable.

Music has ever been related to what the mystic terms the harmony of the spheres. Pythagoras worked equally with music and number to disengage man from the bondage of earth. Because of music’s effect upon the subtle faculties of Man in helping him recall the experience of his First Estate, Pythagoras recommended its daily use among his disciples. He expounded the theory of the harmony of the spheres, explaining that the seven planets were comparable to the seven strings of a harp, which it is said he invented. Each planet has its individual note, all blending to make a great music within the universe itself.

Too little is known even now of the mystical stimulus evoked by chants, mantras and vowel sounds, and of the effect which such things have on the different parts of the body. When musicians become mystics, or when mystics turn to music to express themselves, the whole moral and ethical tone of their life is elevated. ***A definite purification takes place within the Plastic Envelope and man’s reintegration and regeneration are thereby advanced.*** According to Plato, it is through music that man can be most quickly attuned to the realm of the Archetypes.

May you ever dwell in the Eternal Light of Divine Wisdom.

Some questions for your consideration:

In what way is Poetry, Painting and Music related to our First Estate?

What is the name of the treatise which is said to be the oldest Hebrew metaphysical essay?

Why are the seven Hebrew “double letters” called “double letters”?

What effect do music, chants and mantras have on the Plastic Envelope?

How are language and numbers related?

What are the names of the three mother letters of the Hebrew alphabet?

How many letters compose the Hebrew alphabet?

What are the divisions of the Hebrew alphabet?

What Number is known as the Ogdoad, and what does it represent?

Why is NINE a symbol for limitation?

What particular message did Saint-Martin’s books carry?

Describe what is meant by ‘reincarnation’.

Does the physical body reincarnate?

MAGIC ALPHABET					HEBREW ALPHABET				ENGLISH EQUIVALENT	USUAL	↓	VARIATIONS	EGYPTIAN		PHOENICIAN
ALPHABET OF THE MAGI	CELESTIAL WRITING	MALACHIM OR WRITING OF THE ANGELS	PASSING THE RIVER	USUAL FORM	FINALS	NAMES OF HEBREW LETTERS	NUMERICAL VALUE OF HEBREW ALPHABET						HIERO-GLYPHICS	EVOLVED FORM	
						ALEPH	1		A	Δ					Α
						BETH	2		B <sup>H</sup>	⊙	+				Β
						GHIMEL	3		G <sup>gh</sup>	♂	⊙				Γ
						DALETH	4	FORM	d <sup>h</sup>	⊙	♀				Δ
						HE	5	FORM	H	⊙					Ε
						VAU	6	NAL	W	⊙					Υ
						ZAIN	7	FI	NZ	⊙					Ζ
						CHETH	8	IN	ch	⊙					Η
						TETH	9	EN	t	⊙					Θ
						YOD	10	WHEN	y	⊙					Ι
						CAPH	20	500	K <sup>kh</sup>	⊙	4				Κ
						LAMED	30		l	⊙					Λ
						MEM	40	600	m	⊙					Μ
						NUN	50	700	N	⊙					Ν
						SAMECH	60		S	⊙					Ξ
						AYIN	70		ay	⊙					Ο
						PHE	80	800	P <sup>ph</sup>	⊙	♂				Ρ
						TSADE	90	900	T <sup>s</sup>	⊙					Σ
						COPH	100		q <sup>h</sup>	⊙					Φ
						RESH	200		R	⊙					Ψ
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COMPARATIVE TABLE OF HEBREW AND OTHER "SACRED" ALPHABETS

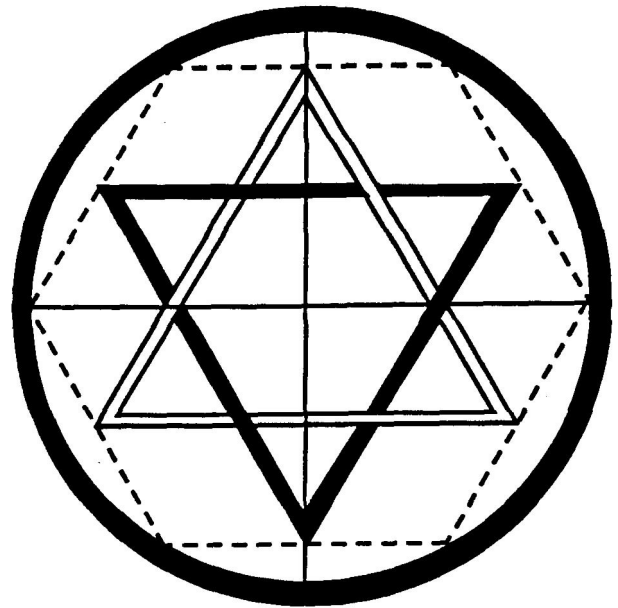
## LECTURE

### The Symbolism of The Martinist Pentacle

On all documents of the Martinist Order, the Universal Pentacle (pictured at right) is imprinted, and it constantly puzzles the profane who, too often, confuse it with the Star of David.

God, the First Principle of the Universe, is represented by a circle, the symbol of eternity. The action of eternity, passing from latent power to action, is symbolized by the mystic relation from Center to Circumference; it is the Ray projected six times inside the Circle, which produces the hexagon, emblematic of the six periods of creation.

The center Point forms the Seventh Period, that of Rest. It is between these creative emanations (eons), that Nature evolves by its two great currents of Involution (descending triangle, black) and Evolution (ascending triangle, white).



Let us observe that Nature, symbolized by the Seal of Solomon, does not reach God, but only the creative forces emanating from Him. From the Center of the Universe to God Himself (Circle), man's power takes birth, uniting the effects of Divinity to the fatalism of Nature in the Unity of his Free Will symbolized by a quaternary (the cross). This cross, the image of man, unites the center of the universe (the Human Soul) to God Himself. It expresses the opposition of the dual forces which gives birth to the quintessence. It is the image of the action of the active over the passive, of spirit over matter.

The vertical bar symbolizes the Active; the horizontal bar represents the Passive. The triangle pointing up represents all that ascends, it is particularly the symbol of Fire, of heat. The one with the point down represents all that descends, it is especially the symbol of Water, of humidity. The union of the two triangles represents the combination of heat and humidity; of the sun and the moon. It symbolizes the principle of creation, the circulation from heaven to earth. This figure (the Seal of Solomon), gives the explanation of Hermes' words in the Emerald Tablet: "It goes up from the earth to heaven and, vice versa, it goes down to earth and receives the force of superior and inferior things."

Such, concluded Papus about the Martinist Pentacle, is the explanation of the most complete synthetic figure that the genius of Man had ever discovered. It reveals all the mysteries of nature. It is true in physics as well as in metaphysics, in the natural sciences as well as in theology. It is the Seal that unites reason to faith, materialism to spiritualism, religion to science. As for Solomon's Seal, or the Six Pointed Star, which is an integral part of the Martinist Pentacle, it is explained by Papus and Teder as follows:

"Solomon's Seal represents the universe and its two ternaries, God & Nature. For this reason, it is called the "sign of the macrocosm" or "Grand World", in

opposition to the Five Pointed Star which is the sign of the “microcosm” or “small world” or “man”. The Seal of Solomon is composed of two triangles: that which has the head facing up and represents all that goes up. It symbolizes fire and heat. Psychically, it corresponds to the aspirations of man ascending towards his creator, materially it represents the evolution of psychic forces from the center of the earth to our planetary system, the sun. In a word, it expresses the natural return of moral and psychic forces to the principle from which they emanate. The triangle that points downwards represents all that descends; it is the hermetic symbol of water and humidity. In the spiritual world, it symbolizes the action of the Divinity upon its creatures; in the physical world, it represents the current of involution coming from the sun, center of our planetary system and going to the center of the earth. Combined, these two triangles express not only the law of equilibrium but also the eternal activity of God and the Universe. They represent the perpetual movement, the constant generation and regeneration by fire and water. In other words, the “putrefaction” term used in the past instead of the more scientific one of “fermentation”.

Solomon’s Seal is then the perfect image of creation and according to Papus & Teder, it is with this significance that Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin enclosed it in his Universal Pentacle.

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## **ESSAY**

### **Life and Death**

Dear Brothers & Sisters:

Life is for living! But what about the experience we call death? The reason the passing of a loved one is such a shattering experience is that our frame of reference is too small. It is like living in the flat world of pre-Columbus times. There is a point “out there” where the journeyer falls off into oblivion.

Unless we have a view of life that transcends or at least includes death, we will experience fear and bereavement. Some persons are so unnerved at the passing of a loved one that their faith is shattered. This indicates they were trying to understand God through their experiences, indicating a very limited concept of God. The need is to begin with God as the underlying principle, and then to look at trouble from this transcendent perspective. Looking at death through the consciousness of God is to see, not void, but another dimension of life.

Some persons think it is negative to talk about death. However, fear of dealing with the subject indicates a subconscious bondage to it. It may suggest that our faith does not include the wholeness of life that transcends death. When we get the realization of wholeness and allness, then we see death, when it comes, as a part of that wholeness, and not a deviation from it.

There is an interesting parallel between the movement of the ocean waves and the flow of life. Is a wave a body of water? Watch a piece of flotsam. If the water is moving, the flotsam moves with it. When the wave crashes on the shore, where is the water that first formed it? It has returned to the deep, as indicated by the fact that the piece of flotsam is still out there.

Life that appears to begin with birth and end with death is like one instant in the movement of the wave. In one instant the wave is a particular body of water. In this moment, life for you is your body. But life is not limited to your body! When the body is laid aside at death, it is not the end of you or the flow of life projected through you; the wave moves on!

Shakespeare says: “All the world’s a stage, and all of us are actors on it.” In our life-time we play many parts. You may have identified with one, and thus become self-typed. You may have accepted a self-image of limitation, such as failure, or incompetence, etc., because of some experience back there in your early life. But you are not the same person that your memory sees in one frame in early years. It is a mark left in passing, but why let it be your final grade? You are always growing, and that is life! And the purpose of the flow of life is the ceaseless longing of the infinite to **evolve** through you that which is **involved** in you. Wherever you are in life’s ongoing, there is always within you the unborn possibility of wholeness, and yours is always the privilege of giving birth to it.

But again: what about death? Is this process limited to the proverbial three-score-years-and-ten? Are we to believe that at birth a brand-new product comes forth from some celestial soul-factory to play its little part for a few years and then to be swept up in the dustpan of oblivion? Life would make little sense, and it would seem at times to be unjust.

Jesus said: “Be ye perfect as your heavenly father is perfect.” It is a clear command, and an ultimate goal. But how is this to be reached in seventy-five or even one hundred years? Especially when we start at different levels? The only logical answer is that, even as life is not finished at death, life has not just begun at birth. What **appears** to be the beginning is but the other side of what appears to be the ending. Even as there are many different levels of consciousness and experiences at death, so there must be many different levels of beginning at birth.

Death, then, is not a goal or a final experience. It never really settles anything. Unfinished business must be carried over, unsolved problems must eventually be worked out. And spiritual development, or “treasures in heaven” cannot be lost. Plato says: “Knowledge easily acquired is that which the enduring self had in an earlier life, so that it flows back easily.”

Here we have the concept of reincarnation, which we will not delve into at this time, but would challenge you to look up and see beyond the artificial barriers of birth and death. As the wave passes, where is the water that was the wave but has not yet returned to the placid ocean? “The only place to find the wave that was, is in the wave that is. The life you once lived can only be found in the life you now express.” (From The Sleeping Prophet, Jess Stem’s best selling book).

The Psalmist says: “A day is as a thousand years and a thousand years is as a day in the sight of God.” Imagine life between birth and death as one day of livingness. You rise in the morning, launch into the day, experience its problems and blessings, and then, even if you are not satisfied with the day, you eventually relax into a night’s sleep. And what is night? It is the “brief shadow through which we pass from sunlight to sunlight.” It brings rest and renewal. And the morning cometh, and beginning again.

So what is death? Jesus said of the girl: “She is not dead, but sleepeth.” Death is no more a reality or finality than sleep. Get this thought into your consciousness of the eternal flow of life that transcends death, and you will be free from the fear of death, free from the burdens of worry over the passing of time or grief over the passing of a loved one.

Then you can get on with the business of living life from **within-out!** You can resolve to live each day as if it were the only day there is, which in fact it is! “Look upward to eternal life, to the fearless and deathless, the everlasting, to the stars.” In its complete sense, life simply is. Let us accept it, live it, and rejoice in it!

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## ESSAY

### The Books of Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin

Saint Paul has written, "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin gave the surest evidence of that spirit as the years passed and more and more seekers turned to him. In the books he wrote, as well as in the guidance he offered, the truths of the system of Martinez Pasquales were clarified and strengthened.

Saint-Martin's books became immensely popular among the cultivated of France and elsewhere. They appealed for a consideration of the principles of true knowledge. They were published under a pseudonym, "The Unknown Philosopher". They made no attempt to turn their readers toward a personal teaching. Their message was everywhere the same:

***Look within for that which is of Truth.***

Saint-Martin wrote, "Books are the windows of Truth, but they are not the Door; they point out things to men, but they do not impart them." And again, by way of emphasizing that man must seek Truth not from another, but from within his own self, he wrote, not without some humor, "The works which I have composed have no other end than to persuade my readers to abandon all books, including my own."

From this, it is plain that Saint-Martin understood Truth to be inward, rather than outward. Man can only discover it by searching within, never by looking into outward things for it. The only help anyone can offer another in his search is to provide in the simplest way possible ***the aids by which he can enter into the depths of his own being.***

This, briefly, sets forth the reasons for the respect and veneration our Order holds for Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin. In his search for Truth, his exposition of it, and his exemplary way of life, he has become the symbol of the true Mystic and Martinist.

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Listen to the salutation of the dawn:  
Look to this day, for it is life, the very life of life.  
In its brief course lie all the possibilities and rarities of your existence: the bliss of growth, the glory of action, the splendor of beauty.  
For yesterday is already a dream, and tomorrow, only a vision.  
But today well lived makes every yesterday a dream of happiness and every tomorrow a vision of hope.  
Look well, therefore, to this day.  
Such is the Salutation of the Dawn.

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## ESSAY

### The Revelation of Health

The greatest creation of God, which far surpasses anything ever invented, is the human body. Unfortunately, man has not appreciated this gift; he constantly misuses it and deprecates it in thought.

A physician recently described some of the rigors of his professional life. He told of having to drink a great deal of coffee to stay awake during his late nights at the hospital; because he then couldn't



sleep, sleeping pills before bed; because he felt so drugged in the morning, wake-up pills. No wonder the quip has evolved: "There's a new wonder pill so powerful that you can't take it unless you are in perfect health." The concept of a "pill culture" has led to expression in ways that are saddening and destructive, especially with regards to our young people.

The medical profession is, however, slowly coming to know that there is more to a person than his physical body, and that in treating the body exclusively, they are giving only partial treatment, or sometimes no treatment at all. This realization first prompted the acceptance of psychiatry, which is a step in the right direction, but which still most often fails to deal with the whole person.

Dr. Rolf Alexander, in his book, The Doctor Alone Can't Cure You, tells that as a young man, he began his quest to solve the riddle of why the same drug could have different effects on different patients, and why some people die of comparatively minor afflictions while others, riddled with disease, cling to life for years. He concluded that there is, within every person, a vital core, or soul, that is the initiator and regulator of every mental and physical process of the body, and that with the exception of two factors, the work of the soul maintains perfect health. The two factors are nutritional deficiencies and emotional imbalance. He says that every mental and emotion reaction, whether mild or severe, has immediate repercussions in every cell, tissue, and function of the body.

Dr. Grantly Dick Read, in Childbirth Without Fear, says: "For my part, after thirty years of close association with physical and mental derangements of health, I am persuaded without a shadow of a doubt that with the exception of unforeseen accidents, the origin of every form of disease, both surgical and medical, whether hereditary or not, can be traced by careful investigation of the influence of fear upon the human mechanism."

Isn't it interesting that two thousand years ago, Jesus contended that all sickness was the result of disturbed states of mind? When man removes the blocks in his own consciousness, the healing principle can do its perfect work; as the Old Testament puts it, "health would spring forth speedily. Modern medical people are restating Jesus' thesis in their own language and are endeavoring to correct these disturbed mental states which are the fundamental cause of sickness.

Jesus taught the true nature of man. He taught that man is not a worm of the dust, born in sin and condemned by a disapproving God, and that he is not doomed to a life of misery in a hostile world, waiting only to sigh with relief as death releases him to eternal bliss. Jesus taught that man is a child of God, an expression of Infinite life, substance, and intelligence, and that man is a master of his circumstances, even though he has been hypnotized into considering himself a slave. Jesus also taught that man can be fettered by the chains of his own making, but that there is ever present the privilege of standing up and throwing off his shackles.

Notwithstanding that we are children of God, people do get sick and people do die. But the mistake in treating sickness is that we diagnose and treat only the physical manifestation of a deeper in-harmony. We see the symptoms in the flesh, so we treat the flesh. But, as Paul said, "Now we see in part, When that which is perfect shall come, that which is imperfect shall be done away." When we cease to focus on the imperfection and begin instead to identify with the perfect pattern of the perfect man, in the God-idea that is involved within each of us, then the way is open for health and healing.

We are told that "the free gift of God is eternal life," and by this we can see that life does not get sick, life does not grow old, and life does not die. Life is eternally acting; it is a principle given to every person as the regenerating and restoring power of his body. But because of man's freedom of will, he has the choice of setting into operation the spiritual principles that indwell him according to his consciousness. Through his use or misuse of the life principle, he either invites health or he invites sickness.

Healing, like gravity, is no respecter of persons; it acts for all alike, and goes instantly into operation. The principle does not act because of any particular virtue within the person. A prayer for healing is not dependent on special wording, nor on piety, nor on Divine coercion. The sun doesn't come from behind a cloud by some special bidding. With respect to us, it doesn't move or change at all. It is the cloud that moves, revealing the sun as just as bright and warm as ever. Just so, healing is not getting God to do our bidding, and it is not trying to get the healing principle to become to a greater degree what we have always been: children of God. As one doctor has put it, sickness is "struggling health"; it is but a temporary repression of the health that is always there.

Healing is not essentially a process; it is a revelation. As Paul said, "...the earnest expectation of the Creation awaited the revealing of the sons of God." When you really know that you are a child of God, that you have inherited perfect life and health as your Divine inheritance, then you will be healed, no matter what the prognosis.

This was the case with Myrtle Fillmore, back in the early days of Unity. She got that realization despite the fact that physicians had given her only six months to live because of an advanced state of tuberculosis. She realized that she was a child of God and did not inherit sickness. This opened up a whole new consciousness for her, preparing the way and furnishing the conditions for the law of life to act.

The work of healing has nothing to do with what type of distorted physical condition we might experience; it has only to do with our thoughts. Spiritual healing is not a way to make things happen; rather, it is a way to let things happen, to provide within ourselves an avenue for them to happen. We must ourselves furnish the conditions that invite health and wholeness, through what we eat, see, think, and talk about. These factors constitute invitation to ill health or radiant vitality. Obviously, some of us are going to have to change the way we talk about ourselves; daily "organ recitals" about which part of our body hurts today will have to go. Ella Wheeler Wilcox states this thought poetically:

"Talk health. The dreary, never-ending tale /Of mortal maladies is more than stale;  
You cannot charm or interest or please /By harping on that minor chord, disease.  
Say you are well, or all is well with you, /And God shall hear your words and make  
them true."

Talking health permits life to function. This potential of man for a full and complete and healthy life is totally limitless in you because you are a spiritual being. Your perfect expression of wholeness is your Divine inheritance, for you are created in God's image and likeness. God's will can be done.

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### **OPTIONAL**

#### **The Ancient Mysteries and Secret Societies (2)**

The most famous of the ancient religious Mysteries were the Eleusinian, whose rites were celebrated every five years in the city of Eleusis to honor Ceres (Demeter, Rhea, or Isis) and her daughter, Persephone. The initiates of the Eleusinian School were famous throughout Greece for the beauty of their philosophic concepts and the high standards of morality which they demonstrated in their daily lives. Because of their excellence, these Mysteries spread to Rome and Britain, and later the initiations were given in both these countries. The Eleusinian Mysteries, named for the community in Attica where the sacred dramas were first presented, are generally believed to have been founded by Eumolpos about fourteen hundred years before the birth of Christ, and through the Platonic system of philosophy their principles have been preserved to modern times.

The rites of Eleusis, with their mystic interpretations of Nature's most precious secrets, overshadowed the civilizations of their time and gradually absorbed many smaller schools, incorporating into their own system whatever valuable information these lesser institutions possessed. Heckethorn sees in the Mysteries of Ceres and Bacchus a metamorphosis of the rites of Isis and Osiris, and there is every reason to believe that all so-called secret schools of the ancient world were branches from one philosophic tree which, with its root in heaven and its branches on the earth, is - like the spirit of man - an invisible but ever-present cause of the objectified vehicles that give it expression. The Mysteries were the channels through which this one philosophic light was disseminated; and their initiates, resplendent with intellectual and spiritual understanding, were the perfect fruitage of the divine tree, bearing witness before the material world of the recondite source of all Light and Truth.

The rites of Eleusis were divided into what were called the Lesser and the Greater Mysteries. According to James Gardner, the Lesser Mysteries were celebrated in the spring (probably at the time of the vernal equinox) in the town of Agrae, and the Greater, in the fall (the time of the autumnal equinox) at Eleusis or Athens. It is supposed that the former were given annually and the latter every five years. The rituals of the Eleusians were highly involved, and to understand them required a deep study of Greek mythology, which they interpreted in its esoteric light with the aid of their secret keys.

The Lesser Mysteries were dedicated to Persephone. In his *Eleusinian and Bacchic Mysteries*, Thomas Taylor sums up their purpose as follows: "The Lesser Mysteries were designed by the ancient theologians, their founders, to signify occultly the condition of the unpurified soul invested with an earthly body, and enveloped in a material and physical nature."



From Thomassin's *Recueil des Fugures, Groupes, Thermes, Fontaines, Vases et autres Ornaments*.

### THE RAPE OF PERSEPHONE

Pluto, the lord of the underworld, represents the body intelligence of man; and the rape of Persephone is symbolic of the divine nature assaulted and defiled by the animal soul and dragged downward into the somber darkness of Hades, which is here used as a synonym for the material, or objective, sphere of consciousness.

In his *Disquisitions upon the Painted Greek Vases*, James Christie presents Meursius' version of the occurrences taking place during the nine days required for the enactment of the Greater Eleusinian Rites. The first day was that of general meeting, during which those to be initiated were questioned concerning their several qualifications. The second day was spent in a procession to the sea, possibly for the submerging of an image of the presiding goddess. This third day was opened by the sacrifice of a mullett. On the fourth day the mystic basket containing certain sacred symbols was brought to Eleusis, accompanied by a number of female devotees carrying smaller baskets. On the evening of the fifth day there was a torch race, on the sixth a procession led by a statue of Iacchus, and on the seventh an athletic contest. The eighth day was devoted to a repetition of the previous ceremonial for the benefit of any who might have been prevented from attending sooner. The ninth and last day was devoted to the deepest philosophical issues of the Eleusinia, during which an urn or jar - the symbol of Bacchus - was exhibited as an emblem of supreme importance.

The legend used in the Lesser rites is that of the abduction of the goddess Persephone, the daughter of Ceres, by Pluto, the lord of the underworld, or Hades. While Persephone is picking flowers in a beautiful meadow, the earth suddenly opens and the gloomy lord of death, riding in a magnificent chariot, emerges from its somber depths and, grasping her in his arms, carries the screaming and struggling goddess to his subterranean palace, where he forces her to become his queen.

It is doubtful whether many of the initiates themselves understood the mystic meaning of this allegory, for most of them apparently believed that it referred solely to the succession of the seasons. It is difficult to obtain satisfactory information concerning the Mysteries, for the candidates were bound by inviolable oaths, never to reveal their inner secrets to the profane. At the beginning of the ceremony of initiation, the candidate stood upon the skins of animals sacrificed for the purpose, and vowed that death should seal his lips before he would divulge the sacred truths which were about to be communicated to him. Through indirect channels, however, some of their secrets have been preserved. The teachings given to the neophytes were substantially as follows:

The soul of man — often called *Psyche*, and in the Eleusinian Mysteries symbolized by Persephone — is essentially a spiritual thing. Its true home is in the higher worlds, where, free from the bondage of material form and material concepts, it is said to be truly alive and self-expressive. The human, or physical, nature of man, according to this doctrine, is a tomb, a quagmire, a false and impermanent thing, the source of all sorrow and suffering. Plato describes the body as the sepulcher of the soul; and by this he means not only the human form but also the human nature.

The gloom and depression of the Lesser Mysteries represented the agony of the spiritual soul unable to express itself because it has accepted the limitations and illusions of the human environment. The crux of the Eleusinian argument was that man is neither better nor wiser after death than during life. If he does not rise above ignorance during his sojourn here, man goes at death into eternity to wander about forever, making the same mistakes which he made here. If he does not outgrow the desire for material possessions here, he will carry it with him into the invisible world, where, because he can never gratify the desire, he will continue in endless agony. Dante's *Inferno* is symbolically representative of the sufferings of those who never freed their spiritual natures from the cravings, habits, viewpoints, and limitations of their Plutonic personalities. Those who made no endeavor to improve themselves (whose souls have slept) during their physical lives, passed at death into Hades, where, lying in rows, they slept through all eternity as they had slept through life.

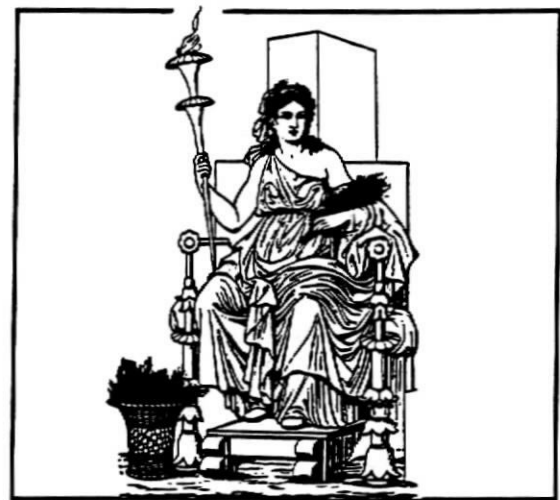
To the Eleusinian philosophers, birth into the physical world was death in the fullest sense of the word, and the only true birth was that of the spiritual soul of man rising out of the womb of his own fleshly nature. "The soul is dead that slumbers," says Longfellow, and in this he strikes the keynote of the Eleusinian Mysteries. Just as Narcissus, gazing at himself in the water (the ancients used this mobile element to symbolize the transitory, illusionary, material universe) lost his life trying to embrace a reflection, so man, gazing into the mirror of Nature and accepting as his real self the senseless clay that he sees reflected, loses the opportunity afforded by physical life to unfold his immortal, invisible Self.

An ancient initiate once said that the living are ruled by the dead. Only those conversant with the Eleusinian concept of life could understand that statement. It means that the majority of people are not ruled by their living spirits but by their senseless (hence dead) animal personalities. Transmigration and reincarnation were taught in these Mysteries, but in a somewhat unusual manner. It was believed that at midnight the invisible worlds were closest to the terrestrial sphere and that souls coming into material existence slipped in during the midnight hour. For this reason

many of the Eleusinian ceremonies were performed at midnight. Some of those sleeping spirits who had failed to awaken their higher natures during the earth life and who now floated around in the invisible worlds, surrounded by a darkness of their own making, occasionally slipped through at this hour and assumed the forms of various creatures.

The mystics of Eleusis also laid stress upon the evil of suicide, explaining that there was a profound mystery concerning this crime of which they could not speak, but warning their disciples that a great sorrow comes to all who take their own lives. This, in substance, constitutes the esoteric doctrine given to the initiated of the Lesser Mysteries. As the degree dealt largely with the miseries of those who failed to make the best use of their philosophic opportunities, the chambers of initiation were subterranean and the horrors of Hades were vividly depicted in a complicated ritualistic drama. After passing successfully through the tortuous passageways, with their trials and dangers, the candidate received the honorary title of *Mystes*. This meant one who saw through a veil or had a clouded vision. It also signified that the candidate had been brought up to the veil, which would be torn away in the higher degree. The modern word *mystic*, as referring to a seeker after truth according to the dictates of the heart along the path of faith, is probably derived from this ancient word, for faith is belief in the reality of things unseen or veiled.

The Greater Mysteries (into which the candidate was admitted only after he had successfully passed through the ordeals of the Lesser, and not always then) were sacred to Ceres, the mother of Persephone, and represent her as wandering through the world in quest of her abducted daughter. Ceres carried two torches, intuition and reason, to aid her in the search for her lost child (the soul). At last she found Persephone not far from Eleusis, and out of gratitude taught the people there to cultivate corn, which is sacred to her. She also founded the Mysteries. Ceres appeared before Pluto, god of the souls of the dead, and pleaded with him to allow Persephone to return to her home. This the god at first refused to do, because Persephone had eaten of the pomegranate, the fruit of mortality. At last, however, he compromised and agreed to permit Persephone to live in the upper world half of the year if she would stay with him in the darkness of Hades for the remaining half.



From a mural painting in Pompeii

#### CERES, THE PATRON OF THE MYSTERIES

Ceres, or Demeter, was the daughter of Kronos and Rhea, and by Zeus the mother of Persephone. Some believe her to be the goddess of the earth, but more correctly she is the deity protecting agriculture in general, and corn in particular. The poppy is sacred to Ceres and she is often shown carrying or ornamented by a garland of these flowers. In the Mysteries, Ceres is represented riding in a chariot drawn by winged serpents.

The Greeks believed that Persephone was a manifestation of the solar energy, which in the winter months lived under the earth with Pluto, but in the summer returned again with the goddess of productiveness. There is a legend that the flowers loved Persephone and that every year when she left for the dark realms of Pluto, the plants and shrubs would die of grief. While the profane and uninitiated had their own opinions on these subjects, the truths of the Greek allegories remained safely concealed by the priests, who alone recognized the sublimity of these great philosophic and religious parables.

Thomas Taylor epitomizes the doctrines of the Greater Mysteries in the following statement: "The

Greater (Mysteries) obscurely intimated, by mystic and splendid visions, the felicity of the soul both here and hereafter when purified from the defilement of a material nature, and constantly elevated to the realities of intellectual (spiritual) vision.”

Just as the Lesser Mysteries discussed the prenatal epoch of man when the consciousness in its nine days (embryologically, months) was descending into the realm of illusion and assuming the veil of unreality, so the Greater Mysteries discussed the principles of spiritual regeneration and revealed to initiates not only the simplest but also the most direct and complete method of liberating their higher natures from the bondage of material ignorance. Like Prometheus chained to the top of Mount Caucasus, man’s higher nature is chained to his inadequate personality. The nine days of initiation were also symbolic of the nine spheres through which the human soul descends during the process of assuming a terrestrial form. The secret exercises for spiritual unfoldment given to disciples of the higher degrees are unknown, but there is every reason to believe that they were similar to the Brahmanic Mysteries, since it is known that the Eleusinian ceremonies were closed with the Sanskrit words “*Konx Om Pax.*”

That part of the allegory referring to the two six-month periods during one of which Persephone must remain with Pluto, while during the other she may revisit the upper world, offers material for much consideration. It is probable that the Eleusinians realized that the soul left the body during sleep, or at least was made capable of leaving by the special training which undoubtedly they were in a position to give. Thus Persephone would remain as the queen of Pluto’s realm during the waking hours, but would ascend to the spiritual worlds during the periods of sleep. The initiate was taught how to intercede with Pluto to permit Persephone (the initiate’s soul) to ascend from the darkness of his material nature into the light of understanding. When thus freed from the shackles of clay and crystallized concepts, the initiate was liberated not only for the period of his life but for all eternity, for never thereafter was he divested of those soul qualities which after death were his vehicles for manifestation and expression in the so-called heaven world.

In contrast to the idea of Hades as a state of darkness below, the gods were said to inhabit the tops of mountains, a well-known example being Mount Olympus, where the twelve deities of the Greek pantheon were said to dwell together. In his initiatory wanderings the neophyte therefore entered chambers of ever-increasing brilliancy to portray the ascent of the spirit from the lower worlds into the realms of bliss. As the climax to such wanderings he entered a great vaulted room, in the center of which stood a brilliantly illumined statue of the goddess Ceres. Here, in the presence of the hierophant and surrounded by priests in magnificent robes, he was instructed in the highest of the secret mysteries of the Eleusis. At the conclusion of this ceremony he was hailed as an *Epoptes*, which means one who has beheld or seen directly. For this reason also, initiation was termed *autopsy*. The Epoptes was then given certain sacred books, probably written in cipher, together with tablets of stone on which secret instructions were engraved.

In *The Obelisk in Freemasonry*, John A. Weiss describes the officiating personages of the Eleusinian Mysteries as consisting of a male and a female hierophant who directed the initiations; a male and a female torchbearer, a male herald; and a male and a female altar attendant. There were also numerous minor officials. He states that, according to Porphyry, the hierophant represents Plato’s *Demiurgus*, or Creator of the world; the torchbearer, the Sun; the altar man, the Moon; the herald, Hermes, or Mercury; and the other officials, minor stars.

From the records available, a number of strange and apparently supernatural phenomena accompanied the rituals. Many initiates claim to have actually seen the living gods themselves. Whether this was the result of religious ecstasy or the actual cooperation of invisible powers with the visible priests must remain a mystery. In *The Metamorphosis, or Golden Ass*, Apuleius thus describes what in all probability is his initiation into the Eleusinian Mysteries:

“I approached to the confines of death, and having trod on the threshold of Persephone, I

returned from it, being carried through all the elements. At midnight I saw the sun shining with a splendid light; and I manifestly drew near to the gods beneath, and the gods above, and proximately adored them.”

Women and children were admitted **to** the Eleusinian Mysteries, and at one time there were literally thousands of initiates. Because this vast host was not prepared for the highest spiritual and mystical doctrines, a division necessarily took place within the society itself. The higher teachings were given to only a limited number of initiates who, because of superior mentality, showed a comprehensive grasp of their underlying philosophical concepts. Socrates refused to be initiated into the Eleusinian Mysteries, for knowing its principles without being a member of the order he realized that membership would seal his tongue. That the Mysteries of Eleusis were based upon great and eternal truths is attested by the veneration in which they were held by the great minds of the ancient world. M. Ouvaroff asks, "Would Pindar, Plato, Cicero, Epictetus, have spoken of them with such admiration, if the hierophant had satisfied himself with loudly proclaiming his own opinions, or those of his order?"

The garments in which candidates were initiated were preserved for many years and were believed to possess almost sacred properties. Just as the soul can have no covering save wisdom and virtue, so the candidates - being as yet without true knowledge - were presented to the Mysteries unclothed, being first given the skin of an animal and later a consecrated robe to symbolize the philosophical teachings received by the initiate. During the course of initiation the candidate passed through two gates. The first led downward into the lower worlds and symbolized his birth into ignorance. The second led upward into a room brilliantly lighted by unseen lamps, in which was the statue of Ceres and which symbolized the upper world, or the abode of Light and Truth. Strabe states that the great temple of Eleusis would hold between twenty and thirty thousand people. The caves dedicated by Zarathustra also had these two doors, symbolizing the avenues of birth and death.

The following paragraph from Prophyry gives a fairly adequate conception of Eleusinian symbolism:

“God being a luminous principle, residing in the midst of the most subtile fire, he remains forever invisible to the eyes of those who do not elevate themselves above material life: on this account, the sight of transparent bodies, such as crystal, Parian marble, and even ivory, recalls the idea of divine light; as the sight of gold excites an idea of its purity, for gold cannot be sullied. Some have thought by a blackstone was signified the invisibility of the divine essence. To express supreme reason, the Divinity was represented under the human form — and beautiful, for God is the source of beauty; of different ages, and in various attitudes, sitting or upright; of one or the other sex, as a virgin or a young man, a husband of a bride, that all the shades and gradations might be marked. Every thing luminous was subsequently attributed to the gods; the sphere, and all that is spherical, to the universe, to the sun and the moon — sometimes to Fortune and to Hope. The circle, and all circular figures, to eternity — to the celestial movements, to the circles and zones of the heavens. The section of circles, to the phases of the moon; and pyramids and obelisks, to the igneous principle, and through that **to** the gods of Heaven. A cone expresses the sun; a cylinder the earth; the phallus and triangle (a symbol of the matrix) designate generation.”  
(From Essay on the Mysteries of Eleusis by M. Ouvaroff.)

The Eleusinian Mysteries, according to Heckethorn, survived all others and did not cease to exist as an institution until nearly four hundred years after Christ, when they were finally suppressed by Theodosius (styled the **Great**) who cruelly destroyed all who did not accept the Christian faith. Of this greatest of all philosophical institutions Cicero said that it taught men not only how to live but also how to die.

## THE ORPHIC MYSTERIES

Orpheus; the Thracian bard, the great initiator of the Greeks, ceased to be known as a man and was celebrated as a divinity several centuries before the Christian Era. "As to Orpheus himself..." writes Thomas Taylor, "scarcely a vestige of his life is to be found amongst the immense ruins of time. For who has ever been able to affirm any thing with certainty of his origin, his age, his country, and condition? This alone may be depended on, from general assent, that there formerly lived a person named Orpheus, who was the founder of theology among the Greeks' the institutor of their lives and morals; the first of prophets, and the prince of poets; himself the offspring of a Muse; who taught the Greeks their sacred rites and mysteries, and from whose wisdom, as from a perennial and abundant fountain, the divine muse of Homer and the sublime theology of Pythagoras and Plato flowed." (See The Mystical Hymns of Orpheus.)

Orpheus was founder of the Grecian mythological system which he used as the medium for the promulgation of his philosophical doctrines. The origin of his philosophy is uncertain. He may have got it from the Brahmins, there being legends to the effect that he was a Hindu, his name possible being derived from *orfyaiow*, meaning "dark." Orpheus was initiated into the Egyptian Mysteries, from which he secured extensive knowledge of magic, astrology, sorcery, and medicine. The Mysteries of the Cabin at Samothrace were also conferred upon him, and these undoubtedly contributed to his knowledge of medicine and music.

The romance of Orpheus and Eurydice is one of the tragic episodes of Greek mythology and apparently constitutes the outstanding feature of the Orphic Rite. Eurydice, in her attempt to escape from a villain seeking to seduce her, died from the venom of a poisonous serpent which stung her in the heel. Orpheus, penetrating to the very heart of the underworld, so charmed Pluto and Persephone with the beauty of his music that they agreed to permit Eurydice to return to life if Orpheus could lead her back to the sphere of the living without once looking around to see if she were following. So great was his fear, however, that she would stray from him that he turned his head, and Eurydice with a heartbroken cry was swept back into the land of death.

Orpheus wandered the earth for a while disconsolate, and there are several conflicting accounts of the manner of his death. Some declare that he was slain by a bolt of lightning; others, that failing to save his beloved Eurydice, he committed suicide. The generally accepted version of his death, however, is that he was torn to pieces by Ciconian women whose advances he had spurned. In the tenth book of Plato's *Republic* it is declared that, because of his sad fate at the hands of women, the soul that had once been Orpheus, upon being destined to live again in the physical world, chose rather to return in the body of a swan than be born of woman. The head of Orpheus, after being torn from his body, was cast with his lyre into the river Hebrus, down which it floated to the sea, where, wedging in a cleft in a rock, it gave oracles for many years. The lyre, after being stolen from its shrine and working the destruction of the thief, was picked up by the gods and fashioned into a constellation.

Orpheus has long been sung as the patron of music. On his seven-stringed lyre he played such perfect harmonies that the gods themselves were moved to acclaim his power. When he touched the strings of his instrument the birds and beasts gathered about him, and as he wandered through the forests his enchanting melodies caused even the ancient trees with mighty effort to draw their gnarled roots from out the earth and follow him. Orpheus is one of the many Immortals who have sacrificed themselves that mankind might have the wisdom of the gods. By the symbolism of his music he communicated the divine secrets to humanity, and several authors have declared that the gods, though loving him, feared that he would overthrow their kingdom and therefore reluctantly encompassed his destruction.

As time passed on the historical Orpheus became hopelessly confounded with the doctrine he represented and eventually became the symbol of the Greek school of the ancient wisdom. Thus



Orpheus was declared to be the son of Apollo, the divine and perfect truth, and Calliope, the Muse of harmony and rhythm. In other words, Orpheus is the secret doctrine (Apollo) revealed through music (Calliope). Eurydice is humanity dead from the sting of the serpent of false knowledge and imprisoned in the underworld of ignorance. In this allegory Orpheus signifies theology, which wins her from the king of the dead but fails to accomplish her resurrection because it falsely estimates and mistrusts the innate understanding within the human soul. The Ciconian women who tore Orpheus limb from limb symbolize the various contending theological factions which destroy the body of Truth. They cannot accomplish this, however, until their discordant cries drown out the harmony drawn by Orpheus from his magic lyre. The head of Orpheus signifies the esoteric doctrines of his cult. These doctrines continue to live and speak even after his body (the cult) has been destroyed. The lyre is the secret teaching of Orpheus; the seven strings are the seven divine truths which are the keys to universal knowledge. The differing accounts of his death represent the various means used to destroy the secret teachings: wisdom can die in many ways at the same time. The allegory of Orpheus incarnating in the white swan merely signifies that the spiritual truths he promulgated will continue and will be taught by the illumined initiates of all future ages. The swan is the symbol of the initiates of the Mysteries; it is a symbol also of the divine power which is the progenitor of the world.

## THE BACCHIC AND DIONYSIAC RITES

The Bacchic Rite centers around the allegory of the youthful Bacchus (Dionysos or Zagreus) being torn to pieces by the Titans. These giants accomplished the destruction of Bacchus by causing him to become fascinated by his own image in a mirror. After dismembering him, the Titans first boiled the pieces in water and afterwards roasted them. Pallas rescued the heart of the murdered god, and by this precaution Bacchus (Dionysos) was enabled to spring forth again in all his former glory. Jupiter, the Demiurgus, beholding the crime of the Titans, hurled his thunderbolts and slew them, burning their bodies to ashes with heavenly fire. Out of the ashes of the Titans — which also contained a portion of the flesh of Bacchus, whose body they had partly devoured, the human race was created. Thus the mundane life of every man was said to contain a portion of the Bacchic life.

For this reason, the Greek Mysteries warned against suicide. He who attempts to destroy himself raises his hand against the nature of Bacchus within him, since Man's body is indirectly the tomb of this god and consequently must be preserved with the greatest care.

Bacchus (Dionysos) represents the rational soul of the inferior world. He is the chief of the Titans — the artificers of the mundane spheres. The Pythagoreans called him the *Titanic monad*. Thus Bacchus is the all-inclusive *idea* of the Titanic sphere and the Titans — or *gods of the fragments* — the active agencies by means of which universal substance is fashioned into the pattern of this idea. The Bacchic state signifies the unity of the rational soul which, being scattered throughout creation, loses the consciousness of its own essential one-ness. The mirror into which Bacchus gazes and which is the cause of his fall is the great sea of illusion - the lower world fashioned by the Titans. Bacchus (the mundane rational soul), seeing his image before him, accepts the image as a likeness of himself and ensouls the likeness; that is, the rational idea ensouls its reflection - the irrational universe. By ensouling the irrational image, it implements in it the urge to become like its source, the rational image. Therefore the ancients said that man does not know the gods by logic or by reason but rather by realizing the presence of the gods within himself.

After Bacchus gazed into the mirror and followed his own reflection into matter, the rational soul of the world was broken up and distributed by the Titans throughout the mundane sphere of which it is the essential nature, but the heart, or source, of it they could not scatter. The Titans took the dismembered body of Bacchus and boiled it in water — symbol of immersion in the material universe — which represents the incorporation of the Bacchic principle in form. The pieces were afterwards roasted to signify the subsequent ascension of the spiritual nature out of form.

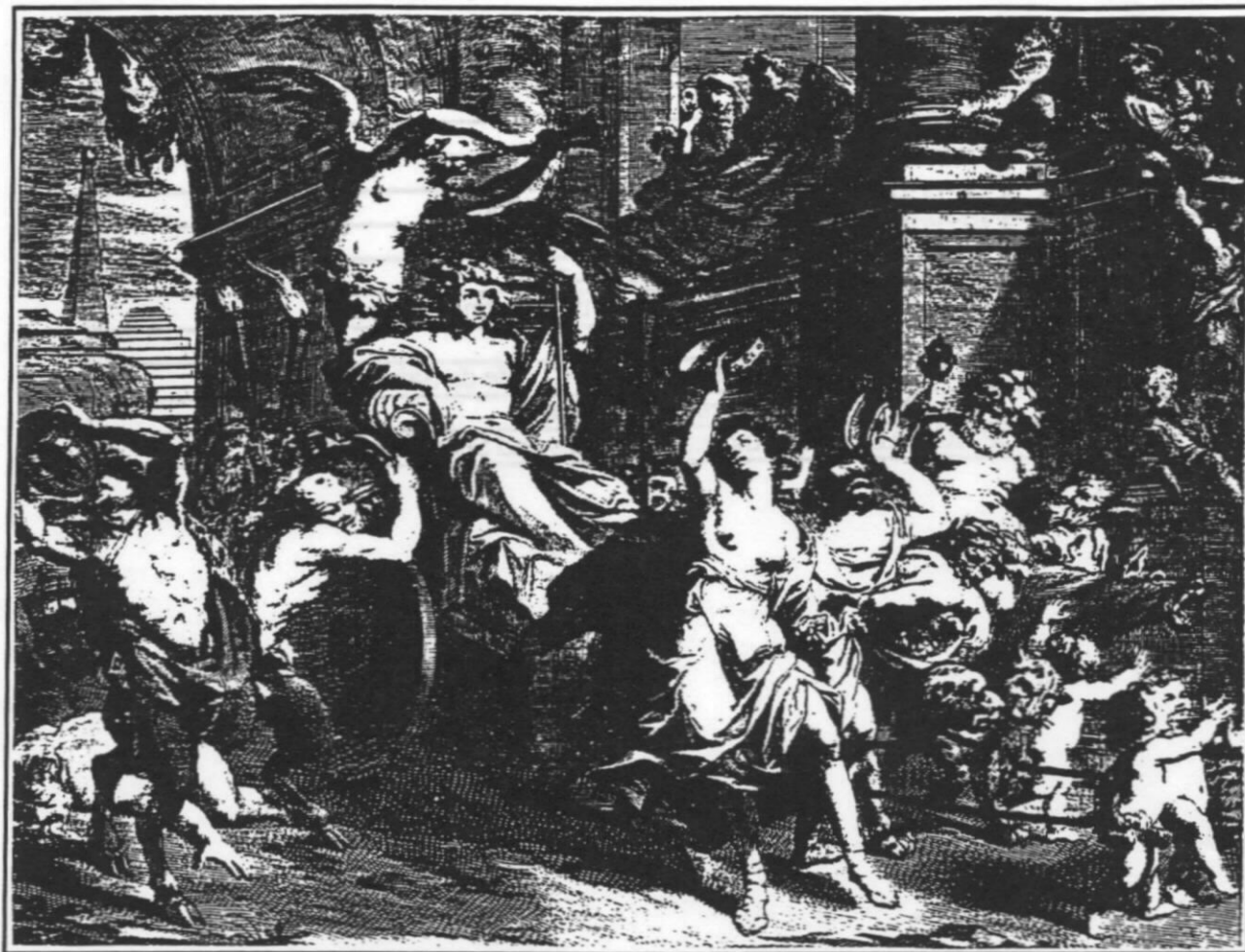
When Jupiter, the father of Bacchus and the Demiurgus of the universe, saw that the Titans were hopelessly involving the rational or divine idea by scattering its members through the constituent parts of the lower world, he slew the Titans in order that the divine idea might not be entirely lost. From the ashes of the Titans he formed mankind, whose purpose of existence was to preserve and eventually to release the Bacchic idea, or rational soul, from the Titanic fabrication. Jupiter, being the Demiurgus and fabricator of the material universe, is the third person of the Creative Triad, consequently the Lord of Death, for death exists only in the lower sphere of being over which he presides. Disintegration takes place so that reintegration may follow upon a higher level of form or intelligence. The thunderbolts of Jupiter are emblematic of his disintegrative power they reveal the purpose of death, which is to rescue the rational soul from the devouring power of the irrational nature.

Man is a composite creature, his lower nature consisting of the fragments of the Titans and his higher nature the sacred, immortal flesh (life) of Bacchus. Therefore man is capable of either a Titanic (irrational) or a Bacchic (rational) existence. The Titans of Hesiod, who were twelve in number, are probably analogous to the celestial zodiac, whereas the Titans who murdered and dismembered Bacchus represent the zodiacal powers distorted by their involvement in the material world. Thus Bacchus represents the sun who is dismembered by the signs of the zodiac and from whose body the universe is formed. When the terrestrial forms were created from the various parts of his body the sense of wholeness was lost and the sense of separateness established. The heart of Bacchus, which was saved by Pallas, or Minerva, was lifted out of the four elements symbolized by his dismembered body and placed in the ether. The heart of Bacchus is the immortal center of the rational soul.

After the rational, soul had been distributed throughout creation and the nature of man, the Bacchic Mysteries were instituted for the purpose of disentangling it from the irrational Titanic nature. This disentanglement was the process of lifting the soul out of the state of separateness into that of unity. The various parts and members of Bacchus were collected from the different corners of the earth. When all the rational parts are gathered Bacchus is resurrected.

The Rites of Dionysos were very similar to those of Bacchus, and by many these two gods are considered as one. Statues of Dionysos were carried in the Eleusinian Mysteries, especially the lesser degree. Bacchus, representing the soul of the mundane sphere, was capable of an infinite multiplicity of form and designations. Dionysos apparently was his solar aspect.

The Dionysiac Architects constituted an ancient society, in principles and doctrines much like the modern Freemasonic Order. They were an organization of builders bound together by their secret knowledge of the relationship between the earthly and the divine sciences of architectonics. They were supposedly employed by King Solomon in the building of his Temple, although they were not Jews, nor did they worship the God of the Jews, being followers of Bacchus and Dionysos. The Dionysiac Architects erected many of the great monuments of antiquity. They possessed a secret language and a system of marking their stones. They had annual convocations and sacred feasts. The exact nature of their doctrines is unknown. It is believed that Hiram Abiff was an initiate of this society.



From Ovid's *Metamorphosis*

### THE PROCESSIONAL OF THE BACCHIC RITES

In the initiation of the Bacchic Mysteries, the role of Bacchus is played by the candidate who, set upon by priests in the guise of the Titans, is slain and finally restored to life amidst great rejoicing. The Bacchic Mysteries were given every three years, and like the Eleusinian Mysteries, were divided into two degrees. The initiates were crowned with myrtle and ivy, plants which were sacred to Bacchus.

In the *Anacalypsis*, Godfrey Higgins conclusively establishes Bacchus (Dionysis) as one of the early pagan forms of the Christos myth: "The birthplace of Bacchus, called Sabazius or Sabaoth, was claimed by several places in Greece; but on Mount Zelmisus, in Thrace, his worship seems to have been chiefly celebrated. He was born of a virgin on the 25th of December; he performed great miracles for the good of mankind; particularly one in which he changed water into wine; he rode in a triumphal procession on an ass; he was put to death by the Titans, and rose again from the dead on the 25th of March; he was always called the *Saviour*. In his mysteries, he was shown to the people, as an infant is by the Christians at this day, on Christmas Day morning in Rome."

While Apollo most generally represents the sun, Bacchus is also a form of solar energy, for his resurrection was accomplished with the assistance of Apollo. The resurrection of Bacchus signifies merely the extraction or disentanglement of the various parts of the Bacchic constitution from the Titanic constitution of the world. This is symbolized by the smoke or soot rising from the burned bodies of the Titans. The soul is symbolized by smoke because it is extracted by the fire of the Mysteries. Smoke signifies the ascension of the soul, for evolution is the process of the soul rising, like smoke, from the divinely consumed material mass. At one time the Bacchic Rites were of a high order, but later they became much degraded. The Bacchinalia, or orgies of Bacchus are famous in literature.

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**NOTES**