

Rays from the Rose Cross



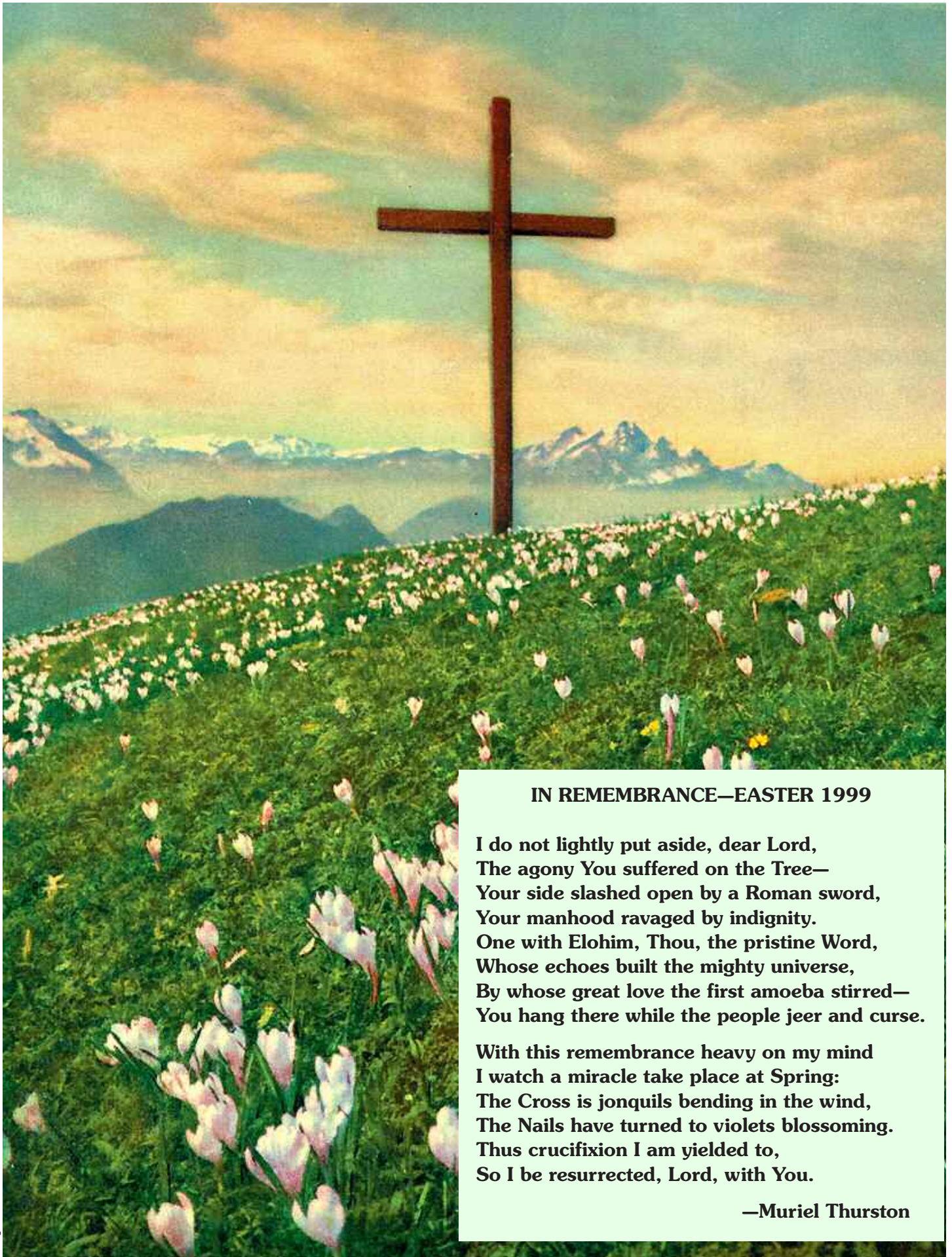
"A Sane Mind, A Soft Heart, A Sound Body"

March/April 1999—\$5.00

**THE SONG OF PRAYER
INDIAN YOGA IN RELATION TO THE CHRISTIAN ROSICRUCIAN PATH
GOD'S IMAGES
A CHRISTIAN WOMEN'S DECLARATION**

A CHRISTIAN ESOTERIC MAGAZINE





IN REMEMBRANCE—EASTER 1999

I do not lightly put aside, dear Lord,
The agony You suffered on the Tree—
Your side slashed open by a Roman sword,
Your manhood ravaged by indignity.
One with Elohim, Thou, the pristine Word,
Whose echoes built the mighty universe,
By whose great love the first amoeba stirred—
You hang there while the people jeer and curse.

With this remembrance heavy on my mind
I watch a miracle take place at Spring:
The Cross is jonquils bending in the wind,
The Nails have turned to violets blossoming.
Thus crucifixion I am yielded to,
So I be resurrected, Lord, with You.

—Muriel Thurston

Rays from the Rose Cross

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This Issue...

Feature

Barnfloor and Winepress...Gerard Manley Hopkins.....2

Editorial

The Cross of Life3

Mystic Light

Indian Yoga in Relation to the Christian Rosicrucian Path...Valentin Tomberg...4

The Song of Prayer...Foundation for Inner Peace.....10

A Creed for Our Time...Adam Bittleston.....16

The Shekinah Glory and the Divine Feminine...Ann Barkhurst.....18

From Max Heindel's Writings

The Esoteric Meaning of Easter.....23

Readers' Questions

The Purpose of Physical Existence24

Dangerous Pests25

Western Wisdom Bible Study

The Sacrament of Marriage...Max Heindel.....26

Astrology

Stars Over NATO...A Probationer.....29

Stars Over Russia...Dr. Paul Freiwirth.....31

Religion and Art

God's Images...James Dickey and Marvin Hayes.....33

Religion and the Public Realm

A Christian Women's Declaration...Collective Authorship.....40

News Perspectives

A Look at Factory Farming.....46

Book Reviews

Literacy in the Information Age—A Review of two Books...Mado Spiegler49

Nutrition and Health

Mayest Thou Prosper in Health...Leon Patrick, D.O., M.D.53

Healing

Mental Surgery58

For Children

Meek and Mild...Manfred Kyber59

Miscellaneous

In Remembrance (Poem)...Muriel Thurston.....Inside front cover

The Mystic's Prayer (Poem)...William Sharp15

Green Diamond (Poem)...Irene Stanley28

Spring Sacrament (Poem)..Harold E. Goad57

The Lamb (Poem)..William Blake60

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

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Barnfloor and Winepress

Thou who on Sin's wages starvest,
Behold we have the joy of Harvest:
For us was gathered the First-fruits,
For us was lifted from the roots,
Sheaved in cruel bands, bruised sore,
Scourged upon the threshing floor,
Where the upper millstone roofed His Head,
At morn we found the Heavenly Bread;
And on a thousand altars laid,
Christ our Sacrifice is made.

Thou, whose dry plot for moisture gapes,
We shout with them that tread the grapes
For us the Vine was fenced with thorn,
Five ways the precious branches torn.
Terrible fruit was on the tree
In the acre of Gethsemane:
For us by Calvary's distress
The wine was rackèd from the press;
Now, in our altar-vessels stored,
Lo, the sweet vintage of the Lord!

In Joseph's garden they threw by
The riven Vine, leafless, lifeless, dry:
On Easter morn the Tree was forth,
In forty days reached Heaven from earth,
Soon the whole world is overspread:
Ye weary, come into the shade.

The field where He hath planted us
Shall shake her fruit as Libanus,
When He has sheaved us in His sheaf,
When He has made us bear His leaf.
We scarcely call that banquet food,
But even our Saviour's and our blood,
We are so grafted on His wood.

—Gerard Manley Hopkins



Oil on wood panel, 139 x 96 cm, Marco da Siena (1521-1582), Picture Gallery, Vatican, Rome

The Mystical Press and Christ in Glory

The Cross of Life

ACCORDING TO an ancient legend, Adam took with him three cuttings from the tree of life when he was forced to leave Paradise, and Seth, his son, planted these three cuttings and they grew. One of them was later used to make the staff of Aaron, wherewith he performed miracles before Pharaoh. The second cutting was taken to Solomon's temple with the intention of making it a pillar, or fitting it in somewhere. But no place could be found for it, so it was used as a bridge across the brook which was outside the temple. The third of the cuttings was used for the cross of Christ, and upon it he suffered for our sakes and was finally liberated, drawing into the earth and becoming the planetary spirit of our globe, in which he is now groaning and travailing until the day of liberation.

There is great significance in this ancient legend. The first cutting represents the spiritual power wielded by the Divine Hierarchies in the days when mankind was in its infancy—power, then, wielded for our benefit by others.

The second cutting was to be used in Solomon's temple. No one could appreciate it, except the Queen of Sheba. No place could be found for it, for Solomon's temple is the consummation of the arts and crafts, and in a material civilization nothing spiritual is appreciated. The sons of Cain are working out their salvation along material lines, and therefore they have no use for spiritual powers. So "it was used as a bridge across the brook." There are souls, the real, true masons, who are able to make use of that bridge, which leads from the visible to the invisible. They know how to cross that bridge to return to the Garden of Eden, to Paradise.

It was the third cutting from the tree of life which



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

I Am the Life

formed the cross of Christ. By climbing that cross, He gained liberation from this physical existence, and entered into the higher spheres. Likewise, we also, when we take up our cross and follow him, shall develop our soul power and enter a larger sphere of usefulness in the invisible world.

May we all so hourly strive that one day not far distant we shall climb our own cross and from this attain the glorious liberation, the Resurrection of life, of which the Christ was and is the first fruits for every believing soul. This is the real, the true Easter message, and every one of us should realize that we are Christ's in the making, and that when the Christ is really and truly born within, that Christ will show us the way to the cross, where we may attain and advance from the tree of knowledge, which brought death, to the tree of Life in the vital body, which brings immortality. □

—Max Heindel

Indian Yoga in Relation to the Christian Rosicrucian Path

WE TRIED YESTERDAY* to place before us the ideal, the “goal,” of meditative work. Here the essential thing is to achieve through this work an equilibrium

between spirit, soul, and body in such a way that the spirit inclines downward, the soul is extended, and the body is raised to the dignity of the soul. By this means the three members of the human being, each according to its own nature, begin to speak and work together—so that a kind of alliance comes into being between them, while at the same time each follows its own inner nature. The result is inner harmony, which means true happiness for the human being.

This bringing of the three members of the human being into harmony is exactly what the term *Goetheanism* may be said to designate. When we consider Goethe’s [eighteenth century polymath] significance, it is actually not at all a matter of what he created in the way of a world outlook, nor what he created in the artistic realm, nor the works he achieved in the field of science; instead, what is especially significant about Goethe is that through him a quite definite sort of striving was placed before humankind, a striving



Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, 1749-1832, “is undoubtedly one of the most universally accomplished men in history,” of whom Napoleon said: *Voilà un homme!* (“There is a man!”), and Max Heindel calls an initiate. *Goethe characterizes the principle underlying all life (and the essence of Christian evolution) as “dying and becoming.”*

which to a certain degree also bore fruit. Goethe exemplified the realization of a relationship between body, soul, and spirit in such a way that each of these three members, out of its own freedom, could create in harmony with the Divine.

Goethe’s own words characterize his relationship to the Trinity: “As a man of science, I cannot be any other than a pantheist; as an artist, it is impossible for me to be other than a polytheist; as for being human—that is also taken care of.” That is to say, Goethe had no system or dogma before his inner eye. What Goethe had was a threefold inner attitude towards existence. He was *wholly* a scientist and had thus to see in the whole of nature the revelation of the Deity. He was *wholly* an artist and had to recognize the individual qualities of the Divine. And he was *wholly* human—this comes to expression in his novel *Wilhelm Meister*. Although not directly mentioned, the third element in his spiritual makeup was the ideal of Christ.

We can say, then, that in Goethe we are presented not with a teaching about the Trinity, but with a trinitarian attitude of the soul. Goethe was threefold in his entire being, and each of these three sides of his being led him to a definite inner comprehension of, and meeting with, the Divine. At the same time one can say that if, on the one hand, Goethe’s striving bore fruit in all three of these directions, on the other hand there was also a great deal that was lacking. We cannot speak of Goethe as a perfect representative of humanity. And yet we can speak of him as one who clearly, and to a quite high

Bayer Staats Gemäldesammlung

**This is the third of seven lectures delivered by Valentin Tomberg in Rotterdam in 1938, available under the title Inner Development, published by the Anthroposophic Press, Hudson, NY 12534. It is used here with permission of the publisher.*

The appearance of this and other articles in the Rays is not to be construed as representing, in every particular, the esoteric teachings given to Max Heindel by the Elder Brothers and promulgated through the Rosicrucian Fellowship.

degree, strove toward the ideal of a harmonious human being, and even partially realized that ideal. We have in Goethe, therefore, a striving after a high ideal within a person still burdened with a number of imperfections.

If, however, we turn aside from Goethe and direct our attention to the East, particularly to India, we find human beings who are perfect from the everyday point of view; at least, they are regarded and revered as perfect. At the present moment [1938], Meher Baba lives there. He is called "his divine Majesty" and is much revered. This is because his pupils—and there are a large number of them—are convinced that they have before them a perfect human being. In the East, in India, Meher Baba is regarded as being the epitome of perfection in terms of human development—which is not the case with Goethe, who is much honored, but more honored than understood. Goethe is revered, not because of his perfections, but rather from other points of view, which we will speak of later. For now we will direct our attention to the remarkable fact that there are perfect individuals in India, individuals at least regarded and revered as being perfect. This state of highest perfection, the Mahatma state, which is attained in India by single personalities, is reached by the path of Yoga.

Let us attempt to draw a picture of the essence of Indian Yoga. It is fundamental to Indian Yoga that a force called the "Fire of the Serpent" or the "Fire of Kundalini" slumbers in the human subconscious. This slumbering force is to be awakened. If awakened, it is channeled upward into consciousness and superconsciousness, thereby creating a current that, rising out of the region of the abdomen, ascends as far as the top of the skull, whence it escapes into the outer world. This is a condition of ecstasy in which the soul rises to the greatest heights of the Divine and becomes a Mahatma. The process can be schematically represented (see Figure 1). Imagine the figure of a human being. If the slumbering power of fire (a) would be awakened, it would ascend in serpentine movements and then leave the body. It is what the Indians designate as the thousand-petalled lotus flower, the crown center of the head, that is here (b) brought into movement, producing a mul-

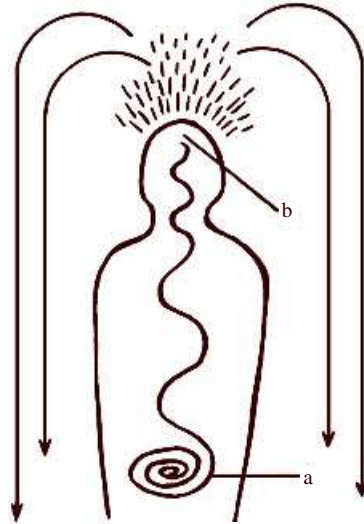


Figure 1

titude of upward-flowing streams leaving the body. From this the experiences result that belong to Indian occultism.

But in fact what really happens later is as follows. The higher the expelled soul life ascends upward, the lower it falls later on—like rain—into the sphere of the Ahrimanic.* The physical, natural phenomenon of rain has this process as its spiritual archetype. If an individual ascends, like a cloud, to dwell in the heights, then there occurs after a certain time a fall into the region of Ahriman. Thus Ahriman captures the Luciferic. That is karma. But the impulse lying hidden in this Yoga is not so simple that one can merely say: human beings wish only to be freed from life's vale of tears. We do wish it, but this is not the essential thing. Let us try to understand what inner motives really lie behind the pursuit of Yoga.

When in the life after death one has passed through the cosmic midnight hour, the midpoint in the soul's path after death, then one stands before the possibility of a definite temptation. One says to oneself: "I live in the spiritual, spiritual light surrounds me. It would be possible for me to incorporate into this spiritual light everything that I bear within myself, to unite with it so that everything in me that is imperfect would be transformed into perfection." This is the Luciferic temptation. It means inwardly to break away from, and refuse, the whole further development of *humanity*....The point is that a temptation can be so great that a human soul cannot withstand it. Such a temptation is therefore concealed by the gods, but nevertheless it is effectively present in the world. The element of temptation here does not consist in one's being offered the possibility of, say, dominion, or of realizing evil intentions, or the temptation of egoism in the worldly sense; no, the possibility offered is that of remaining pure and holy in the spiritual world. But in that case what is imperfect—and yet, as potential perfection, is still present in human nature—will not be developed, even if what is already developed in human nature were to remain forever in the light of purity and holiness. The temptation, then, is to renounce the great ideal of the future. In return, one can attain to a high degree of beauty and light in one's being, insofar as this is now developed.

Thus every human soul stands at one time before the choice of becoming wonderfully holy or else at some

*All that prompts humanity to believe that material creation is the only reality ultimately derives from the influence of Ahriman. This spirit has a contracting, rigidifying effect on the vital body and promotes cold, abstract, earth-bound logic.

time in the future—by working through many, many imperfections—of attaining a far-off ideal, wherein all undeveloped faculties implanted in human nature by the gods will come to fruition.

Rudolf Steiner speaks of the “temple” of humanity’s future as the image of the ideal human being. In the state after death, the soul sees this “temple” and is so inspired by the temple’s light that it enthusiastically makes decisions that lead it to return to Earth—in order to attain perfection in a far distant future.

And if a few persons of depth admire Goethe, they do not admire in him the ideal human being, since he is not that at all; rather, they admire the inner power of his striving after the realization of the gods’ ideal, his striving towards the temple of which Rudolf Steiner speaks—the ideal of a future humanity whose realization has to occur through the transformation of our many imperfections. On the other hand, in India perfect holiness is admired, and behind this lies a striving that would look upon the present state of humanity as its final state and to renounce all further development of humankind.

Humanity—not human beings as they are, but as they are to become—is the object of the religion of the gods. They have intended a lofty future for humanity. This temple is their great hope, great faith, and great love. The realization of this temple of the ideal human being is the religion of the gods.

Let us now try to understand what kind of temple this is. How can we understand the construction of this temple, which is the archetype of all temples on Earth? In our attempt to understand it, we shall begin from above—that is to say, in trivial language, we shall begin with the roof or dome. The highest idea that human beings at present have is the idea of the Divine Trinity. This has to do not only with the idea of the unity of the three in one, but of three inwardly distinct fundamental feelings. In the case of human beings this can be a matter of three different regions of activity. We should not rest content with having three concepts in a unity; rather we ought to be able to bring three sorts of *activity* into relation with the triune divinity in our lives. This is how it is on Earth.

In the future it will one day be different. Indeed, on Jupiter, humanity will have realized the *trinity* as far as the will; that is to say, human beings themselves will be a trinity. Thinking, feeling, and willing will be separate, but shaped into unity by the I. Then, on the future Venus, there will not be a trinity, but rather a *duality*, for the Holy Spirit will be *within* us. We will look only to the Father and the Son. Finally, on Vulcan, we will be at one with the Son. Christ will be in us. We will look up to the

Father God only. The future is as follows: if today we have a trinity as our ideal, which to a certain degree will be realized (this is the Manas [Human Spirit] conscious-

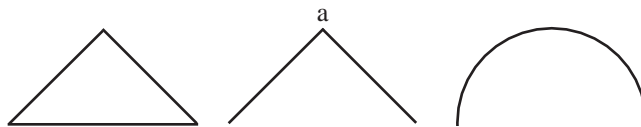


Figure 2

ness), then on Venus there will be a duality, and on Vulcan there will be a unity. That is to say, this angle of differentiation, the angle (a) (see Figure 2) will disappear; the vault of Heaven will be filled solely with the Father God. This consciousness of standing only before the Father God, who is the highest ideal in the human being, will be the upper element of the human temple of the future.

Now, the temple roof is supported by seven pillars. These are the paths humanity will have to tread in order to raise itself to this unified consciousness of God. And these paths are in fact nothing other than the stages of the path which Christ Jesus trod on Earth; they are the seven stages of the Passion. In my *Anthroposophical Studies of the New Testament*, I tried to depict the seven stages of the Passion as stages of the esoteric Christian spiritual life.

Today, we shall try to consider these stages from the cosmic perspective—for the whole world is the macrocosmic temple which represents the archetype of the microcosmic temple of future humanity....As we now have the task of knowing the ideal of the future human being, the microcosmic temple, let us consider the macrocosm and try to understand the temple of the future from this perspective.

The macrocosm, within which we live, began with the old Saturn condition. What, in essence, was this? Its basis was the streaming forth of the will of the Thrones. And this will, which had a sublime origin, streamed downward, forming the lower beings of this world. The beginning of humanity was created. And what was the essential nature of this whole event?...This streaming forth of the will of the Thrones was the macrocosmic deed of the washing of the feet. Old Saturn is the place of the washing of the feet. This is expressed in the sign for Saturn—♄. Above we have the cross, which represents self-sacrificial union with the element of passive receptivity, the moon.

If we look next to the old Sun, which followed old Saturn, we find that the Spirits of Wisdom sent forth from themselves the substance of wisdom. This produced the beginning of the life body and of life. What does *wisdom* mean? What does the word really express?



Lithograph by Lehman & Bolton, 1888, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division

The Scourging

“The ability to be centered in oneself—to stand, out of the power of one’s own inner being, in spite of all assaults from without—this is the power that is developed through scourging.”

We must deepen our understanding of this word. Wisdom is not a condition of being open to what is *outside* us. Wisdom is the power that streams out from the *interior* of a being in many directions. It is what dwells, actively present, in the interior of the being itself, comprehending its surroundings not in a one-sided way, but *many-sidedly*.

If we wish to represent this schematically, we draw a point—for wisdom is contained within the human being. Out of the point, wisdom issues forth in many-sided form. Thus we have the sign of the Sun—☉. This is the expression of wisdom—which is inner and, at the same time, comprises everything. It radiates forth equally in all directions—it is universal. The life force is in fact this striving of the inner being outward toward universality, And the struggle that wisdom, as well as life, must endure in existence consists precisely in the fact that a power must be developed out of wisdom that can put up resistance to one-sidedness, to impact from without, from right and from left. For wisdom is the condition of a being that is capable of relying upon itself, of not needing any point of support, whether from right or from left, of relying upon nothing save its own inner strength of

being, and of not being drawn into one-sidedness. This is the power that lives in the principle of wisdom. It was shown in the Gospels in deeply moving portrayal when Christ Jesus was scourged by his fellow human beings. The ability to be centered in oneself—to stand, out of the power of one’s own inner being, in spite of all assaults from without—this is the power that is developed through scourging. What constituted the essential heart of the old Sun, what caused the planet to shine forth, was the same power that manifests and endures in the scourging. The planet of the scourging was the old Sun.

And if we now move on to the old Moon, we find the astral element being poured out into existence through the Spirits of Movement. At the same time, this astral element was taken hold of by Lucifer, and a battle then took place in the heavens. *Human karma* began on the Earth, but *cosmic karma* began on the old Moon. We can also put it this way: If the human fall into sin took place on *Earth*, then the cosmic fall into sin took place on the *old Moon*. And as a guardian was placed on Earth to guard the threshold, so also—when the spirits fell—a guardian was placed on the old Moon, one who took



Etching, Marvin Hayes, courtesy Oxmoor House

The Crowning with Thorns

“The power that reveals itself in being crowned with thorns is that of being obliged to judge while experiencing an inward pity that must, however, be constantly controlled and overcome.”

karma onto himself. This guardian was the realizer of *spiritual karma*. By remaining true to themselves, spirits received the dignity of the guardian of the divine intentions. The dignity of the guardian is what is expressed by the crown of thorns. The crown of thorns symbolizes a dignity that indeed corresponds to a state of being crowned, but at the same time it wounds the one who is crowned. For the power that the guardian, the represen-



Oil on Canvas, 1565. Titian (Vecellio di Gregorio Tiziano). Prado Museum, Madrid, Spain

Christ and the Cyrenian

By taking the Cross borne by Christ Jesus (Matthew 27:32; Mark 15:21), Simon of Cyrene established the prototype for a stage of Christian initiation.

tative of karmic necessity, must unfold from within is the power of *inexorableness*. It is the principle of taking a moral stand so that the Truth and the Law will be fulfilled. Pity must be overcome by the being who assumes the guardian's mission. And so the spiritual beings who had to represent the karma of the worlds needed, on the one hand, to look upon the Luciferic being with the greatest pity, and on the other hand they had to repeatedly overcome this pity in order to stand unshakably on the *cosmic threshold*. The power that reveals itself in being crowned with thorns is that of being obliged to judge while experiencing an inward pity that must, however, be constantly controlled and overcome. Thus this crown pricks the wearer himself. And that is what happened in the cosmos during the time of the old Moon. It is the special drama of the old Moon that during this time the crown of thorns came into being in the cosmos.

If we now pass on further to the development of the Earth, we find earthly existence represented by the cross. The carrying of the cross is the fundamental note, the fundamental motif, of earthly existence, and every being connected with the Earth has to experience it in some form or other. During the development of the Earth, humanity must, on the whole, reach the stage of the carrying of the cross; again and again individuals will have to take the cross upon themselves and learn to

bear it through the whole cycle, the whole circle, of their experiences. The symbol of the Earth itself expresses this—⊕. The symbol of the circle bearing the cross is the bringing to fulfillment of the carrying of the cross.

During the future Jupiter existence, humanity will have to undergo the experience of the crucifixion. At this stage, humanity will go through those stages of immobility that were originally lived through and suffered by Christ Jesus himself. Human destiny will then essentially consist in the fact that humanity will be bound to the karma of the planet Jupiter and will have to develop a new power out of this middle point, where the lines of the cross intersect each other—a power that will mean the redemption of the Luciferic. And during Jupiter existence the words will cosmically resound that resounded on Golgotha through the good thief. And these words will find the same answer that Christ gave: “Verily I say unto thee, today wilt thou be in

Paradise with me.” This will happen for Lucifer during Jupiter existence, as humanity itself goes through the crucifixion and loosens the bonds holding Lucifer to the karma of humanity.

And on the future Venus, humanity will have to experience the entombment. This will consist in the fact that the whole of karma, all the realms of nature that are lower than humanity, will be taken up by human beings into themselves, not in the sense of a devouring, but in the sense of a projecting of themselves into an alien (unknown) destiny in the hope that a cosmic miracle will accompany this sacrifice and that a resurrection of all that is human, which has been laid in the grave, will follow upon this entombment.

This resurrection of all that is human will be experienced by the whole of humankind during the future Vulcan existence. Then humanity will have created and formed the resurrection body which appeared to the Disciples after the death of Christ. This resurrection body will then be the body that human beings will manifest during the seventh stage of planetary evolution.

These seven stages then are the seven pillars of the temple of humanity, the temple of the ideal human being. And to these pillars lead steps that actually represent the states of consciousness in which the seven fundamental tones of existence can be experienced. For existence is a sympho-



Watercolor. J. James Tissot (1833-1902). Brooklyn Museum of Art

The Soul of the Good Thief

Having shown contrition for his misdeeds, the good thief is redeemed. The unrepentant thief still has this opportunity.

ny consisting of these seven fundamental, or archetypal, tones. They are the tones of the washing of the feet, the scourging, the crowning with thorns, the carrying of the cross, the crucifixion, the entombment, and the resurrection. These are the pillars upon which divine unity rests and to which four states of consciousness lead—objective consciousness, imagination, inspiration, and intuition.* We can experience all seven pillars (the washing of the feet, the scourging, and so forth) in all four realms of these states of consciousness.

Thus we have the picture, which could be diagrammatically represented in this manner (see Figure 3). At

***PERIODS AND CORRESPONDING CONSCIOUSNESS:**

Earth.....Waking, objective consciousness

Jupiter.....Imagination or Self-conscious picture consciousness

Venus.....Inspiration or objective, Self-conscious, creative consciousness

Vulcan.....Intuition or highest spiritual consciousness

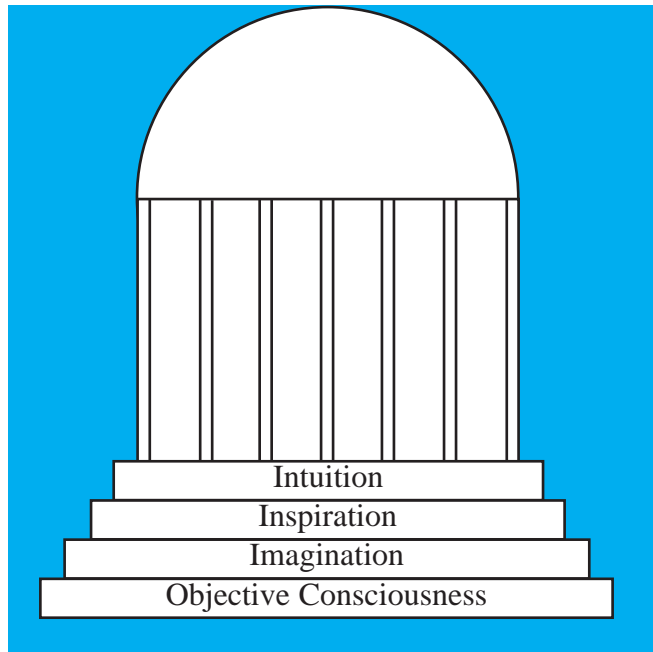


Figure 3

the top, we have the human being's spiritual consciousness, which becomes a unity. In the spiritual world we will no longer have *trinity*, but will instead have *unity*. Below this we can imagine seven columns, and these seven columns will rest on four steps leading to the temple. This is the simplest diagram possible, but it represents the fundamental idea of the Temple of the Ideal Human: the ideal state of the human spirit, soul, and body.

This ideal is disregarded by those who follow the impulse that comes to expression in present-day Yoga. For Yoga has the aim of turning all that is not yet perfected in the human being into head—of transfiguring all that is not yet perfected in the same way as the head is transfigured—and then of allowing this head to soar away on angelic wings. One who frees oneself in this way would thus be no representative of the resurrection: such a person would not have experienced resurrection, but rather deathlessness.

Thus there stand before us two possibilities. One possibility is that of deathlessness and holiness in the present—a holiness that consists in everything undeveloped in a human being becoming head. The other possibility is the ideal of going through the resurrection. It is the ideal of the future, resurrected human being; that is, the ideal image of humanity, of the temple—an ideal that every soul sees after death. Through this vision the soul is fired with enthusiasm to return to Earth to learn the washing of the feet, to experience the power of the scourging, to experience the crowning with thorns; in order, scourged, to carry the cross, to be crucified and entombed and in the end to rise again. □

The Song of Prayer

P RAYER IS THE GREATEST gift with which God blessed His Son at his creation. It was then what it is to become: the single voice Creator and creation share; the song the Son sings to the Father, Who returns the thanks it offers Him unto the Son. Endless the harmony, and endless, too, the joyous concord of the love they give forever to each other. And in this, creation is extended. God gives thanks to His extension in His Son. His Son gives thanks for his creation, in the song of his creating in his Father's Name. The love they share is what all prayer will be throughout eternity, when time is done. For such it was before time seemed to be.

To you who are in time a little while, prayer takes the form that best will suit your need. You have but one. What God created one must recognize its oneness, and rejoice that what illusions seemed to separate is one forever in the Mind of God. Prayer now must be the means by which God's Son leaves separate goals and separate interests and turns in holy gladness to the truth of union in his Father and himself.

Lay down your dreams, you holy Son of God, and rising up as God created you, dispense with idols and remember Him. Prayer will sustain you now, and bless you as you lift your heart to Him in rising song that reaches higher and then higher still, until both high and low have disappeared.

In this and the two succeeding issues of the Rays, we reprint with permission from the Foundation for Inner Peace the complete text of The Song of Prayer: Prayer, Forgiveness, Healing, which is "an extension of the principles of A Course in Miracles," available from FFIP, P.O. Box 635, Tiburon CA 94920



Oil on canvas (no date), Sayda Afonina

St. Seraphim Praying by a Brook

Russian hesychasts literally practiced St. Paul's injunction, "Pray without ceasing." The numinous St. Serafim of Sarov is shown engaged in a thousand-day vigil in the forest.

Faith in your goal will grow and hold you up as you ascend the shining stairway to the lawns of Heaven and the gate of peace. For this is prayer, and here salvation is. This is the way. It is God's gift to you.

True Prayer

Prayer is a way offered by the Holy Spirit to reach God. It is not merely a question or an entreaty. It cannot succeed until you realize that it asks for nothing. How else could it serve its purpose? It is impossible to pray for idols and hope to

reach God. True prayer must avoid the pitfall of asking to entreat. Ask, rather, to receive what is already given; to accept what is already there.

You have been told to ask the Holy Spirit for the answer to any specific problem, and that you will receive a specific answer if such is your need. You have also been told that there is only one problem and one answer. In prayer this is not contradictory. There are decisions to make here, and they must be made whether they be illusions or not. You cannot be asked to accept answers which are beyond the level of need that you can recognize. Therefore, it is not the form of the question that matters, nor how it is asked. The form of the answer, if given by God, will suit your need as you see it. This is merely an echo of the reply of His Voice. The real sound is always a song of thanksgiving and of love.

holiness entreat, being fully entitled to everything love has to offer? And it is to Love you go in prayer. Prayer is an offering; a giving up of yourself to be at one with Love. There is nothing to ask because there is nothing left to want. That nothingness becomes the altar of God. It disappears in Him.

This is not a level of prayer that everyone can attain as yet. Those who have not reached it still need your help in prayer because their asking is not yet based upon acceptance. Help in prayer does not mean that another mediates between you and God. But it does mean that another stands beside you and helps to raise you up to Him. One who has realized the goodness of God prays without fear. And one who prays without fear cannot but reach Him. He can therefore also reach His Son, wherever he may be and whatever form he may seem to take.

In prayer you overlook your specific needs as you see them, and let them go into God's hands. There they become your gifts to Him, for they tell Him that you would have no gods before Him; no Love but His.

You cannot, then, ask for the echo. It is the song that is the gift. Along with it come the overtones, the harmonics, the echoes, but these are secondary. In true prayer you hear only the song. All the rest is merely added. You have sought first the Kingdom of Heaven, and all else has indeed been given you.

The secret of true prayer is to forget the things you think you need. To ask for the specific is much the same as to look on sin and then forgive it. Also in the same way, in prayer you overlook your specific needs as you see them, and let them go into God's hands. There they become your gifts to Him, for they tell Him that you would have no gods before Him; no Love but His. What could His answer be but your remembrance of Him? Can this be traded for a bit of trifling advice about a problem of an instant's duration? God answers only for eternity. But still, all little answers are contained in this.

Prayer is a stepping aside; a letting go, a quiet time of listening and loving. It should not be confused with supplication of any kind, because it is a way of remembering your holiness. Why should

Praying to Christ in anyone is true prayer because it is a gift of thanks to His Father. To ask that Christ be but Himself is not an entreaty. It is a song of thanksgiving for what you are. Herein lies the power of prayer. It asks nothing and receives everything. This prayer can be shared because it receives for everyone. To pray with one who knows that this is true is to be answered. Perhaps the specific form of resolution for a specific problem will occur to either of you; it does not matter which. Perhaps it will reach both, if you are genuinely attuned to one another. It will come because you have realized that Christ is in both of you. That is its only truth.

The Ladder of Prayer

Prayer has no beginning and no end. It is a part of life. But it does change in form and grow with learning until it reaches its formless state and fuses into total communication with God. In its asking form it need not, and often does not, make appeal to God, or even involve belief in Him. At these levels prayer is merely wanting, out of a sense of scarcity and lack.

These forms of prayer, or asking-out-of-need, always involve feelings of weakness and inadequacy, and could never be made by a Son of God who knows Who he is. No one, then, who is sure of his Identity could pray in these forms. Yet it is also true that no one who is uncertain of his Identity can avoid praying in this way. And prayer is as continual as life. Everyone prays without ceasing. Ask and you have received, for you have established what it is you want.

It is also possible to reach a higher form of asking-out-of-need, for in this world prayer is reparative, and so it must entail levels of learning. Here, the asking may be addressed to God in honest belief, though not yet with understanding. A vague and usually unstable sense of identification has generally been reached, but tends to be blurred by a

An enemy is the symbol of an imprisoned Christ. And who could He be except yourself? The prayer for enemies thus becomes a prayer for your own freedom. Now it is no longer a contradiction in terms. It has become a statement of the unity of Christ and a recognition of His sinlessness. And now it has become holy, for it acknowledges the Son of God as he was created.

Let it never be forgotten that prayer at any level is always for yourself. If you unite with anyone in prayer, you make him part of you. The enemy is you, as is the Christ. Before it can become holy, then, prayer becomes a choice. You do not choose for another. You can but choose for yourself. Pray truly for your enemies, for herein lies your own salvation. Forgive them for your sins, and you will be forgiven indeed.

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sand a recognition of His sinlessness.***

deep-rooted sense of sin. It is possible at this level to continue to ask for things of this world in various forms, and it is also possible to ask for gifts such as honesty or goodness, and particularly for forgiveness for the many sources of guilt that inevitably underlie any prayer of need. Without guilt there is no scarcity. The sinless have no needs.

At this level also comes that curious contradiction in terms known as "praying for one's enemies." The contradiction lies not in the actual words, but rather in the way in which they are usually interpreted. While you believe you have enemies, you have limited prayer to the laws of this world, and have also limited your ability to receive and to accept to the same narrow margins. And yet, if you have enemies you have need of prayer, and great need, too. What does the phrase really mean? Pray for yourself, that you may not seek to imprison Christ and thereby lose the recognition of your own Identity. Be traitor to no one, or you will be treacherous to yourself.

Prayer is a ladder reaching up to Heaven. At the top there is a transformation much like your own, for prayer is part of you. The things of earth are left behind, all unremembered. There is no asking, for there is no lack. Identity in Christ is fully recognized as set forever, beyond all change and incorruptible. The light no longer flickers, and will never go out. Now, without needs of any kind, and clad forever in the pure sinlessness that is the gift of God to you, His Son, prayer can again become what it was meant to be. For now it rises as a song of thanks to your Creator, sung without words, or thoughts, or vain desires, unneedful now of anything at all. So it extends, as it was meant to do. And for this giving God Himself gives thanks.

God is the goal of every prayer, giving it timelessness instead of end. Nor has it a beginning, because the goal has never changed. Prayer in its earlier forms is an illusion, because there is no need for a ladder to reach what one has never left. Yet prayer is part of forgiveness as long as for-

givenness, itself an illusion, remains unattained. Prayer is tied up with learning until the goal of learning has been reached. And then all things will be transformed together and returned unblemished into the Mind of God. Being beyond learning, this state cannot be described. The stages necessary to its attainment, however, need to be understood, if peace is to be restored to God's Son, who lives now with the illusion of death and the fear of God.

Praying for Others

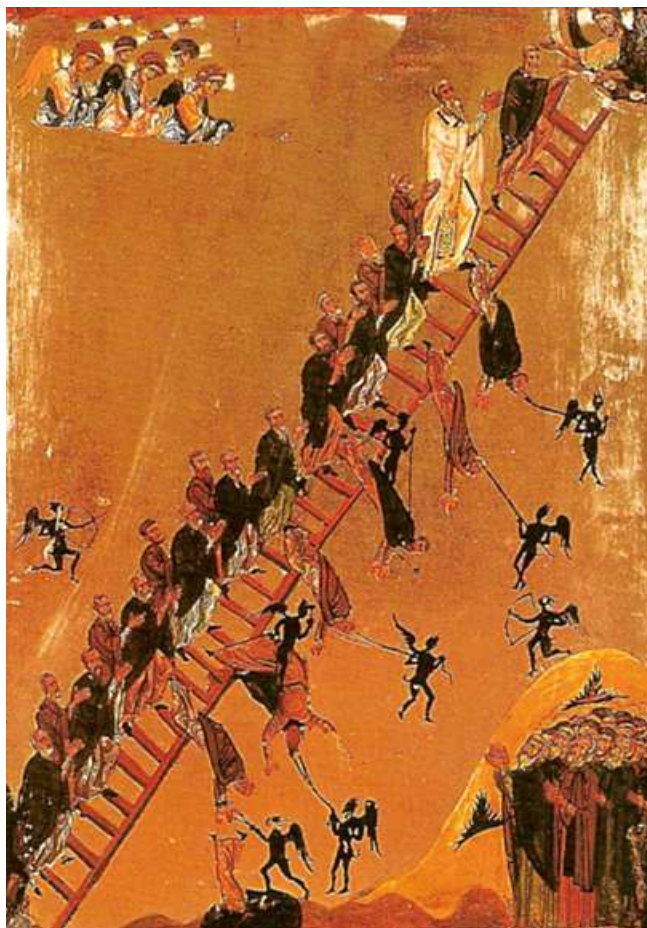
We said that prayer is always for yourself, and this is so. Why, then, should you pray for others at all? And if you should, how should you do it? Praying for others, if rightly understood, becomes a means for lifting your projections of guilt from your brother, and enabling you to recognize it is not he who is hurting you. The poisonous thought that he is your enemy, your evil counterpart, your nemesis, must be relinquished before you can be saved from guilt. For this the means is prayer, of rising power and with ascending goals, until it reaches even up to God.

The earlier forms of prayer, at the bottom of the ladder, will not be free from envy and malice. They call for vengeance, not for love. Nor do they come from one who understands that they are calls for death, made out of fear by those who cherish guilt. They call upon a vengeful god, and it is he who seems to answer them. Hell cannot be asked for another, and then escaped by him who asks for it. Only those who are in hell can ask for hell. Those who have been forgiven, and who accepted their forgiveness, could never make a prayer like that.

At these levels, then, the learning goal must be to recognize that prayer will bring an answer only in the form in which the prayer was made. This is enough. From here it will be an easy step to the next levels. The next ascent begins with this:

“What I have asked for for my brother is not what I would have. Thus have I made of him my enemy.”

It is apparent that this step cannot be reached by anyone who sees no value or advantage to himself in setting others free. This may be long delayed, because it may seem to be dangerous instead of merciful. To the guilty there seems indeed to be a



Icon, twelfth century, Monastery of St. Katherine, Mount Sinai

The Ladder of Divine Ascent

Based on a treatise of St. John Climacus, the Christian life is conceived as a ladder with thirty rungs, each corresponding to a virtue. Ascent to complete Christ-consciousness is impeded by the temptations of vices, personified by tiny devils.

real advantage in having enemies, and this imagined gain must go, if enemies are to be set free. Guilt must be given up, and not concealed. Nor can this be done without some pain, and a glimpse of the merciful nature of this step may for some time be followed by a deep retreat into fear. For fear's defenses are fearful in themselves, and when they are recognized they bring their fear with them. Yet what advantage has an illusion of escape ever brought a prisoner? His real escape from guilt can lie only in the recognition that the guilt has gone. And how can this be recognized as long as he hides it in another, and does not see it as his own? Fear of escape makes it difficult to welcome freedom, and to make a jailer of an enemy seems to be safety. How, then, can he be released without an insane fear for yourself? You have made of him your

salvation and your escape from guilt. Your investment in this escape is heavy, and your fear of letting it go is strong.

Stand still an instant, now, and think what you have done. Do not forget that it is you who did it, and who can therefore let it go. Hold out your hand. This enemy has come to bless you. Take his blessing, and feel how your heart is lifted and your fear released. Do not hold on to it, nor onto him. He is a Son of God, along with you. He is no jailer, but a messenger of Christ. Be this to him, that you may see him thus.

It is not easy to realize that prayers for things, for status, for human love, for external “gifts” of any kind, are always made to set up jailers and to hide from guilt. These things are used for goals that substitute for God, and therefore distort the purpose of prayer. The desire for them is the prayer. One need not ask explicitly. The goal of God is lost in the quest for lesser goals of any kind, and prayer becomes requests for enemies. The power of prayer can be quite clearly recognized even in this. No one who wants an enemy will fail to find one. But just as surely will he lose the only true goal that is given him. Think of the cost, and understand it well. All other goals are at the cost of God.

Praying with Others

Until the second level at least begins, one cannot share in prayer. For until that point, each one must ask for different things. But once the need to hold the other as an enemy has been questioned, and the reason for doing so has been recognized, if only for an instant, it becomes possible to join in prayer. Enemies do not share a goal. It is in this their enmity is kept. Their separate wishes are their arsenals; their fortresses in hate. The key to rising further still in prayer lies in this simple thought; this change of mind:

We go together, you and I.

Now it is possible to help in prayer, and so reach up yourself. This step begins the quicker ascent, but there are still many lessons to learn. The way is open, and hope is justified. Yet it is likely at first that what is asked for even by those who join in prayer is not the goal that prayer should truly seek.

Even together you may ask for things, and thus set up but an illusion of a goal you share. You may ask together for specifics and not realize that you are asking for effects without the cause. And this you cannot have. For no one can receive effects alone, asking a cause from which they do not come to offer them to him.

Even the joining, then, is not enough, if those who pray together do not ask, before all else, what is the Will of God. From this Cause only can the answer come in which are all specifics satisfied; all separate wishes unified in one. Prayer for specifics always asks to have the past repeated in some way. What was enjoyed before, or seemed to be; what was another's and he seemed to love—all these are but illusions from the past. The aim of prayer is to release the present from its chains of past illusions; to let it be a freely-chosen remedy from every choice that stood for a mistake. What prayer can offer now so far exceeds all that you asked before that it is pitiful to be content with less.

You have chosen a new-born chance each time you pray. And would you stifle and imprison it in ancient prisons, when the chance has come to free yourself from all of them at once? Do not restrict your asking. Prayer can bring the peace of God. What time-bound thing can give you more than this, in just the little space that lasts until it crumbles into dust?

The Ladder Ends

Prayer is a way to true humility. And here again it rises slowly up, and grows in strength and love and holiness. Let it but leave the ground where it begins to rise to God, and true humility will come at last to grace the mind that thought it was alone and stood against the world. Humility brings peace because it does not claim that you must rule the universe, nor judge all things as you would have them be. All little gods it gladly lays aside, not in resentment, but in honesty and recognition that they do not serve.

Illusions and humility have goals so far apart they cannot coexist, nor share a dwelling-place where they can meet. Where one has come the other disappears. The truly humble have no goal but God because they need no idols, and defense no longer serves a purpose. Enemies are useless

now, because humility does not oppose. It does not hide in shame because it is content with what it is, knowing creation is the Will of God. Its selflessness is Self, and this it sees in every meeting, where it gladly joins with every Son of God, whose purity it recognizes that it shares with him.

Now prayer is lifted from the world of things, of bodies, and of gods of every kind, and you can rest in holiness at last. Humility has come to teach you how to understand your glory as God's Son, and recognize the arrogance of sin. A dream has veiled the face of Christ from you. Now can you look upon His sinlessness. High has the ladder risen. You have come almost to Heaven. There is little more to learn before the journey is complete. Now can you say to everyone who comes to join in prayer with you: I cannot go without you, for you are a part of me. And so he is in truth. Now can you pray only for what you truly share with him. For you have understood he never left, and you, who seemed alone, are one with him.

The ladder ends with this, for learning is no

The Mystic's Prayer

Lay me to sleep in sheltering flame,
O Master of the Hidden Fire!
Wash pure my heart, and cleanse for me
My soul's desire.

In flame of sunrise bathe my mind,
O Master of the Hidden Fire,
That, when I wake, clear-eyed may be
My soul's desire.

—William Sharp

longer needed. Now you stand before the gate of Heaven, and your brother stands beside you there. The lawns are deep and still, for here the place appointed for the time when you should come has waited long for you. Here will time end forever. At this gate eternity itself will join with you. Prayer has become what it was meant to be, for you have recognized the Christ in you. (Continued) □

THE ROSICRUCIAN COSMO-CONCEPTION

By Max Heindel

This book gives a complete outline of the Western Wisdom Teachings as far as it may be made public at the present time. It contains a comprehensive outline of the evolutionary processes of man and the universe, correlating science with religion. The author received this Teaching personally from the Rosicrucian Brotherhood. It is their latest communication.

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MYSTIC LIGHT

A Creed for Our Time

*“Christ, through Whom men attain the re-animation of the dying earth existence, is to this divine Being as the Son, born in eternity.”**

AND THOSE WHO do not welcome you—when you leave that city, shake off the dust from your feet, as witness unto them.” What does this strange instruction mean, given to the Twelve when they were sent out to preach and to heal? Would the disciples have been taught to do something meaningless and fruitless—expressing, as it seems, only a petulant resolve to have nothing more to do with the inhospitable city?

In the Gospels the smallest details, if we are willing to follow them up carefully, lead us into the mysteries of the evolution of the earth and of man—and so it is here. If we ask what dust is, then we are confronted with the fate of the earth. When life and form depart, dust is left. Every kind of dust originates from something that once had structure and that has crumbled, or rubbed away, has frayed or dissolved or has been broken. Just as the physicists today



Oil on canvas, 1896-97, Pascal Adolph Jean Dagnan-Bouveret
Christ and the Disciples at Emmaus

describe entropy, the irreversible loss of complexity in the Universe, so in the language of ancient wisdom Dust stands for the ultimate crumbling away of the world, and in particular of man’s dwelling-place, the earth.

When the earth was young, all its processes were more vigorous, its structure bolder. The age of the earth is sometimes greatly over-estimated by geologists, because it is assumed that processes—the forming of deposits, for example—have always gone on at the same speed. But the earth when more alive was also more plastic, like the bones of a child.

Today, the earth is growing middle-aged. But for the Christian who begins to understand what Christ means for the earth, there is comfort. And this was the ‘witness’ of the disciples to those who would not hear them: if the Gospel were rejected, men would have nothing to set against the decay of the earth. Without Christ, man and the earth would be held captive in the process that leads to dust. With Christ it would be possible to achieve a life of the soul strong enough not to be swept away, along with the crumbling substances, into disintegration; and further, the beings and substances of earth themselves would find new life through Him, and His work in man.

In order to approach the Christ, we need to turn our hearts in some measure to the general destiny of man and earth—to lift ourselves a little out of the

The first ecumenical statement of Christian faith, formulated in Rome around 180 A.D., amplified and ratified about 390 A.D., is known as The Apostles’ Creed. This Creed has been reconceived in view of the spiritual needs and understanding of the present time and constitutes part of the Act of the Consecration of Man, the service of the Christian Community. Reflections on the second of the Creed’s twelve statements are reprinted here with permission of Floris Books. © 1962 Christian Community Press, now Floris Books, Edinburgh.

**Reference is to the “Being” introduced in the Creed’s first sentence: “An almighty Being of God, spiritual-physical, is the Foundation of existence, of the heavens and of the earth, Who goes before His creatures like a Father.”*

personal, which claims each one of us so tenaciously. In hospitals, or wherever men of different nations or races meet in a common purpose—at every frontier, whether between peoples or between life and death, Christ is especially near. Thus it is that in the Creed, the second sentence begins with the help offered by Christ, through which it becomes possible for the earth to receive new life, and only after this speaks of His cosmic being, His relationship with the Father. Through our thoughts alone we could arrive at something like the description of the Ground of the World given in the first sentence of the Creed; though we need Christian experience to fill the word “Father” with the right content. But for the second sentence we need a feeling heart concerned with the destiny of the earth that we tread with our feet, transform with our hands. Does it grow old as we grow old?

One of the great tasks of our time is that of finding the right aims and uses for the second half of human life. But though we do waste the qualities of later life, as in another way we waste the qualities of youth, the difficulty really lies deeper. Into the heart of man as he grows older the dying-process of the earth is reflected and he does not know what to do about it. But there is at work in him as well a second youth, which he has to learn to take hold of and use with confidence. The “second youth” of the earth began with Christ’s deed; i.e. His incarnation, death and resurrection.

We share in the consequences of this renewal of the earth to some extent without any conscious effort on our side. But as the Gospels indicate, for example in the parable of the talents, if we do not use what comes in this way as gift of grace, we shall lose it. And indeed the new Paradise brought to men by Christ has for the most part become a lost country, of which legend speaks and men dream, but which they no longer seek to find with the full waking mind.

For the mind of today, influenced by the great panorama of time spread out by geologists and prehistorians, it has become very difficult to believe that God revealed Himself at a particular moment of the recent phase within the whole cosmic process that we think of as human history.

But why have there to be decline and death in the world at all? Why are they to be found at work

among the Father’s creatures? Death and dying are always signs that something in the world is no longer united with its original purpose. Were God everywhere equally and completely manifest, there could be no death; but there could also be no freedom for His creatures. The purpose of all things would shine out with overwhelming clarity from the mind of God.

In order that freedom grow up within creation, the purposes of God are veiled. A great heritage is given over by the Father to the realm of creatures. But sooner or later, as with the Prodigal Son, the longing awakens for a return to the Father. Man, having treated his heritage wastefully, diverting it from its true purpose, becomes aware of Death, which is both the consequence of misuse and the means of return.

Must freedom then awaken only to die? The freedom of the creature would be empty if it were impossible to find while on earth the purposes of God. They are brought to man by Christ in freedom, so that the earthly self-consciousness may not awaken only to find itself dark and empty, but may be filled. We find the Christ also as the Redeemer of time, through whom the years are not just a slow running-down in a grey world but can become window after window to let in the glory of God. Christ Himself is a being from beyond Time. His birth from the Father is a timeless one, in which there is no forgetfulness; of His heritage nothing is wasted. And yet He is free, for He is one with the Father’s freedom.

Over these things theology has labored through the centuries. Today it is no longer so important to work out sharply defined concepts; we need a developing imaginative picture which can lead us into the realm of vision. And though in conceptual form, the words of the Creed do lead us in the direction of such a picture. In the second sentence we are led first to consider Christ’s share in the destiny of the Earth; and then, lifting up our minds from the time-process to the eternal, to think of His perfect relationship with the Father. Because this relationship is perfect, we know through Him much about the Father that could not otherwise be known. Christ works continually as the Revealer of the works of the Father; or in the words of St. John’s Gospel: “He who has seen the Father has seen me.” □

—Adam Bittleston

The Shekinah Glory and The Divine Feminine

IN THIS ARTICLE we will consider the mystical meaning of the Shekinah Glory. Hebrew seers understood that the human intellect and vision, being finite, could not see and know God, either as the Supreme Being or as the Solar Logos in its purest essence; for human reason goes no higher than the World of Abstract Thought, where the Ego functions. Yet they also knew that there is a spiritual perception, or intuition, as far above ordinary reason as that is above cunning; for that perception, or divine knowing, is the fruitage of what Rosicrucian mystics call the Life Spirit or Christ Within—Wisdom or Gnosis. (Greek mythology also tells us of Gnostos, who was the husband of Circe, and from whom one of the Sibyls was descended.) If we call this inward impression *intuition* we shall have perhaps the best approach, though that is but a feeble word to express its cosmic glories.

Now it is by this Mediator, the Christ within, the life spirit or love-wisdom principle, that the human being is able to sense the Presence of God, the One, in mystic communion. Even the humblest of mortals has this power, for it is an innate faculty of the Spirit or Godhead in man, an integral part of his essential Being. It manifests as the sense of unity—a truly universal sense—by which we love our neighbor as ourselves.

Thus, by meditation on the Christ within, we perceive, we actually sense, the Presence of God—but that Presence is invisible. It is a communion at the altar of the heart where Christ is High Priest after the Order of Melchizedek; for as demonstrated in the Western Wisdom Teachings, the messages of the Christ within are received first in the heart and afterward in the head.



Photograph, Belgrade National Museum

Fresco, Lesnovo, Yugoslavia, 14th century

The Ark of the Covenant

The Shekinah appears over the Ark in the Holy of Holies, where the Cherubim is here depicted. This angelic rank is also called the Lords of Wisdom, thus correlating them with Sophia revelations. In the ancient tabernacle, only the high priest was permitted to enter this most hallowed sanctum.

Therefore the mystic knows God in his heart before he can see any evidence of God either with physical or spiritual eyes. But the time comes when to his awakening perceptions the Presence of God becomes visible. Not as a person, nor as a thing, but as Light: God is Light! Wherever and whenever the mystic feels the Presence in his heart, Light appears. Light—a radiant, transcendent glory—the glory of Godhead, and in that Light the spiritual universe, the mystic rose, becomes visible to his enraptured vision.

The mystic, in adoration at his heart's altar, realizes his oneness with this spiritual universe and can commune at will with its glorious inhabitants. The *Cosmo-Conception* teaches that before Christ's advent, His spiritual power came to us by way of the Moon, or Jehovistic channel. That is, it came to us indirectly, by reflection from without, by way of the Jehovistic consciousness, the pooled experience of collective race consciousness. Initiation under Jehovah-God was not individual but racial. It was accomplished through the Initiate's union with the Spirit of his tribe, which in the case of the Israelites was the Archangel Michael. Even in the Mosaic period Initiation into the Solar or Christ Mysteries was still received by way of the mediating lunar power. Thus the Zohar states that Moses became the Light of the Moon by reason of his union with Shekinah.

The Shekinah Glory was the visible Presence of God, considered feminine in esoteric (not exoteric) Judaism. So was Moses said to have married Shekinah. In Phoenician theology the goddess was often called the Face, or manifestation, of the god, and the Hebrews speak of Shekinah in exactly the same way. This abstract term tends to supplant all older, more anthropomorphic names for the Holy Spirit. An apocryphal document quotes Jesus of Nazareth as referring to the Holy Spirit as "my Mother." And the Manicheans call the Mother of Christ "the virgin of Light."

This Glory of Shekinah, this Light which signals the Presence of God and in which the living universe is revealed, is always feminine to the ancient seer. She is the Eurydice of Orphism. She is the Queen of the Ocean of Light of Enoch. She is the Egyptian Isis. She is Ishtar of the Stars, the Bride, the Light, with whom the Unknowable is wed at the dawn of creation and from the joy of whose union the spiritual universe is born, alive and glowing as a Holy Child. God and Shekinah (and all things included) are one and indissoluble: "Behold, O Israel, the Lord our God is One." So also the universe, made after His image and in His likeness, is One, a spiritual Unity.

In the ancient Hebrew dispensation, the Light of the Presence was manifested in its own particular way for the enlightenment of the Israelites. That way, adapted to the evolutionary needs of the Hebrews, was through the earthly mediation of the

High Priest once each year in the dark chamber of the Holy of Holies, where God revealed His presence in Light above the Mercy Seat. "And Glory [Shekinah] shone around." In that Light, revealing It and revealed by It, *stood the angel of the Lord* conveying the Teachings.

That this relationship of the Shekinah Glory to Michael and the angelic hosts was generally understood among Hebrew mystics is shown in the apocryphal *Revelation of Esdras* (not to be confused with the famous Apocalypse designated either II Esdras or IV Ezra), where we read: "It came to pass in the thirtieth year...I was in my house. And I cried out and said to the Most High: 'Lord, give the glory, in order that I may see thy mysteries!' And when it was night, there came an angel, Michael the Archangel."

The inner chamber, the adytum, or Holy of Holies, was truly dark to the physical senses, but the High Priest had set alight the Glory of Shekinah in his own heart, and it was that interior light which shone before him as he drew aside the curtain which hung before the Most Holy. That sacred curtain (according to an ancient tradition) was, in the time of Christ, a Babylonian curtain, interwoven with roses of pure gold.

We know that when the vernal equinox (the Passover) preceded from the constellation Taurus into Aries, the Taurean Aphrodite-worship (which includes both Moon and Venus) among the ancient Hebrews was gradually superseded by the Arian Sun-worship. This merely means, however, that the Feminine Principle was worshiped secretly, in esoteric rites, while the Masculine Principle played the dominant role in the exoteric rites. Once each year the High Priest entered the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement when the Sun was near the autumnal equinox, which at that time occurred in the constellation Libra, the Sign of Judgment. (It is now in Virgo, but the Scorpio Atonement and Libra Judgment continue as the keynotes of the holy day, for Judaism has lost the ancient esoteric key to its true meaning.)

The Bible tells us nothing of any celebration at the winter solstice. It was not until the second century B.C. that the Feast of Lights was instituted, supposedly to celebrate the restoration of Jahweh-worship in the Temple at Jerusalem. At this feast devout Hebrews placed lighted candles in the windows of their houses to celebrate the return of the true Light

to the sanctuary. Curiously enough, all this took place on December 25th! How can we doubt that an esoteric understanding is the basis of this Feast or that somewhere in ancient Israel it has its counterpart in secret rites and teachings

It is generally known among mystics that Light symbolizes understanding, and therefore Wisdom. Like all genuine mystical pronouncements, this has its foundation in the phenomena of the soul world, which in its turn is governed by metaphysical Law: the Spermaticos Logos (Generative Reason) of the Stoic. Many mystics have seen the interior Sun, the Sun of the soul, which is an emanation from the Christ Sun of the spiritual worlds. Many have seen the Light in which the soul world is continuously bathed. Many have felt, as well as seen, that Light. But few realize that that Light which to the soul sense is so very tangible has a meaning and that its meaning is the presence of Intelligence. A lack of spiritual intelligence is experienced by the soul as darkness, and that is why the Hades of the pagan world was a dim and dusky region where the shades wandered about in pallor and silence, when not in actual torment.

But if the spirit can both see and feel, it can also hear; and there is a “sound” which strikes the interior ear like the sweet chiming of a bell. Now it is interesting to know that in Hebrew tradition the Shekinah Glory was frequently accompanied by the sound of the tinkling of bells, which reveals to us at once the symbolical meaning of the twelve bells which adorned the hem of the High Priest’s robe and which gave out their delicate music as he entered the Holy of Holies.

It is a curious fact that jewels owe much of their magical glamour to their likeness to certain aspects of the spirit world; they do, in a very real sense, speak directly into the spirit itself. Thus the crystal gives off, when struck, the sound of a little bell, and the purity of the sound is determined by the purity of the crystal. Therefore, in the “new tongue” of mysticism, the crystal is the stone of feminine purity and chastity, and its bell-like tone expresses the utter sweetness which is the spirit-touch of the Divine Feminine. For this reason Elsa, the pure Maiden of the Grail story, when in distress rang a little bell which was heard in the starry interior of the Grail Castle, and upon hearing the sound of that bell the spirit Hero came to her rescue.



Painting by Johfra, used with permission of the Lectorium Rosicrucianum, The Netherlands

The Golden Rose Breaks Free

While God geometrizes and crystal forms reflect the stellar intelligence that emanates from Thought World archetypes, physical matter as such arrests and encrypts spirit. Above, the spirit of man, symbolized as a golden rose, rises out of the drear and dread dungeon of its dense material confines.

But whether the Ego is in a feminine or masculine incarnation, the crystal is always the symbol of that clarity of spirit in which alone the spiritual universe is revealed to the inward vision. For God is the Great Crystal holding within Himself the image of the spiritual universe, like a sayer’s [crystal gazer’s—Ed.] vision; and in God’s likeness are we, as Virgin Spirits, made—a multitude of living micro-crystals, holding within our transparent orbs a minute reflection of the same spiritual universe, the Macrocosmos, the Divine Man, the Christos. Hence the mystic *Invocation of the Crystal*:

*In clearness and in ultimate purity
Keep Thou my spirit. Turn it skillfully:
By Thy touch loosen the ineffable
Sweet sound of its imprisoned bell,
O Dweller in the Crystal.*

We may add that hearing the bell sound is a fairly

common mystical experience. Theosophists speak of “astral bells” for example; and to the etheric sense the heart may be heard tolling like a church bell in its body fastnesses. A.E., the celebrated Irish mystic, has described an experience of his own in which the Serpent Fire rushed upward in his body to the accompaniment of a sound as of clashing cymbals another aspect of the bell phenomenon.

Now when the Master Jesus descended into the Jordan at the Baptism, we are told in one of the Apocrypha, he was surrounded by fire. When He came up from the fire the Glory of God descended upon Him and from within the Glory Cloud came the Word: “This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.” Henceforth not Mary, but Shekinah, is the Mother of Christ: “the Holy Spirit, my Mother.” Clement of Alexandria writes, “Baptized, we are enlightened; enlightened, we are made sons; made sons, we are perfected; ‘I’, he saith, ‘said ye are gods and sons of the Most High, all of you.’ This Work has many names; it is called gift (grace), enlightenment, perfection, baptism....the Perfect will give what is perfect.”

Even in the Old Testament proper, as well as in Gnostic documents and various apocrypha, we find Wisdom (She Who enlightens) spoken of as feminine. This is the Gnosis and Sophia of the Gnostics. In Chapter 4 of Proverbs we read: “Wisdom is the principal thing....Exalt her and she shall promote thee; she shall bring thee to honor when thou dost embrace her. She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace: a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee.” A crown of glory? Yes, for she is herself Glory: the Light.

Esoteric students often wonder why there is no mention of the Divine Feminine in Hebrew Scriptures, since it is obvious that a Creator cannot be masculine only. Here we have the answer: the Hebrews *did* recognize the Feminine Principle—under the name of Wisdom. Wisdom is the Comforter, who teaches all things to Her disciples. It was not until after the early centuries of Christianity had passed away that this truth was forgotten by the orthodox Church and the Comforter—truly a feminine concept—looked upon as masculine.

It is interesting to know, too, that recent archeological discoveries in Palestine include at least one inscription in which the name of the goddess *Anath* is coupled with that of *Jahweh* (Jehovah). Now the



Kiev Icon of Sophia, the Wisdom of God

Wisdom or Sophia, ponders the Son of God, about Whom in the Proverbs of Solomon it says: “Wisdom has built a house for herself, and has set up seven pillars” (9:1). These words refer to Christ, the Son of God, Who in the Epistles of St Paul is called “Wisdom of God” (1 Cor.1:30), and the word “house” refers to the Most Holy Virgin Mary, of Whom the Son of God is incarnate. The seven archangels are above. Old Testament witnesses of the manifestation of Wisdom, the Forefathers and the Prophets stand on the seven steps, each of which inscribed with one of the virtues—faith, hope, love, purity, humility, grace, glory—mentioned in Revelation.

same name occurs in Phoenician records, and Hellenistic Phoenicians identified Anath with the Greek goddess of wisdom, Athena, she who sprang fully-powered from the forehead of Zeus; that is, from the Mind of God. Thus in prehistoric Israel wisdom is Anath, the wife of Jahweh. The Gnostics identified Jahweh with Zeus, Father of the Greek gods and the “Our Father who art in heaven” of the Greek people. Athena, as we all know, was a Virgin Goddess.

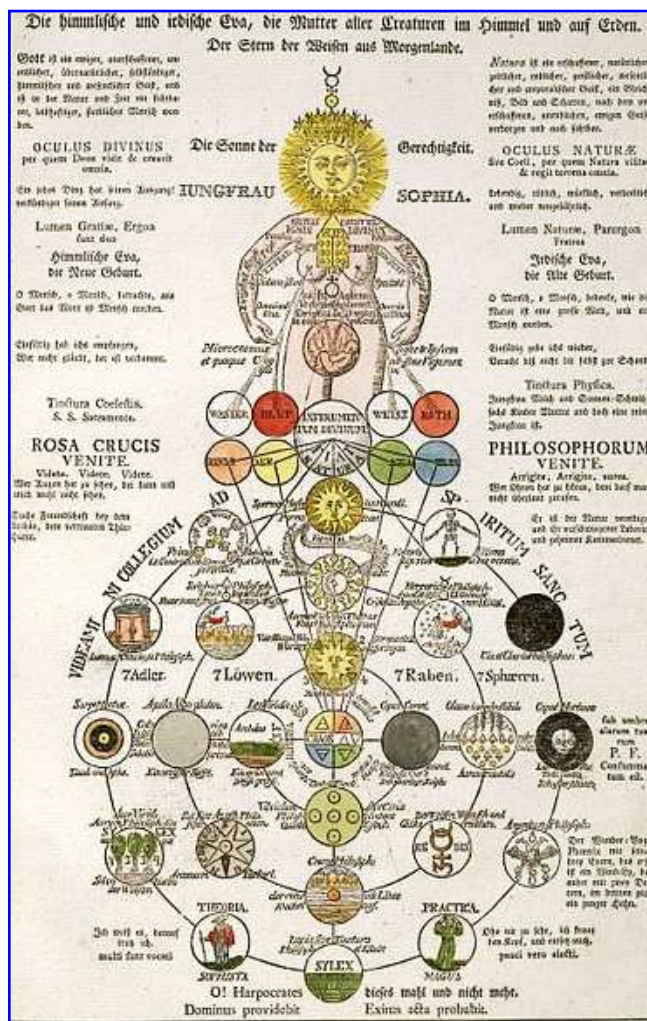
Despite all this, the odd belief in a God without a feminine principle persists with astonishing tenacity

among the orthodox. In *Paradise Lost* Milton causes Adam to exclaim reproachfully to Eve: "O that we were as the angels, without a feminine!" Yet Hebrew mysticism most assuredly recognized an angelic feminine as well as an angelic masculine; although the most authoritative opinion seems always to have been that the angelic hosts are not sexed beings in any human sense, but express both the masculine and feminine potencies at one and the same time. Fra Angelico follows this latter tradition in his painting, although to the discerning his angels seem to be quite definitely masculine, for they express the *will* of God, which is like an axis of steel in the spirit, around which the whole consciousness revolves.

Only a little study of ancient literature makes it clear that Hebrew mystics, in common with the rest of the ancient world, did recognize a Cosmic Feminine. Students interested in verifying this for themselves will read carefully the wisdom literature in the Bible, and also apocryphal works like *Ecclesiasticus*, *the Book of the Wisdom of Jesus*. This Jesus, who took the Egyptian Initiation, is often confused by occult students with Jesus of Nazareth (see *Cosmo-Conception*, page 379). He was an Alexandrian Jew who lived about one hundred years before Christ. (The *Britannica* says he came to Egypt in the year 132 B.C.) His book purports to be a translation of his grandfather's work in Hebrew, written in Palestine. The grandfather's name was also Jesus. There is much illuminating information on the meaning of wisdom in *Ecclesiasticus*, despite evidence of tampering by the orthodox. The beauty and power of the Alexandrian Jesus' concept of the Eternal Feminine is beyond description, but we must enter into that concept in spirit and in truth if we are really to appreciate it.

Most beautiful and thought-stimulating of all the wisdom writings in the orthodox canon is the *Song of Songs*. This is the love song of the mystic who aspires to union with the Celestial Feminine. Scholars agree that this Song could not have been the work of the historic King Solomon, but he is made its hero and central figure because he is Israel's lover of wisdom, par excellence.

At the Council of Jamnia, 100 A.D., this great Song was very nearly excluded from the Hebrew canon, but thanks to the impassioned eloquence of the world-renowned mystic Rabbi Akiba (whose influence on Israel was in other respects most unfor-



From *Secret Symbols of the Rosicrucians of the 16th and 17th Centuries*, Altona, 1785

The Heavenly and Earthly Eve or Gnostic Sophia and the World Soul

Wisdom is the female emanation of God, through which his spiritual seed is realized, first in the uttered word of heavenly Gnosis-Sophia, then in matter (mater, mother earth) through the womb of nature. The latter is the fallen, lower Sophia, and, alchemically, is identified with Mercury, the root of all metals.

tunate), it was granted the place which it now occupies in the old Testament. He of course gave it a purely nationalistic interpretation, as being the love song of God for His chosen people. The esotericist sees in it the love song of the mystic marriage of the human spirit with the God within, which is the great mystery of Gnosis. Or, to use modern terminology, the union of the lower with the higher Self, the little with the great Self, the transmutation of the human into the angelic, the discovery of the Man or Woman (Angel) within, as Max Heindel describes it in his discussion of Tannhauser in *Mysteries of the Great Operas*. □

—Ann Barkhurst

MAX HEINDEL' S MESSAGE



The Esoteric Meaning of Easter

IF WE WERE TO ENTER one of the orthodox churches or attend the open air Easter morning services held in so many places all over the country, we should probably be told the story of the resurrection of an individual named Jesus, who died for our sins on Good Friday and rose from the dead on Easter Sunday. But while the life story of Jesus, as recorded in the Gospels, is practically true, and while we love and venerate Christ (who took the body of Jesus for the three-year ministry) for the noble work He has done and is doing for humanity, we look beyond for the significance and esoteric meaning of Easter.

If this were simply a feast to commemorate the death of an individual, it would on the face of it be foolishness to make it a movable feast. We do not fix the death of Lincoln by the sun, as we know is the case with Easter in relation to the Christ. Easter is always determined by the conjunction of the sun and moon in the sign Aries, the ram or lamb. First, the sun and moon must come to a conjunction; that is the new moon. Then the moon must pursue her course half way around the circle of the zodiac until she is at the full, and the first Sunday following that event is Easter. This plainly shows that we are not celebrating the death of an individual, but that it is a solar festival.

We do not, however, worship the sun, moon, and stars. To do that would be idolatry. But we know that the sun is the physical vehicle of the Godhead, as the planets are the vehicles of the Seven Spirits before the Throne. And therefore we realize that the Christ Spirit which illuminated the body of

Jesus and entered the earth on Golgotha did not then and there complete the sacrifice once and for all, any more than the sun by shining upon the surface of the earth can make the plants grow forever and cause warmth to surround the earth perpetually. But each year when the sun descends towards its western node at the fall equinox, the vitalizing Christ ray enters the earth and permeates our globe to the very center, which it reaches at the time when the Sun is at its lowest point of declination, the time when we speak of the Savior as being born at Christmas.

Then as the sun begins to ascend towards the vernal equinox, this great vitalizing wave of dynamic force rises to the periphery of the earth, fertilizing the millions of seeds slumbering in the soil. It drives the sap up in the trees and causes them to bud, so that the forest becomes a bridal bower for the mating beasts and birds. This cosmic Christ force is liberated from the bondage of the earth at Easter, when it has spent itself and given its life for the world. Thus there is an inbreathing and outbreathing in nature, and the world could not exist without it any more than we could exist without continually breathing the oxygenated air in which we live.

And so as a matter of fact the Christ annually gives us the bread of life, but not only in the physical sense; there is in addition a spiritual outpouring during the winter months, from which we may greatly benefit if we are minded to attune ourselves to its vibrations. That is the true bread of life in the highest sense of the word, and without it our souls must starve; hence our great gratitude to the Christ for His annual sacrifice. □

READERS' QUESTIONS

The Purpose of Physical Existence; Dangerous Pests

QUESTION: I see quite clearly how we can learn great lessons concerning this physical expression of life, but do not see why the physical world is necessary to teach us ethics or morals. And if it were possible to learn ethics and morals in the higher worlds, just why is a physical world, or what we call the physical expression, necessary?

While formulating this question it occurred to me that all other worlds might be said to be physical by those who inhabit them. Would this be the answer?

Answer: Yes, and no. All other worlds are not by any means physical even to those who inhabit them. It is perfectly true that one feels the hand-clasp of a friend in the invisible world just as we do here, but that is because we think resistance into the hand of the other party and our own. We do this quite unconsciously, of course, but the effect is the same. It lends a resistance to our hands and our hand stops where it meets the other's, just as it would be stopped by the solid flesh and bone here in this world. But did we not, when we clap our friend on the back in the first joy of greeting, think this resistance, our hand would go straight through his body, and we can at any time we wish interpolate our own body into his or any one else's without inconvenience to ourselves or to them.

Here in the physical world such a thing is of course impossible. Here everything is rigid and solid, comparatively speaking, but it is this very quality that imparts value to the physical world, as a school in right and accurate thinking—for that is what it is, as has been explained in the *Rosicrucian*



Oil on canvas (1495), Jaco Bar, Museo Capodimonte, Naples

A Mathematician Monk

Franciscan Luca Pacioli applies observation and deductive reasoning to practical human affairs. He printed mathematical textbooks and devised a system of double accounting.

Cosmo-Conception. The illustration was there given of how an inventor may mould in his mind, from mindstuff, an engine or a machine which he has designed to do a certain work. The machine which he thus visualized has wheels that revolve perfectly and the whole thing works smoothly, but when he comes to put his ideas down on paper so that workmen may execute his design, it is probable he will find alterations are necessary in this plan, and later, when the wheels have physical form in iron and steel, it is quite likely that some of them will rub against each other and cannot be put into the places where he had designed in his mind stuff because those places are already occupied with other wheels; so then it is necessary for him to remodel his idea in such a manner as his physical machine shows him to be necessary, until he has it running perfectly.

Thus his thought and idea is corrected by the mistakes as shown in the physical world. Had there been no physical world he would have had no means of correcting his inaccurate conception of what that machine should be, and it is very important that he should learn to think accurately and correctly, for by and by when we are sufficiently evolved we

shall not stand laboriously and fashion things with our hands but we shall conceive the idea of what we want to create in our minds and then we shall speak the word that will bring it into being.

Nor will these our creations be mere machines, but they will be living things, and if we do not learn to think correctly we shall create monstrosities that will have to be destroyed because of the evil nature they would develop in whatever spirit inhabits them.

And that brings us to your question about ethics and morals. It is said that “handsome is that handsome does,” and also that “beauty is only skin deep.” At the same time it cannot be denied that the face is an expression of the soul. We all speak about someone as having a good face and others as having an evil expression, showing the power of thought to mould the flesh in accordance with the morals and ethics of the person. Therefore we are learning morals and ethics here and must learn them in order that we may understand how to use them to mould the form and features of the things that we shall create.

But in order to become thoroughly efficient tools our morals and ethics must be intensified a thousand-fold, just as we have already seen is the case with thought. Thought is all-powerful in its own subtle realm, but is hampered when working on the resistant material of the physical world. Similarly morals and ethics are also handicapped. They are however being developed by exercise as the muscle grows and there could be no exercise if they were not used in a world where there is resistance. That is a slow process but it makes for efficiency,

But if you remember the law of infant mortality you will also recollect that the little children, who die because an accident or other unfortunate circumstances prevented them from living their purgatory after their previous life, are taken straight into the First Heaven and there taught by compassionate ones the moral lessons that they should have learned in their previous purgatory. Let us suppose that one of the lessons that a soul had to learn is sympathy, because it had been cruel and hard in its previous life. Perhaps it had tortured animals physically or human beings mentally and found great pleasure in so doing.

Such a little child would then be taken to purga-

tory at a time when a soul of similar propensities was living its purgatory and expiating acts of cruelty. The child’s body would then probably be interpolated into the desire body of the other one and it would feel what he or she would feel, the suffering of the tortured animals on account of their physical pain and the sufferings of his human victims in mental anguish.

Thus the child would pick up very quickly the lessons that had to be learned, and be made ready for rebirth in a short time. So both the invisible and the visible world play their part in teaching us ethics and morals and there is no doubt that both are indispensable, or the wise beings who guide us on the path of evolution would find other means of more efficiency to teach us the needed lessons.

DANGEROUS PESTS

Question: Should we let roaches, flies, mosquitoes, mice, rats, et cetera, live in our houses and not try to get rid of them? Ever since I have been a vegetarian I have been squeamish about killing anything; but I am afraid, living in the south, we would be overrun if we did nothing to get rid of these pests. What shall I do about it?

Answer: As our friends are again asking this question in relation to the disposal of bothersome pests, we are giving a paraphrased answer based on Max Heindel’s reply when the same question was presented to him.

The Rosicrucian teaching has always conformed to the teaching of the Bible, “Thou shalt not kill”; but we have never felt that this injunction was intended to include pests, vermin, bacilli, or other microorganisms which take such a toll of human life. The bacilli of infectious diseases are particularly the embodiment of fear and hate, and therefore they can be effectually vanquished by applying the opposite forces of courage and love.

Beasts of prey and poisonous reptiles should never be permitted to go about when they would endanger human life, and it is perfectly right to exterminate them should the occasion really demand it. What we do insist upon, however, is that it is wrong to kill for profit, for sport, for food, or for the gratification of vanity; that is, using animal skins for personal adornment. □

The Sacrament of Marriage

WHEN STRIPPED of nonessentials the argument of the orthodox Christian religion 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 us to a more ethereal state



Absolon Stumme. From the Dome Altar, 1499, Pisa, Italy

The Marriage of the Virgin

After the Lord had willed a miracle to single out Joseph as Mary's husband, the high priest Abiathar joined them in matrimony. The incident is narrated in Pseudo-Matthew 8:4-5.

where dissolution will no longer be necessary to free us 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 the Spirit.

We have in previous articles 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 1 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.

Like the 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 they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh." (Matt. 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." (Matt. 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 seclu-

sion 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 that 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 a 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

Green Diamond

Assigned as I to Aries' constellation,
You are my soul's symbolic secret jewel.
Through creeping eons has your slow formation

Progressed in my alchemic laboratory,
In subterranean depths receiving fuel
From stellar worlds, for time's green-flaming glory.

No mines nor sands from mother India's rivers,
Though sifted from their deltas to their sources—
Nay, nor the Dresden stone whose beauty shivers

In Saxon vaults, sheer green as leaf of apple,
None concentrates as you the cosmic forces,
Transmuted jewel in my hidden chapel.

—Irene Stanley

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 childbirth. 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. □

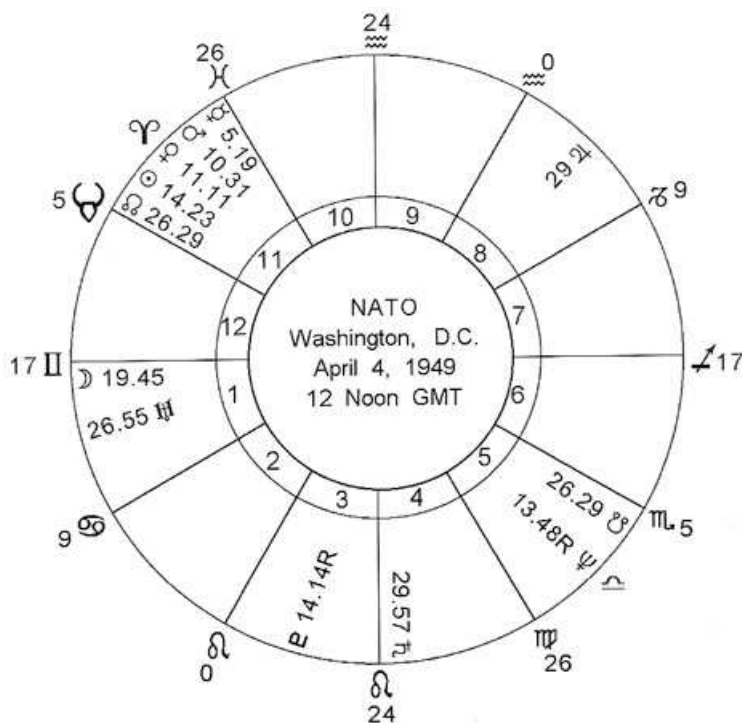
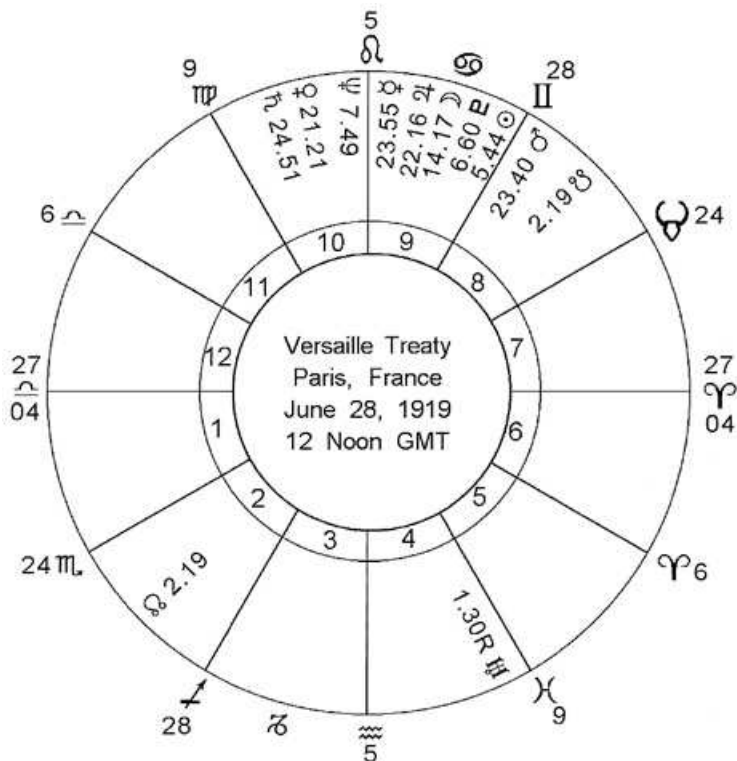
ASTROLOGY

Stars over NATO

IF YOU WERE AN ADULT in 1949, you may remember the time of the inception of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. It came during the Cold War's first major crisis. The Soviets had cut off land access to Berlin, 110 miles behind the iron Curtain; it had to be supplied entirely by air. There was justified fear that Communist Russia would move into Western Europe—all the more since the Communists in early 1949 were also about to seize China. So, to contain world Communism, NATO was founded April 4, 1949, in Washington D.C.

Even a cursory glance at its chart reveals the prominent U.S. role in the event. There are too many similarities between the two maps to doubt their close relationship, all the more significant since 173 years are between them. That is a little more than two Uranus cycles, and so we find the planet of freedom in both charts in Gemini, just below the Ascendant, and lord of the M.C. of direction and destiny. When the U.S. was born, freedom's future was the issue; also at NATO's nativity.

Moreover, the four-planet Aries cluster in NATO's chart is square the four-planet cluster of Cancer in that of the U.S. A square is the aspect of challenge. The U.S. cluster is in its house of finances. U.S. financial resources had indeed been chal-



lenged by NATO to the tune of hundreds of billions of dollars over the years. Had there been no need for NATO, there might today be no federal deficits and debt!

This is underscored by the closest planetary tie between the two charts—NATO's Neptune conjunct the U.S. Saturn.¹ These are "karmic" orbs. The U.S. was correct in helping found and lead and sustain NATO. No other nation could have filled that role. Britain had yielded its primacy of the West the year before, which had resulted in the Truman doctrine of U.S. leadership in the struggle against global Communism. At the time, half the world's goods were being produced in the U.S., and "unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required."

NATO's birth certificate also bears comparison with that of the Treaty of Versailles of June 28, 1919, which "ended" World War I. That treaty's Saturn is conjunct NATO's Saturn; its Neptune is over NATO's Pluto, another potent karmic link. The 1919 treaty was one of history's worst, practically "asking" for revenge. That produced Hitler, chief instigator of World War II, which brought Russian Communism into Central Europe, leading to the setting up of NATO.

Now for a look at the NATO map itself. The timing certainly was excellent; shortly after a New Moon is generally a good time to launch new projects: NATO has been described as "the most successful military alliance in history."² An early spring is also good, since the Sun then transits Aries, in which it is "exalted." Aries is also the sign of war, and NATO was a contingency plan for military struggle.³

Seven of NATO's planets are in the top half and Ascendant. Six are in the eastern half; all but two are in strength-imparting conjunctions of various widths. Of the two "loners," Neptune is conjunct a critical degree and supported by six major aspects: to the Sun, Moon, Mercury, Venus—all the inner planets—plus Mars and Pluto. It has also minor ties to the others: a semi-square to Saturn and bi-septiles to Jupiter and Uranus. And as to Jupiter—being closest to the M.C., it is helpful for the dominant orb to be a benefic. It is the natural ruler of the 9th house, and therein "all planets...have a

higher vibration than when placed in any other area."⁴ All planets are in masculine, odd-numbered signs, eight are in odd-numbered houses—more strength.

Aren't there any "negatives" in this amazing map? Yes—and no! To be specific, there are no orbs in water signs, a "technical" minus, an "imbalance" of sorts. Water signs are the emotional ones; no planets therein would therefore indicate absence of emotion. In *personal* maps, absence of emotion and feeling certainly are a serious void,⁵ but in a *military* organization this is a definite plus. War is extremely serious business; one must stick strictly to the cold facts, to reality.

And NATO has done that. It not only has kept Communism out of Western Europe, but by its strength and resolve it has contributed to the Soviet Union's demise and saved Europe from *national* wars longer than any previous effort. Prior to NATO, Europe's longest respite from war between nations was 38 years—from the Congress of Vienna after Napoleon's fall in 1815 to the outbreak of the Crimean War in 1853. But now Europe has seen no *trans-national* war since 1945. The struggle in Yugoslavia was a *civil* war.

History, it has been truly said, is His story, *God's* story. Even as an earthly father wants his children to learn life's lessons, so does our Heavenly Father. What great lesson can the spiritual student garner from NATO? When asked before the battle of Waterloo who would win, Napoleon said, "The side with the most reserves." Victory goes to the strongest, if not in men and material, then certainly in mental acumen. NATO kept the peace through strength, a determined deterrent. An ancient aspirant was told, "Be thou strong." (Ecclesiastics 10:17) Max Heindel's observation is that "Strong souls are the darlings of the gods." (*Letters to Students*, page 197) □

—A Probationer

1 Counting degrees and minutes, the square between the NATO Mercury and U.S. Jupiter is closer, but Saturn and Neptune are more powerful, and a conjunction makes a stronger impact than a square.

2 *U.S. News & World Report*, April 29, 1996, page 1

3 Jupiter also was moving across the top of Europe's Foundation chart. See *Sex and the Outer Planets*, Barbara Watters, page 28.

4 *Astrology: A Cosmic Science*, Isabel M. Hickey, page 196.

5 *Essentials of Astrological Analysis*, Marc Edmund Jones, p. 288

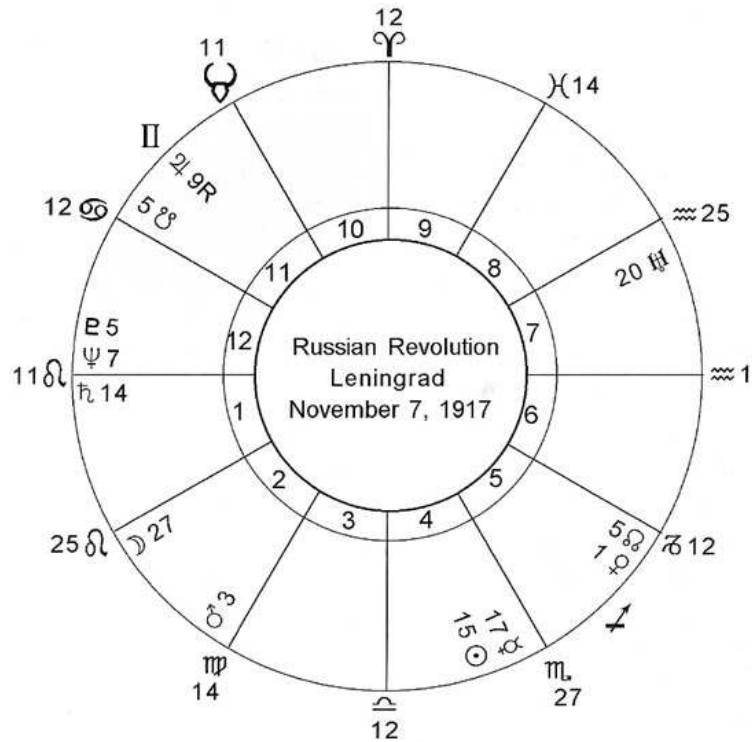
Stars Over Russia

IS URANUS POWERFULLY posited in your natal chart? Barring influences to the contrary, your life will tend to run in seven year cycles.¹ Does this also hold true with nations? It certainly does with contemporary Russia. The territory of Russia is ruled by Uranus; also Moscow, the capital.² And the flow of events in that vast region during this century, beginning with the inception of Communism in 1917, clearly reveals seven-year periods.

1. The Aries cycle, 1917-24. Aries' ruler, Mars, is the planet of war. The Russian Communist Revolution of 1917 was followed within a few months by an invasion of over a dozen nations to eliminate that new regime, but the half-hearted effort failed.

Mars-ruled Aries is also the planet of pioneering. Not only was Russia the first "modern" country to "adopt" Communism, so a "pioneering" task had to be done there, but at the same time Communist Russia undertook "pioneering" efforts abroad: for a brief period Hungary and Berlin, Germany's traditional capital city, were under Communist sway.

2. The Taurus cycle, 1924-31. Venus, ruler of Taurus, is the planet of peace. Stalin, Russia's dictator after Lenin's death, realized that after World War I, and the anti-Communist invasion thereafter, Russia needed peace. Accordingly, after an internal power struggle with Trotsky, Stalin called off efforts to spread Communism abroad by force of arms. Taurus is also the sign of building, and the Russian government during this time emphasized the need to build Communism at home; it also



launched a huge building program to hasten full industrialization.

3. The Gemini cycle, 1931-38. Gemini is the sign of communication and relationships. Russia had become isolated during the previous two cycles as an international pariah. It was not until this cycle that President Roosevelt established diplomatic ties with Russia in the hope that more trade would speed the demise of the Great Depression. Russia also was admitted to the League of Nations, forerunner of the United Nations.

Not only that, Russia eagerly sought alliances with the West. For in 1933 Hitler had seized power in Germany and his anti-Communist tirades caused Russia to tremble. So it not only sent aid to the anti-Nazi forces in Spain's civil war of 1936-39, but also joined a defensive alliance with France and Czechoslovakia to "contain" Hitler.

4. The Cancer cycle, 1938-45. In 1938 Hitler forced Czechoslovakia to cede him the Sudetenland, part of Slovakia to Hungary, and Teschen to Poland, and in 1939 he grabbed the rest of the

weakened land. Russia refused to intervene because France wouldn't act, and Stalin realized that "the West" was unreliable. So, he decided to build up Russia's defense system alone. Cancer is the sign of home, and Russia's "home base" now became Stalin's main focus. In June, 1941, Hitler attacked Russia, and for 46½ months the defense of "home" was that nation's topnotch priority.

5. The Leo cycle, 1945-52. In mundane astrology, the logo of the predatory lion symbolized imperialism and/or colonialism, which aptly describes Russia's chief activity. It set up its system in Eastern Europe, sought to drive the West out of Berlin, supported the Communist revolution in China as well as North Korea's attack on its neighbor to the south.

6. The Virgo cycle, 1952-59. Stalin died in 1953, succeeded by Khrushchev, who startled the world with a lengthy speech in which he bitterly denounced his predecessor's outrages and promised a more humane regime. Virgo is the sign of criticism, analysis; the world now had the most complete critical analysis of Communism.

7. The Libra cycle, 1959-66. When Cuba went Communist in 1959, the Soviets tried to sneak missiles in to threaten the U.S. This led to the great Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962, with the threat of nuclear war. Both sides realized there would be no real winners, and it was recognized that a mutually agreed balance of power would preserve the peace despite irreconcilable differences. Libra is the sign of the scales, balances.

8. The Scorpio cycle, 1966-73. Overtly, the Russians paid lip service to a balance of power, but covertly they soon set out on a course of conquests. They helped Communist forces in North Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, as well as numerous other parts of the Third World. Scorpio is ruled by Pluto, lord of the underworld and things covert.

9. The Sagittarius cycle, 1973-80. 1973 saw the start of the Watergate Crisis that led to President Nixon's fall from office. Moscow believed this had weakened America, so it embarked on open adventures of aggrandizement; Sagittarius is the adventurous sign. When Portugal's overseas empire collapsed, Russia sent Cuban forces there to establish Communism. And its own army marched into Afghanistan.

10. The Capricorn cycle, 1980-87. Capricorn is the sign of government, and the Kremlin itself now became the focus of global attention. Its leader, Leonid Brezhnev, during a state visit to West Germany, was so feeble he couldn't rise unaided from a chair and died in 1982. He was succeeded by Andropov, who lasted only until 1984; his successor, Chernenko, breathed his last in 1985. He was replaced by Gorbachev, whose plans for the future were highly irregular for an avowed Communist and they startled and puzzled observers worldwide.

11. The Aquarius cycle, 1987-94. Gorbachev was faced not only with the remediless problems of Communism, but also the results of the weaknesses of his three predecessors, the huge costs of the arms race with the West, as well as a national malaise. He realized that extreme situations call for radical measures. He called for *glasnost* (openness) and *perestroika* (reorganization). Those two policies would inevitably bring transformation—a keyword of Aquarius. Boris Yeltsin, who came after him, also tried the same approach.

12. The Pisces cycle, 1994-2001. Pisces' symbol is that of two fishes swimming in opposite directions. What an apt picture of Russia during this epoch! At times one hears of progress toward more freedom and prosperity; then again of rueful retrogression. Pisces' ruler is Neptune, one of whose keywords is *nebulousness*,³ also a good description of "post-Communist" Russia. Neptune is also lord of the ocean, hence the tides.⁴ And we know that unless one looks closely, carefully, and for quite a while, one cannot always tell high tide from low tide.

But the good news is that eventually "the Russian people...will reach a degree of spiritual development which will advance them far beyond their present condition."⁵ For centuries they have suffered greatly; under the *Law of Compensation*⁶ they surely deserve what is promised here. □

—Dr. Paul Freiwirth

1 *Astrology: A Cosmic Science*, Isabel M. Hickey, page 183

2 *Raphael's Horary Astrology*, Raphael, page 57; *The Compleat Astrologer*, Derek and Julia Parker, page 105.

3 *The Modern Text Book of Astrology*, Margaret C. Hone, page 34.

4 *A to Z Horoscope Maker and Delineator*, Llewellyn George, p. 563.

5 *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*, Max Heindel, page 305.

6 Max Heindel, *op. City.*, page 306.

RELIGION AND ART

God's Images



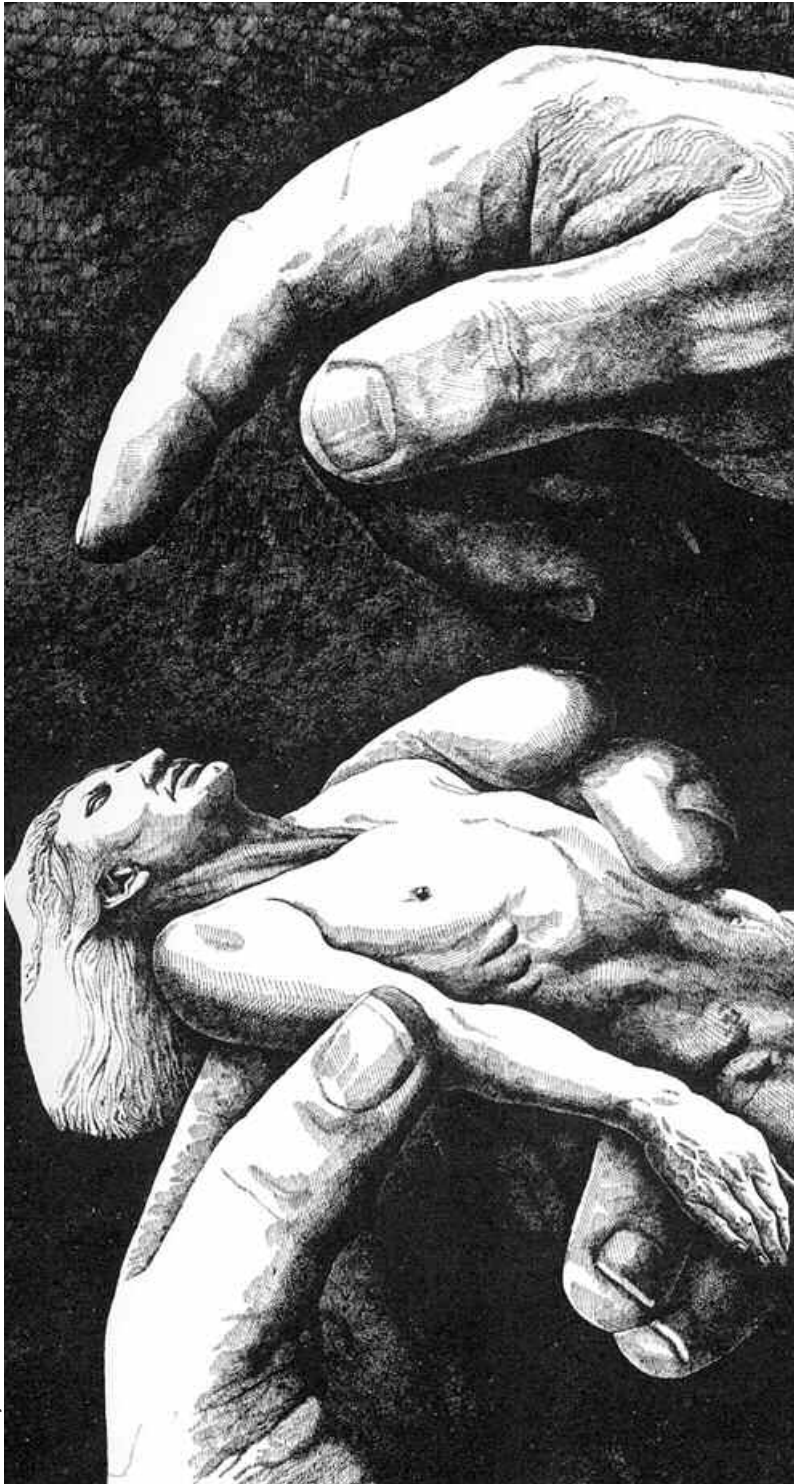
Creation

Sky. Translucent infinite acre. Anxiety of water, when the hand of God passes over it. Here in the sleep-turning void, the pain waves have not yet begun. These are the star laws, moon-turning. The infinite hands are trembling. What is coming? Sleep circles. River eyes dust terror. From now will come the enormous storms over the sad volcanoes, where lava flows to no purpose. From now will come the cooling of the crust. From this the great beasts will arise; this new place will be consecrated and fertilized by gigantic blood. The ground will shake with huge lizards. In the sea, monsters slide beneath the surface, up-coming to tear other monsters apart: those swimming serenely under the hot new sun.

Why do it this way? Why the tremendous dust storms? Why the strange animals? What is to come of this? What possible end? The deep waves I have made give off nothing but meaningless, endless blood. What terror do I wish to release to the clouds I have created? I am trying something out. I don't have to do it, but the soft pain of the blue planet urges me on. This doing is precious to me. Am I ready for it? Is my only Son ready? About it and its quiet fragile air there is water, fire. There is earth. There are flowers and tenderness coming, also. It is all here, now, in my two hands. I can make the forest eagle circle over the green of leaves. I must do this thing. What I have done, I am doing. My hand passes over the deep waters, and the fish become. The forest eagle circles. Come everything. I am afraid.

Release

In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth.—Genesis 1:1



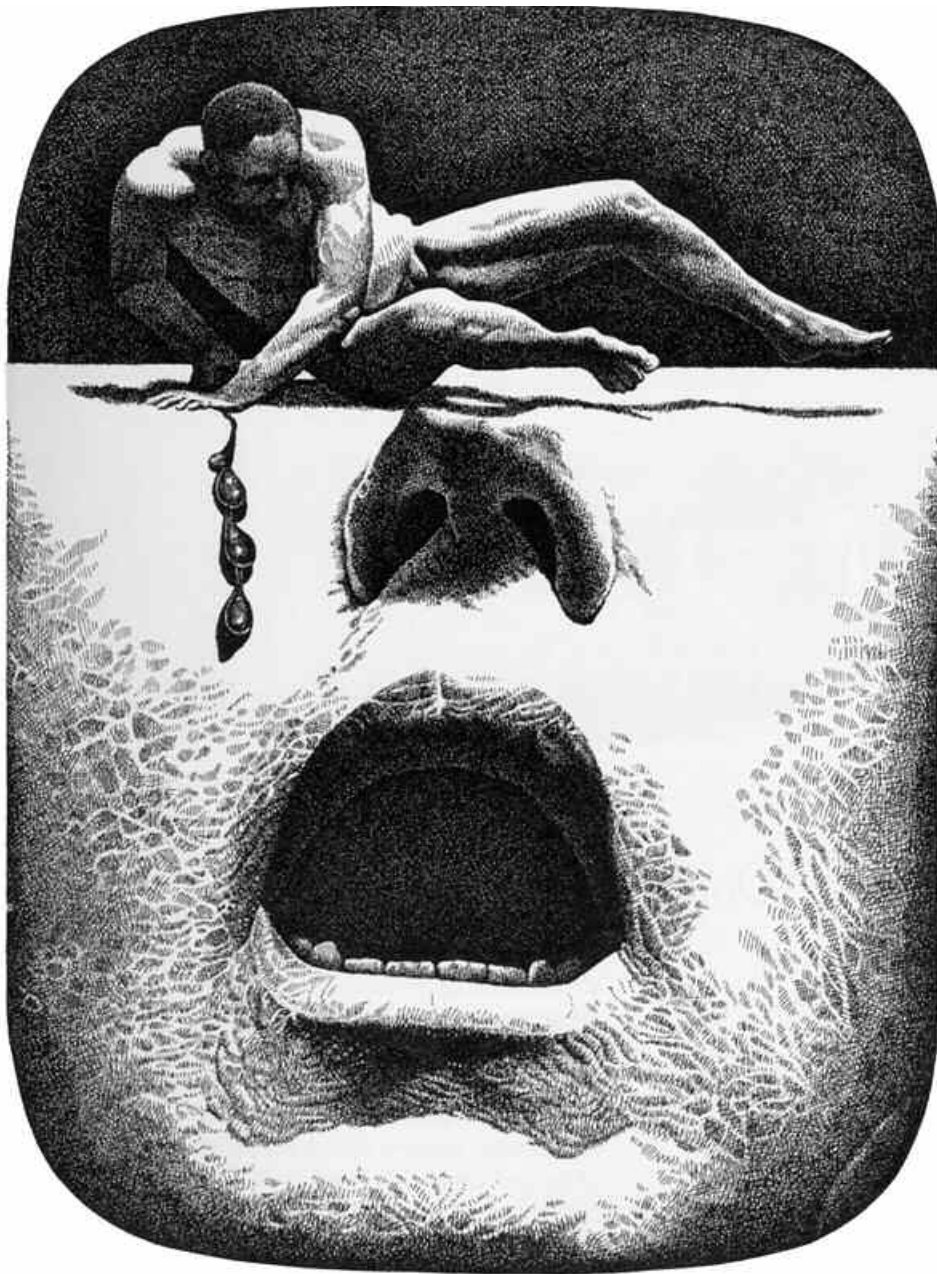
Marvin Hayes

ADAM

Dust fields breathe, slowly.
Taking shape,
the soul begins to feel its form.
Around God's image
tenderness begins to ache.
The muscled valves of the heart
begin to pulse.
Adam is healed of nothingness.
God murmurs over him
as a mother would speak to her child,
who cannot understand why
he has been brought into the world,
but he is there.
The lids of his eyes unfold.
Now there is wind upon him.
The warmth of his mouth
loses the last of its dust.
His teeth are young.
His breath is a mystical opening.
His cheek and forehead
find their true relationship.
The great hands put him
down into the world,
shadows pass over him
and he feels the quiet grasp of rain.
Adam hears an enormous,
soft and caring voice say,
"Welcome, son, creation and brother."

Brother

And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.—Genesis 2:7



Marvin Hayes

Death of Abel

Young fear. Fear bearing deathless terror from the youth of the world. I, Cain, slew my brother Abel. Nothing is fixed; things are wandering. There is an aimless storm around me, and sheet lightning is infinite. I do not know why I did what I did, except that the force of my brother was preferred before me. Around my eternal journey among men there can be no peace; the mystery has been severed, and the curse on me has begun. Nothing like I have done has ever been done before. Abel is dead, but I must wander. I have created death and must carry it everywhere among men. My brother's death is underfoot and catches me with every footstep I take among the great cities. This all happened on a whim, and all the wars of men will come exactly thus. I bear death to men, women and children: a destruction that I do not want, for I am a gentle man.

Gentle

And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand.—Genesis 4:11



Virgin and Child

He is mine, or at least half of Him is mine. Let me kiss the sweet, wet eyes that have come out of my belly. I cannot understand any of this, but I do know I hold in my lap a child who comes from me. He is the Son of God, but God needs a human mate to bring forth a human child. Gently let me rock Him and smooth down his sweaty hair. The Son of God rests easy, and the human mother rejoices deeply, as any human mother does. I love this creature come from me. I am ready for whatever may happen. The main thing is the love that I feel at this moment, and the new, dependent flesh against mine. This is the way things are and thanks be to God.

Thanks

And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus.—Matthew 1:21



Christ and the Fig Tree

There must be prepared soil.

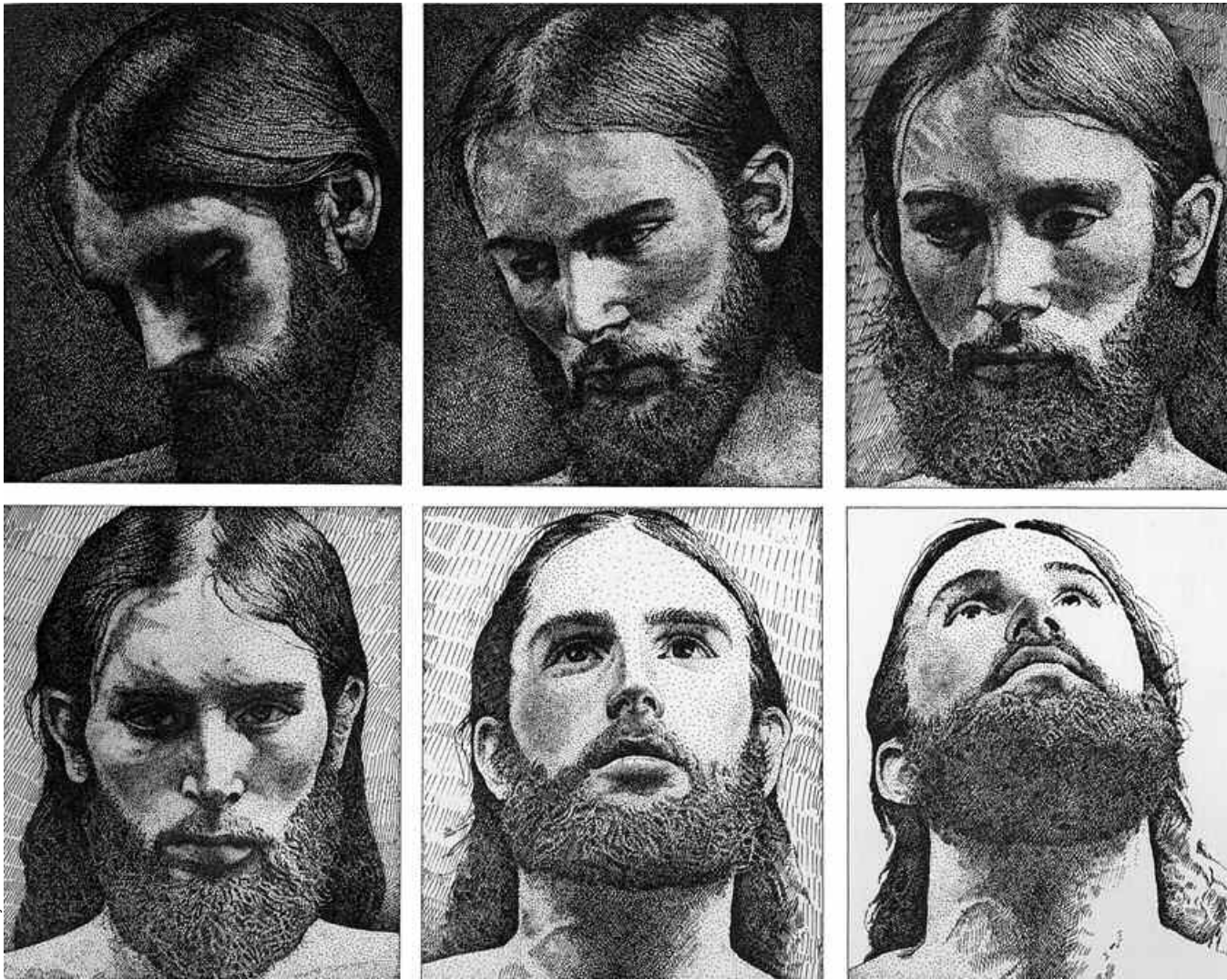
All growth and life and vitality come from it. As it is with the soil, so it is with the soul.

All things must die properly.

The fruit of the fig tree rises freely. The growth is just. But, the Son of Man said that the sinner must repent and bear fruit, or die. And die merely, and feed the soil. Or the man must die, flower, and live again, as the tree blooms.

Grow

He spake also this parable; A certain man had a tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: And if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down.—Luke 13:6-9



Transfiguration

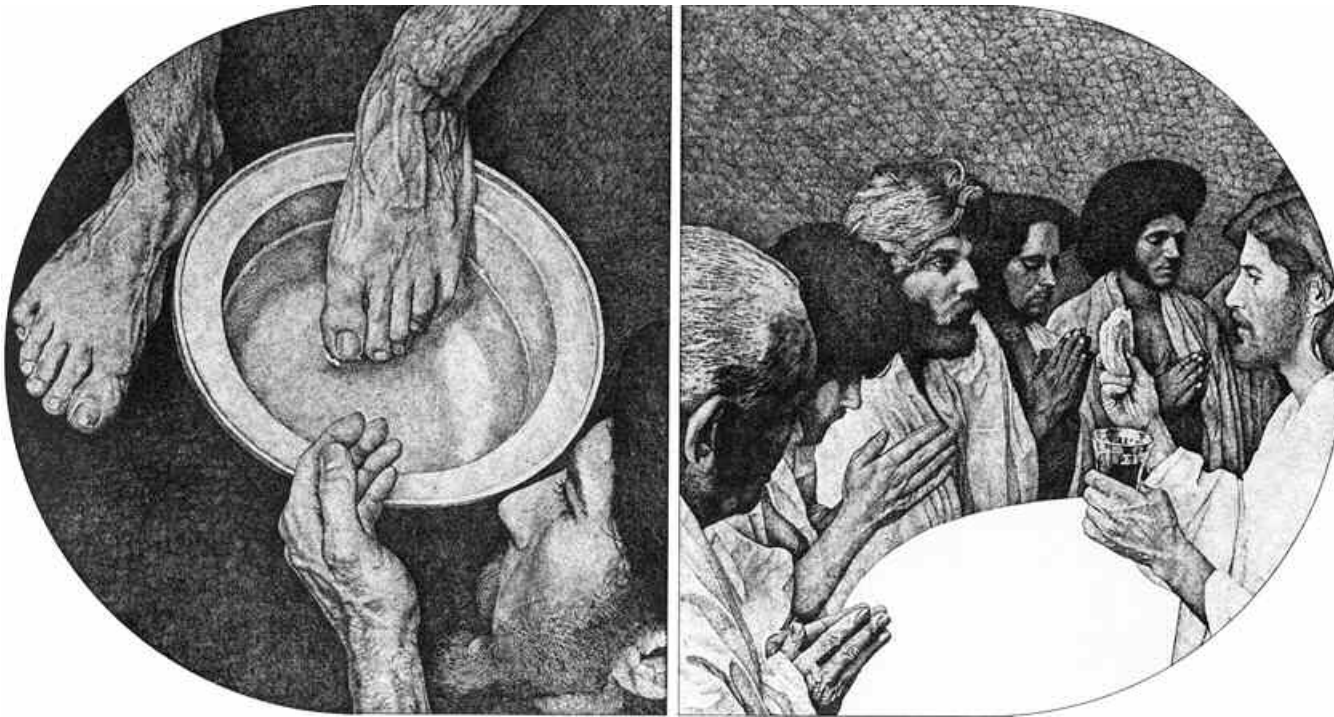
For no reason our Brother bids us go with Him to the high, the solitary mountain. We follow wordlessly. We know that He would not ask us to go with Him if it were not important. It is not a difficult journey, though each leg grows tired at the continual ascent. Then the trees break, and He beckons us to be separate from Him. We wait in bushes, and He waits alone. His face is as of the ground where there are shadows. Then, slowly, His countenance rises through the shadow, through the shade cast by leaves into the utter blackness of midnight.

We, His brothers, can see enough to know that there is a cloud passing over the central darkness of the moon. We see Him with His hands in a gesture of utter acceptance. He is our Brother. We do not know Him, but we will follow Him to the death. We will follow Him to the moonlight on the mountain.

A great light, as that of noon, breaks slowly upon His form. We feel on our faces a radiance that is not ours. From somewhere deep within the sky, from somewhere above, from the heart of a small cloud, a voice is over us, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Voice

And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.—Matthew 17:2



The Last Supper

Darkness, with spread-upward light. Men are embarked on something mysterious. Jesus is like them, and they can understand Him deeply on the basis of His manhood. But He is also profoundly different, giving them an inkling of what men through God may *become*. Something terrible is working in a simple meal: something terrible and wonderful.

Bread and wine. Eating and drinking are simple things. Immortality is simple. Under these strange circumstances the eating of the common bread and the drinking of the common wine will stand for immortality through a great terrifying and liberating pain.

The key is humbleness. The Son of God does not abase Himself, but He *ministers*. That is the true meaning of all His teachings. You *minister* to the *other*. Any wellspring of human kindness—always available—can flow over into another human being. You are humble before all humanity, and will wash feet.

Humble

And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him.—Luke 22:14

The foregoing images have been drawn from God's Images, The Bible: a New Vision, a collaborative venture between poet James Dickey and illustrator Marvin Hayes. The book, copyright in 1977 and published by Oxmoor House, Inc. Birmingham, Alabama, is, regrettably, now out of print. The book's fifty-seven scenes and personages from the Old and New Testaments were etched, in almost microscopic, cross-stitched gradations, on copper plates with acids and cutting, inked troughs—much in the manner of Hayes' admired predecessor and fellow visionary, William Blake. In the book's foreword, Dickey, one of the twentieth century's most accomplished poets, writes: "The Bible is the greatest treasure-house of powerful, disturbing, life-enhancing images in the whole of humanity's long history. They are images of what generations of men have taken to be those projected on the human race by God Himself, or God as He resides in the souls of men.... We all have our images of God, given to us by the Bible, which is the Word of God. These images are ours, and in calling them up in our minds we are living witnesses of the fact that 'the kingdom of God is within you.'... The Bible is buried and alive in us—not one of us can encounter it, and our tradition of the individual human being and the universe, who cannot but have been affected by it."

Marvin Hayes

A Christian Women's Declaration

WHO WE ARE

First and foremost, we are women of faith and principle whose Christianity is founded not on human invention but on divinely revealed truth. This truth enables us to experience the redemptive, transforming power of Jesus Christ, who made freedom and dignity possible for all human beings—for women as well as for men. Because we are created in God's image and the grace of God is extended equally to women, we can join the company of those women who first wept in the shadow of the cross and later rejoiced at the empty tomb. Because the Bible is the most effective force in history for lifting women to higher levels of respect, dignity, and freedom, we join an historic succession of women whose Christian faith is forged from biblical truth and whose lives are shaped into Christ's image on the anvil of obedience.

As women we are beneficiaries, not victims, of our Christian faith, despite its imperfect outworking in history. Women of the early Church gave witness to Christ in boldness of speech, purity of character, and even the final sacrifice of martyrdom. Women of the medieval period enriched the Church through their writing and teaching and their examples of prayer and contemplation, self-discipline, and service to family and society. Christian women of the modern era have been pioneers in areas such as education, health care, business, artistic expres-

This statement was issued on September 16, 1997 by the Ecumenical Coalition of Women and Society, a project of the Washington-based Institute on Religion and Democracy. It is reproduced here with permission.



Anna May McCallum. For a list of other religious illustrations write to the artist at P.O. Box 140 Brahm, MN 55066

The Crucifixion

On Calvary all Christ Jesus' male disciples were absent, except John. But His Mother was present and nothing could separate Mary Magdalene from her Lord and Redeemer.

sion, social reform, and worldwide evangelism.

And in every generation, godly wives and mothers have responsibly exercised God's mandate to fill the earth and subdue it and have freely offered their lives for the nurture and guidance of the next generation. We are indebted beyond measure to these women and we celebrate them all. We also honor those who have sought more opportunities and greater respect for women. It is by their efforts that we enjoy a more extended range of activities and opportunities than any previous generation.

Many of the earliest and most effective advocates of women's rights and dignity were women of faith

whose convictions were rooted in biblical truth. They recognized that all Christians, male or female, share certain obligations and benefits—that “in Christ there is neither male nor female.” Therefore, it is in Christ that we seek to exercise our freedoms today. As individuals, we seek to develop Christian character and to live faithfully within our families, churches, neighborhoods, and the world. As members of the Christian community, we endeavor collectively to bring the love of Christ and authentic Christian freedom and justice to all—especially the weak and helpless who, too often, are denied the respect due all who are created in God’s image.

WE AFFIRM

Our Christian faith has been nurtured in various denominations, but we consider ourselves to be one in Christ as members of His universal Church. Specifically, we affirm the following:

We affirm the triune God. We acknowledge God’s sovereignty, righteousness, and love. We recognize that God is transcendent and distinct from ourselves, yet we bear God’s image as His children created in love. We consider it a privilege to emulate Christ by addressing God by the name Father, even as we acknowledge that God, who created sexuality, is neither male nor female. We will worship no other god but the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. We know that we are not our own, but we have been bought by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. We cannot create forgiveness, identity, purpose, and hope by ourselves. Instead, it is Christ who by His death and resurrection supplies what we cannot. There is no person or force that can bring us to God as Jesus Christ has done. In addition, we gratefully acknowledge the power and grace of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

We affirm the authority of the Scriptures and the doctrines represented in the ecumenical creeds of the Church. We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the divinely inspired written Word of God for all people throughout all ages. From them we learn the history of God’s saving acts toward Israel and all humankind, and so we have a reliable basis for understanding the divine plan and our place in it. From the Scriptures

we receive God’s commandments and counsel, so that we have authoritative guidance for individual behavior and social life. We are called to approach the Bible with faith in the Holy Spirit who inspired it and with a readiness to obey the Word that we hear.

We affirm the natural, created order. We know God to be far greater than what we see in the world around us or experience within ourselves. For this reason we do not worship the Earth or anything in it, including our own selves. We find evidence of the Creator’s design in the differentiation of light and darkness, sea and land, plant and animal, male and female. God pronounced it good that the human race is constituted by two complementary sexes—both created together in His image. We accept this pattern of human sexuality as a foundation for human society, and we celebrate the healthy relationships of mutual service that embody it—above all, the divinely ordained covenant of marriage between one man and one woman prepared to bear and rear each succeeding generation of children. Further, we acknowledge that various social institutions—including family, church, and government—are ordained of God and should operate within appropriate spheres of authority with prerogatives that are respected by the other institutions.

We acknowledge human sinfulness. We acknowledge ourselves to be sinners—without the resources within ourselves to know or to serve God adequately. Sin is personal as well as structural. Every person is guilty. No more and no less than men, we as women are dependent upon the mercy of God in Christ. Ultimately, we trust neither ourselves nor any other human power to defeat the forces of sin and death. Our salvation comes from the Lord.

We affirm that we can achieve the highest and best for ourselves only through obedience to God and service to others. We believe that obedience to God is the pathway, not an obstacle, to our fulfillment as women. We affirm the joy that comes from practicing the timeless virtues that form the character of Christ within us—discipline, self-sacrifice, courage, humility, patience, charity, truthfulness, and personal integrity. The Holy Spirit is the source of the strength to control selfish impulses,

thereby making us capable of living authentic Christian lives.

We affirm the liberty that comes from the reconciling truth that we have already received in Christ. We are grieved by the disrespect, the abuse, the personal prejudice and institutional oppression by which humans so often dishonor the image of God in their fellow humans. This tragedy strikes us particularly because we are conscious of how often women have been the targets of such disrespect, abuse, prejudice, and oppression. We pledge ourselves to stand in solidarity with all who have been denied justice, freedom, and opportunity. We know that, ultimately, the fullest freedom for women is to be found only in Jesus Christ. We believe that His Gospel—as an essential foundation for any other social or political movement or philosophy—has the power to change us and change the world, so that we all may be the good, strong, capable, dignified, and faithful women that we aspire to be.

THE CHALLENGES WE FACE

Well-organized movements have developed ideologies that undermine and ultimately destroy the positive contributions the Church and culture have made in affirming women's dignity and equality.

Detrimental Cultural Trends. Troubling and detrimental assumptions within the wider contemporary, secular society include:

- Epistemological (what is true) and moral (what is right) relativism that denies that any objective norm is available.
- Genetic, environmental, and cultural “determinisms” that assume behavior is beyond personal control and that repudiate the idea of personal responsibility.
- Oversimplified “group think” that views life as a struggle between oppressed victim groups and their oppressors.
- The elevation of individual rights over personal responsibility.
- The focus on the autonomous individual to the neglect of institutions of civil society, especially family.



Oil on canvas, 1890, William-Adolphe Bouguereau, private collection

The Holy Women at the Sepulcher

While Luke identifies the third woman come to the Sepulcher on Resurrection Sunday as Salome, Matthew cites only two—Mary Magdalene and “the other Mary,” probably Mary the mother of James, mentioned by John, who writes that the resurrected Christ first appeared to Magdalene. However, tradition holds that the risen Christ first appeared to his mother.

- Excessive state power and other utopian attempts, whether of the left or right, to engineer perfect societies.
- The “therapeutic” view that sees the sole purpose of human life as pleasure and self-actualization.
- Materialism as the sole basis for human happiness and success, a materialism that is blind to the deeper joy that is possible in adversity or prosperity.

Problems With Radical Feminism. The radical feminists' agenda has revolutionary, not reformist, goals. This agenda demeans the role of women

past and present and seeks to restructure society. Rather than liberating women by providing them equal opportunity to develop to the fullest their God-given talents, abilities, and potential, this agenda, in fact, leads to women being demeaned, their lives destroyed and their spirits enslaved. Specifically, we reject the following aspects of radical feminism:

- The interpretation of “gender” exclusively as a “social construct.” We recognize the force of cultural influences and individual choice on concepts of maleness and femaleness, but we affirm that sexuality is rooted in the biological designation of the two sexes—male and female.
- The definition of “equality” as “identical,” with quotas establishing 50-50 representation of males/females in all institutions and public arenas. We advocate equal opportunity rather than prescribed outcomes.
- The view that women have been “empty vessels” shaped by “patriarchy.” We recognize that some societies and cultures have unjustly limited women’s full participation, but biblical, church, and secular history record countless women of vision and tenacious faith who, through prayer and perseverance, overcame limitations of every variety to influence the shaping of human history.
- The portrayal of women as “victims,” the exaggerations of women’s suffering, and the denial that advances have been made in recognition of women’s rights. While we deplore all abuse and oppression, we gratefully acknowledge advances for women. As a whole, Western women entering the twenty-first century have power, education, and privilege unprecedented in human history.
- The idea that women are innately superior to, inferior to, or radically different in ability from men. We celebrate both our commonalities with men as fellow human beings and our unique differences as men and women.
- The glorification of sexual lifestyles without limits or consequences and views of marriage and family that contradict biblically based faith and time-tested moral behavior. We affirm the whole-

ness and freedom that flow from sexual abstinence before marriage and lifelong, monogamous fidelity within the mutual covenant of marriage between one man and one woman.

The Undermining of Our Churches. At times, portions of the American religious community have offered inadequate, irresponsible, or even destructive responses to pressing cultural crises. Recent decades reveal a massive diminution of the role that church leaders have historically played in positively shaping society. All too often, some of our church leaders have simply appropriated the questionable cultural values and agenda of society as their own. Specifically, we are troubled by the following developments within our churches:

- The movement to “re-imagine” two thousand years of Christian faith. We repudiate the assumption that Christian faith and teachings were first “imagined” by men and now should be “re-imagined” by women.
- The rejection of a balanced view of Christian monotheism, which has traditionally worshiped a triune God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) who is both immanent and transcendent. We repudiate the growing trend to embrace idolatrous tenets and rituals from non-Christian faiths and to intermix these with Christian faith and practice.
- The movement to reject any objective ultimate authority and elevate human experience as the only source of meaning.
- The exclusive focus on corporate and systemic sins, such as racism, classism, and sexism, while ignoring the commission of those sins by individuals who can and should be held accountable. The assumption of the innate innocence of the human person and human perfectibility leads to neglecting a call for personal repentance and Christian conversion.
- The substitution of orthodox liturgies, sacraments, and hymnody with radical feminist rituals and songs that focus on women’s suffering and victimization and obsessively glorify women’s bodies and sexuality.

- The demand for rigid quotas for identical participation of women in church life and work.
- The promotion of easy-to-get divorces, abortion on demand, and lesbianism as acceptable lifestyle choices. We repudiate tolerance for sinful behavior patterns that stem from making misguided assumptions that pleasure produces human fulfillment and that such fulfillment is the main object of life.

OUR PERSONAL PRIORITIES

There are those whose feminism is a means to power and self-actualization. Our vision of womanhood is different. True power and self-fulfillment are byproducts of a rightly ordered life, not its goals. As heirs of a tradition of strong, capable Christian women whose influence on the world has been positive and uplifting, our aspiration is to ennoble women in the service of Christ. Specifically, we pledge:

To Live Holy Lives. Recognizing the imperative to live in right relationship with God, we will celebrate the atonement of Jesus Christ and declare our allegiance to His Lordship. Filled with wonder and joy, we will worship the triune God. We will aspire to the highest standards of Christian morality and virtue by living an “examined life” enabled by God’s Holy Spirit.

To Develop Strong Families. Whether we are married or single, we will choose a radical and sacrificial commitment to strengthening our families. Realizing that successful family life is integral to any other right definition of success, we will make the development of strong family life for ourselves and others a priority in our lives, including our time, interests, and material wealth.

To Embrace Our Calling to Authentic Service to Others and the Church. We will consider it an obligation, freely assumed, to be diligent servants of God and stewards of God’s world around us. We will help build strong communities, help strengthen mediating institutions, and live justly among friends and neighbors. We will have special concern for those among us who are poor, defenseless, or who are suffering.

To Be Good Citizens. We resolve to participate in public discourse about the issues and values that



Unknown artist. The Filicchi Portrait of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, c. 1804. St. Joseph's Provincial House Archives, Emmitsburg, Maryland

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

The first native-born North American to be canonized (1975), Elizabeth (1774-1821) was mother of five children, founder of both the Society of Relief of Poor Widows with Small Children in New York and the Daughters of Charity of St. Joseph, a community of Catholic sisters who established orphanages, hospitals, and parochial schools. Mother Seton not only worked with the poor and sick, but also composed music, wrote hymns, and authored spiritual discourses.

are fundamental to our Christian worldview and to do so with civility and forthrightness. We will endeavor to live lives of integrity and to model the virtues that are necessary to perpetuate a democratic and civil society. We resolve to confront the divisive and destructive forces that could readily undermine our own democracy.

To Fulfill Our Worldwide Obligations. As Christians with an international perspective, we will offer the blessings of the Judeo-Christian moral order and the Gospel of Jesus Christ to women and men around the world. We will support the

oppressed, especially women and children, and those who are persecuted for their religious faith. We will stand with those of all races who aspire to freedom, peace, and justice.

To Build the Church. We will uphold the “holy catholic church” as the body and bride of Christ. We will work through prayer and discipleship for the transformation of lives through Jesus Christ. We will be faithful to the Great Commission of the Church by proclaiming Christ’s work and teachings, confident that these will produce profound spiritual and social impact.

OUR CORPORATE PLEDGE OF ACTION

Together, as women of faith, we will focus on three significant areas of engagement:

We Will Work to Reverse Detrimental Cultural Trends. We affirm democracy as the type of government that holds the most promise for the just and good ordering of society and that best protects human rights and dignity. But we acknowledge that democracy, at its best, is a fragile and often flawed experiment. The greater freedom we enjoy in Western society has created an environment where the misuses of freedom have produced social disintegration. Every person, endowed with inalienable rights, is also obligated to exercise personal and social responsibility. Today, the democratic experiment faces perhaps its gravest threat—a cultural crisis that is at its core a crisis of faith.

We will provide leadership toward responsible involvement in public life by identifying and responding to the dominant cultural ideas that destroy a just and good social order. We will work to counter the destructive movements that undermine the values and covenant relationships that are necessary to shape and nurture a democratic citizenry. At home and abroad, we will seek to serve as moral agents to build rightly ordered and just societies respecting the dignity of all persons.

We Will Expose the Assumptions at the Foundation of the Radical Feminists’ Philosophy. We are especially concerned about the effects on women of contemporary cultural trends. We decry the erroneous thinking about human nature, sin, and utopian expectations of society that have produced a pervasive sense of emptiness. The notion

of women’s autonomy—including absolute control over our own bodies—leaves us with an unrealistic sense of human power and an exaggerated sense of independence from the consequences of our attitudes and actions. The denial of the transcendent God who orders the universe and directs our lives leaves us with societal chaos and the absence of any objective standard of meaning. Most especially, it is the authority of the one true God, in whose image male and female are made, that insures the dignity and equality of women and men.

We will counter the influence of extremists within the feminist movement. We will make clear the agendas and programs that harm efforts to enhance the equality, dignity, and freedom of women. And we will expose and counter extreme, radical initiatives that demean rather than liberate women, that destroy women’s lives and enslave their spirits.

We Will Press for a Renewal of Biblical Orthodoxy in the Church and for a More Central Role for Faith in Society. Many of our churches are excessively influenced, and some even dominated, by radical ideologies whose agendas contradict the Scriptures and historic teachings that are the foundation of Christian faith. The most likely outcomes of the radical agendas are often obscured by lofty-sounding purposes and goals.

We will unite with women of faith who will agree to press for the reform and renewal of our churches. We will be bold in proclaiming the Gospel, the redemptive, transforming power of Jesus Christ. We will work to strengthen those aspects within the Church that affirm the time-honored truths of the Gospel. While we proclaim the intrinsic freedom of each person in Christ, we will seek to rejuvenate the worldwide Christian witness.

We will unite with women of faith to press for a more central role for faith in American society. The coarsening of our culture and the other ills of our society are the inevitable result of allowing faith to become not just sidelined but trivialized in American life. We will work to restore the solid foundation of American culture—biblical orthodoxy in the Church and faith both as a driving force in our personal lives and as a central building block of our society. □

A Look at Factory Farming

ANIMAL CARE cannot be a pressing concern for people who eat animals. Or can it? Judging from what is (not) reported in the media, the dearth of information on the raising of animals for slaughter is understandably not of pressing interest. How could it be? All but the most jaundiced carnivores do not care to be reminded that animals have feelings—with the exception of their household pets, who may be nearly humanized by their owners, and thus, one hopes, treated humanely.

But though the living conditions of many animals targeted for human consumption is unsettling enough not to be common knowledge, the meat-eating American public *is* concerned about the health benefits or hazards of consuming animal flesh. For it is potentially *their* flesh. Therefore the chemicals fed to animals destined for one's dinner should be strictly regulated. But isn't that a function of our federal government? Most Americans have what may politely be called faith that its government will protect their health through the controls and scrutiny of the Department of Agriculture (USDA), which includes the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). But the movers and shakers in the livestock industry have their own interests for which they also seek government cooperation, a cooperation that may run counter to consumer needs and expectations. And big money has a way of persuading. Is there the makings of a conflict here?

Consider the following. According to officials at the Humane Farming Association (HFA), the nation's largest and most effective organization dedicated



HFA Photo

This is how "milk-fed" veal calves spend their entire lives—chained at the neck in wooden crates, they can not walk or even turn around. They are fed an anemia-inducing liquid diet.

to the protection of farm animals, the FDA learned in August, 1989, that the Vitek Supply Corp, a veal calf feed supplier in Wisconsin, was using the illegal and toxic drug clenbuterol as an ingredient in the feed it manufactured, sold and distributed to major veal industry producers. But the FDA and the USDA kept their information secret, eventually prompting the HFA to initiate its own investigation, which, when the incriminating evidence became overwhelming, resulted in the FDA's finally bringing suit against Vitek in 1997.

Clenbuterol is a steroid-like drug not approved for use in the U.S. "In Europe, it has been related to hundreds of illnesses, most requiring emergency hospitalization." (HFA Special Report, Vol XIII, No. 1) Vitek had illegally distributed more than 1.7 million pounds of clenbuterol-laced feed. Its value to veal "farmers" is that it speeds weight gain in calves and artificially lightens flesh color. Why is



HFA Photo



HFA Photo

“Battery” cages now produce over 98% of our eggs.

A sow locked in a gestation crate often rubs her snout back and forth across the front of the crate or frantically and repeatedly bites the metal bars—an endorphin-releasing activity whose “self-narcotization” may provide a temporary measure of relief from the torment of crate confinement.

the word “farmer” in quotes? Because veal calves are raised in factories. The newborn male calf is taken from its mother and chained in crates measuring 22” wide and 58” long. It cannot turn around or lie down in a natural position. It is deliberately kept anemic to produce the light-colored meat sold as “milk-fed” veal. Deprived of drinking water, the calves drink more of their drug-laced liquid feed, gaining weight more rapidly. They are kept in darkness, denied all solid food, and suffer from chronic diarrhea.

This is the terrible fate of hundreds of thousands of veal calves every year in the U.S. But who would know it in the meat department of one’s local market, where slabs of animal flesh are neatly packaged in white styrofoam trays and clear plastic wrappers? Complete dissociation from the origins and history of a once sentient (and therefore suffering) being are essential for gustatory satisfaction.

Veal calving is but one form of factory farming. Cows have been turned into biotech milk machines through injection of Bovine Growth Hormone (BHG) which artificially manipulates the cow’s lactation, exposes women, according to toxicologist Dr. Samuel Epstein, to “an additional breast cancer risk,” increases bovine udder infections (Consumers Union), mastitis, cystic ovaries, disor-

ders of the uterus, lesions and swellings in the hocks and knees (Monsanto warning).

Chickens are also factory farmed. They are raised in “battery cages,” four or five so closely packed together that they are barely able to move. To reduce cannibalism, laying hens are “debeaked” by a hot blade, many dying from shock during the process. The hen is pressed against the side of its wire cage. Her feathers fall out. Her skin becomes raw, often bloody. Her feet are injured and often caught in the sloping wire floor. Male chicks, being of no value to the egg industry, are thrown into plastic garbage bags where they slowly suffocate under the weight of the chicks dumped on top. Others are ground into animal feed—while still alive. Christ’s body is crucified in many ways.

While the advertising phrase “No Hormones” suggests that factory eggs are raised naturally, in fact enormous amounts of antibiotics, pesticides, and other chemicals are used. Vegetarians who eat eggs have the option of buying eggs labeled “range free,” or “cage free,” and “no antibiotics.”

The pork industry is also an ugly spectacle. Here the media has recently been raising something of a stink. Not because of the inhumane conditions the pigs endure, but because their waste is leaching into the waterways where it feeds a microorganism

(*Pfiesteria*) that is killing large numbers of fish and causing human illnesses. (See “Are Our Coastal Waters Turning Deadly?” *National Wildlife*, April/ May, 1998.) The pork farmers say there is no connection between these occurrences and their business.

And what of the pigs themselves? They are often raised in crates, cages, and bare concrete pens in windowless metal buildings. As federal tax breaks favor large-scale corporate agriculture, industrial pig farms now dominate the pork industry. The animals can be intensively confined through the extensive use of drugs. Writing in the *National Hog Farmer*, L.J. Taylor offers this advice: “The breeding sow should be thought of, and treated as, a piece of machinery whose function is to pump out baby pigs like a sausage machine.” Or from the *Hog Farm Management Magazine*: “Forget the pig as an animal. Treat him just like any other machine in a factory. Schedule treatments like you would lubrication. Breeding season is the first step in an assembly line.” Regarding “treatments,” the National Academy of Sciences reports that “Medicine costs stemming from swine confinement production systems have been shown to be at least double those of a comparably productive pasture and hutch system.”

Where does all that medicine (antibiotics, hormones) go? Into the sow. Where does the sow go? Much of it into the human stomach, along with the microbes some of the medicines were meant to kill or control.

Enough of the lurid details. Although, if they are not described, it’s business as usual. They do have a motivating shock value. Were each meat eater required to tour the factories where their meals originate, many might immediately “swear off,” since flesh food is palatable for most people only when complete dissociation from its living source is maintained.

Is the vegetarian “off the hook,” guiltless in these matters. Scarcely less than his meat-eating neighbors, associates and friends. For most of us, out of sight *is* out of mind. Efficient daily functioning even requires it. But there is One Who



By depriving veal calves of their mother’s milk, fresh air, exercise, adequate nutrition, and proper veterinary care, veal factories are a breeding ground for stress and infectious diseases. Consumer awareness and consumer pressure are the most effective means we have for eliminating the health hazards posed by factory farming and for ending the needless suffering of animals.

experiences *all* the world’s pain and suffering—human and animal. And anything we can do to reduce man’s inhumanity to his brothers, including his younger brothers in the animal life wave, will help to lessen Christ’s ongoing Passion.

Ignorance is sin and bondage. Knowledge is power and the ground of individual freedom. Let it be known then that “intensive confinement facilities constitute one of today’s most serious consumer health and environmental hazards. And for the animals held captive, life is one of unrelenting frustration, pain and suffering,” inflicted upon them for the sake of personal profit.

Those who would like to know what they can do to mitigate the health threat and alleviate the suffering of factory farmed animals may contact the Humane Farming Association, 1550 California St., San Francisco, CA 94109 (Phone 415 771-CALF). We’re not talking about heavy-handed proselytizing. There is much here that will appeal directly to the meat consumer’s self-interest. Such as their health. And if their humanity is awakened to the cry of captive millions of warm-blooded, soul-bearing beings, all the better—for all of us. □

—C.W.

BOOK REVIEWS

Literacy in the Information Age

THE TWO BOOKS reviewed here span a ten-year period during which the issue of universal literacy and its enforcement by governmental policy has been debated with increasing shrillness on all kinds of public platforms, even while the massive influx of the mass media has drowned us in a “smog of information (that degrades) reading and writing.” Of the two authors, Ivan Illich’s numerous books have made him known as a subtle and complex writer whose thoughtful voice has run like an ostinato through various fundamentals debates about contemporary culture. A master of the paradox, yet also a man of wisdom rooted in a wide-ranging erudition, he has remained totally innocent of the gratuitous fireworks of nihilistic paradox. Sanders is less famous, but *ABC—the Alphabetization of the Popular Mind* (Ivan Illich and Barry Sanders, Vintage, 1988, 187 pp.) is clearly the expression of a deep intellectual friendship between two powerful minds. The book’s origins in their conversations contributes a warmth and a mobility that is like an after-glow of the worlds they describe. Fittingly for works that are involved with the power of conversation, *A Is for Ox—Violence, Electronic Media and the Silencing of the Written Word* (Pantheon, 1996, 269 pp.), written by Sanders alone, is less ‘warm’, while remaining equally insightful and stimulating.

The books are written to be read by thoughtful readers with little patience for jargon, and the smoothness of the writing encourages reflection and meditative pondering. As Sanders suggests in *A Is for Ox*, the issues at stake are vital, and it is difficult to disagree with his sense of urgency.

Between the two of them, the books constitute a meditation on the nature of literacy, the relation



Mark sharpening his quill in French Renaissance Book of Hours as a scribe Waddesdon Manor, Aylesbury, The National Trust. Ms 20, f. 13v.

While Medieval manuscripts (hand + write) preserved classical Greek and Latin texts and were often illuminated with elaborate designs and fanciful images, mechanically printed words have a material facticity and impersonality that deceptively endows them with more authority, even as they are more remote from the spirit-imbued spoken word and the hand-executed document. A medieval Mark is with his lion.

between spoken language and written literature, and the effects of a contemporary culture that is in the process of replacing language (both spoken and written) by “information.” They can be read fruitfully as distinct works, but they are clearly related, with *A Is for Ox* providing more detailed accounts of parts of *ABC*, as well as opening very insightful new perspectives that confirm and expand the interpretations of the earlier book in the light of the development of our culture in the intervening years.

Most informed readers will have some general

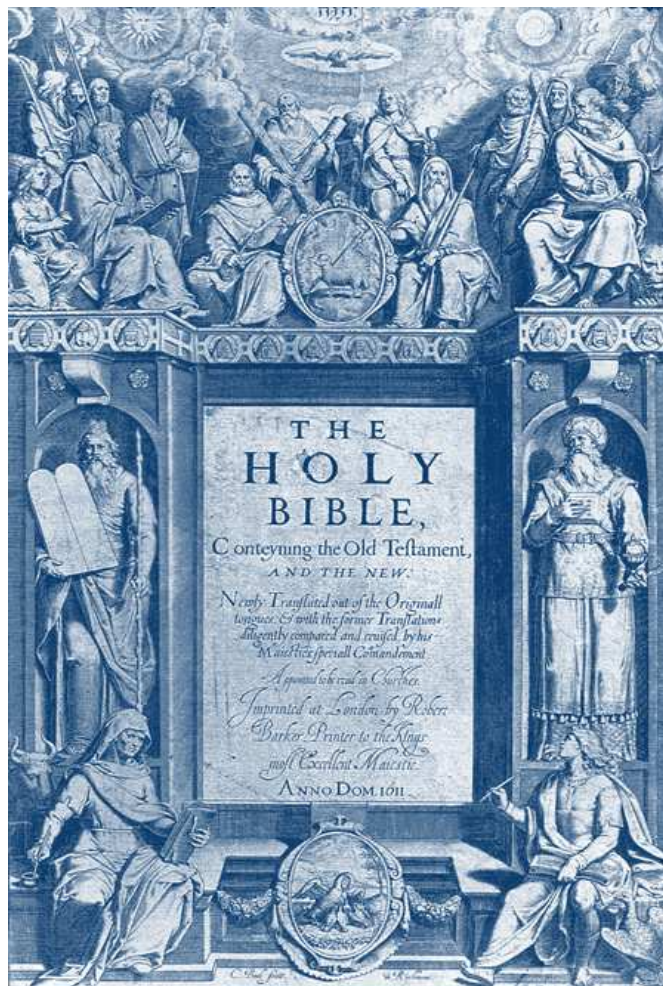
ideas about ‘modern’ book cultures having somehow replaced ‘traditional’ oral cultures, with various effects on the way people use their mind, their power of memory, etc. Still we may find it difficult to fully perceive the tremendous impact of the changes brought about by the technology of alphabetical writing—so tremendous that Herodotus stated that “the human race was brought into being by script”; i.e., by a system that recorded only sounds, not meanings, as previous image-based writing had done. Ilich and Sanders take us on a journey through this metamorphosing landscape, allowing us to fully register the impact of each individual development in the complex technology of reading and writing.

At first, of course, the alphabetic writing recorded only consonants, as a record of the harsh or soft obstacles encountered by the breath in speaking. Only later did vowels begin to record the freely voiced qualities of breathing.

Once this happened, the idea of Mnemosyne (memory as the goddess of immortal recollection) faded, to be replaced by a thinking for which memory was a cellar full of stored goods, or a ledger with strings of entries, a deposit to be opened, searched, and used. Thought and speech were no longer intertwined in every statement; past, present and future became sharply distinct realities. Knowledge could be frozen on a written page. And according to Plato, King Thamus of Thebes saw with foreboding an age of “ignorant know-it-alls, nosy know-nothings, boring wisecracs...” Before long, memory became divided into ‘natural’ memory, born simultaneously with thought, and ‘artificial’ memory, to be improved through precise techniques, devices and exercises.

Language, from embodied Logos, became transformed into ‘words.’ Paradoxically, the words that had been invented at first to record individual sounds became gradually inhabited by silence, devoid of fleshly substance, detached from the speaker’s gender, robbed of the multiple layers of context which as late as the early 20th century could still be found in the grammar of primarily oral cultures. Languages, requiring translation, and imprisoned by fixed national borders, replaced the fluidity of dialects.

By the Middle Ages in Europe, the use of letters



The title page of the King James Version of the Bible, 1611. In every country of Protestant Europe the translation of the Bible deeply affected both literature and everyday language.

was giving birth to a new kind of society, new ways of doing business, of nourishing the prayer life, of administering justice. Before alphabetic writing, writing had been the carefully guarded container of sublime mysteries. With the ever-spreading use of written documents, writing became a mere tool for the recording of the most mundane relations. Where a person’s given word and spoken promise used to have absolute power, trust shifted to a sealed document. Each piece of describable property became surrounded by charters, descriptive and prescriptive documents of all kinds. Activities, work as old as the world, became fodder for documentation, certification. The making of certifiably identical copies, the use of time and date, the appearance of signatures, the increasingly conscious design of the written (and later printed) page, the making of books, their cataloguing, the invention of the index, the

Maidenhead Archives

distinction between narration and quotation—ultimately, the whole world lay described before the reader’s eye.

Memory itself became the memorizing of books. Reading took three forms: reading as a teacher’s activity, reading as a listening activity, and contemplative reading, in silence. As the authors put it, “the practical concern with the identity of two charters and the spiritual concern with the individuality of each person reflect a new ability to distinguish between the book and what is on the page.” Smaller, increasingly cheaper books became more generally accessible, to be entered and exited at will by the individual reader. The full-fledged self appeared, a self that soon would be able to take its knowledge, put it into a bag, and withdraw completely with it from the conversation with others. But also a self that could shape, re-shape and transform itself through literature.

Illich and Sanders remind us that until the advent of electronic media, reading was still rooted in orality, in the world of live speech, of conversation. Part of the power of literacy resided in its connection with orality. This theme serves as the basis for Sander’s later book, *A is for Ox*.

The earlier book ended on the ominous evocation, first mentioned in the Cabalah, of a world in which “words [might rebel] against human beings, ...shake off the servitude of meaning ...become only themselves, as dead stones in our mouths.” This would be a world without language, and without creative silence. This would be a world of increasingly lonely *I*s, and of an analytic *we*. A world where there is not conversation but ‘communication,’ the interactive *we* of the computer, the *we* of propaganda, of advertising, an impoverished *we*. The authors ended with an expression of their longing for “the silent space that remains open in our examined lives, the silence of friendship.”

It is this pregnant silence that constitutes the springboard of the later book. There, Sanders examines the world in which we now live, a world in which the book, and literacy with all its complex powers, has been taken over by governments and business. This is a world in which literacy has



Engraving, 1624, Schelte à Boswert, Priory of the Hermits of Saint Augustine, Malines, Belgium

Augustine is Absorbed in the Trinity

In the World of Thought truth sounds as spiritual tone whose reflection in the material world is the spoken word. The book of seven seals mentioned in the Apocalypse contains mental archetypes. Just such an archetype inspires St. Augustine as he attempts to record it in mundane language.

become almost completely detached from language (from Latin *lingua*, tongue), Logos. It is a world in which books for the larger public have lost their power to evoke, their magic; a world where more and more people get processed through educational mills, yet come out illiterate; a world in which more and more children grow up watching TV, listening to radio, deprived of the face-to-face conversations, the ‘orality’ upon which true literacy is founded, out of which it grows.

Sanders demonstrates that language is interchange between persons, ‘friendship,’ the alternation of speaking and listening. He shows how this aspect of language makes access to a rich spoken environment a prerequisite for literacy, how familiarity with conversation and with reading and writing are needed for the maturation of a potent sense of self, and for the grounding of social structures. He examines the extent to which electronic communication disturbs these basic processes by allowing for information to circulate without the person in any way taking responsibility for its creation or its transmission.

Important sections of the book are devoted to the presentation of evidence about the physiological effects of living in an electronic world. Living in a

world of conversations, live story-telling, where children are part of the ongoing river of speech, activates the person's immune system as well as the ability to live vigorously in feelings and imagination. Both the immune system and the feelings are crippled by exposure to a steady stream of TV and radio voices instead of live voices. This crippling in turn constitutes an obstacle in children's learning to read. By removing children from a rich world of speech we make it harder for them to learn to read. So that all attempts to speed up children's reading by seating them in front of computers actually will make it harder for them.

While condemning as wrong-headed all the shrill calls for early reading, literacy campaigns, etc., Sanders also demonstrates that the failure of increasing numbers of young people to become literate signals a wider catastrophe. He connects the spread of youth violence in gangs to the loss of the human voice and of a richly articulated social experience (articulated through conversation). The earlier book shows how the invention of writing and books allows human beings to shape and reshape

themselves and their worlds, to create fiction, autobiography, history, to create futures with the same power that allows humans to create history. Without futures, without a sense that there is world of creative possibility ahead of them, human beings are condemned to violence. Sanders argues that the future tense, as a grammatical fixture, is born with the advent of reading and writing in human history. And that, in order to imagine futures, *human* futures, human beings need to be given back the resources of literacy grounded in orality.

Sanders leaves readers with no doubt about the tragic error of asking, as our public authorities do: "How can we make sure that children read at earlier and earlier ages, by giving them all interactive computers in kindergartens with wonderful reading programs in them?" The real question is: "How can we rebuild the communities that will make sure that children hear human voices, human stories, human songs, that children are involved in the stream of human conversations, and within that stream, get introduced to the powers of the Book?" □

—Mado Spiegler

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Mayest Thou Prosper in Health

“Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.”—3 John 2

THOUGH THE WORD *health* appears many times in the Bible, only in this one instance is it given its full significance—in all other passages it is used wholly and only as a figure of speech. In this particular verse the apostle differentiates, in a very definite manner, between the welfare of the physical body and that of the soul: “I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.” Being practical, John emphasizes the fact that there is such a thing as physical righteousness and, if we interpret him aright, he considers it of equal importance with spiritual righteousness.

What John might have said, but didn’t, is that health and holiness are synonymous. Our great mentor, Max Heindel, very succinctly paraphrased the same thought when he wrote, “Matter is crystallized spirit.” And again, “An unclean vessel can not contain pure and wholesome water.” A purified body is a healthy body, and the relation of health to holiness is always significant—in proportion. Whatever makes for health makes holiness possible, and from time immemorial happiness has been known to be their effect.

To be well is the first duty of man. To be strong in health is a duty we owe to ourselves, to our posterity, to our God. But man is so engrossed with the evolution of his soul that he woefully, if not willfully,



Oil on canvas (1877), John William Waterhouse (English Pre-Raphaelite painter), 1849-1917. Private Collection

A Sick Child Brought into the Temple of Aesculapius

God of medicine and healing, Aesculapius presided over a mystery cult in Epidaurus, near Athens. He had four daughters, Hygeia and Panacea being the most famous. A healing center of Hygeia, or Salus, was introduced in Rome in 293 B.C. by Sybilline prophecy, to overcome a plague. Hygiene normally refers to the cleanliness that is vital to vigor and good health. A serpent-entwined rod is iconic to the art of healing.

neglects his physical body, the body which Paul tells us is the living “temple of the Holy Ghost.”

How strange that ecclesiastic education scarcely acknowledges the importance of physical righteousness; yet no true sense of spiritual orientation is possible without the background of physical well-being. Physical health assures that mental peace and security and self-expansion which bring a sense of buoyancy to life. When this truth is recognized and appreciated, and the knowledge of it intelligently applied, the soul grows by leaps and bounds, by throes and throbs. A flash! and a glory stands revealed for which you have been groping

blindly through the years.

Man cannot rise above nature; below nature man cannot fall. When the intrinsic standards that nature has erected for physical vigor were neglected or denied by the superstitions of any society, or the shibboleths of any age, disease and pestilence destroyed the people. There is no difference between the principles of physical or mental or spiritual hygiene. When the inherent needs that nature has erected for physical normality are neglected or denied by the superstitions of the social order, physical disease and spiritual pestilence deform the people, and as long as the individual believes in, fears, or yields to the perverting practices or the false teaching, he will be or become neurotic. Indeed, the search for physical righteousness consists in the discharge of all ideas and opinions, values and ideals, that are against human development and evolution, whether they are embodied in the customs and conventions of one's own day, or found in the traditions and sanctions of an earlier century. Physical health requires treatment of the body according to the implicit needs of the body, and this requirement brooks no interference and no neglect.

Nature's laws are inexorable, her penalties inevitable, her rewards gloriously wonderful. Never can any advantage be taken of nature by a trick. The spirit of the world, the great calm presence of the Creator, comes not forth to the sorceries of opium or of wine. The sublime vision comes to the pure and simple soul in a clean and chaste body.

Nature's methods are evolutionary, not revolutionary. Nature makes the crabapple, but without man's help she could never evolve the pippin. Nature makes the man, but unless the man takes charge of himself, he will never evolve into a master. He will remain a crabapple man. So nature requires men to cooperate with her.

Jesus himself was a firm believer in this principle. He never exercised His power of healing without first suggesting that the patient do something for himself—co-operate. This spirit of cooperation is just as imperative today as it was 2,000 years ago. If the patient cooperates with nature, and the doctor cooperates with nature, all will be done that can be done, for nature (God) does all the curing.



Opaque watercolor over graphite on wove paper. J. J. Tissot, 1836-1902. Brooklyn Museum

The Man with an Infirmity of Thirty-eight Years

Belief in the power of healing is the precondition for its operation. If the patient acts on that belief, co-operates with the healer, he or she can be restored to health.

Health is born of knowledge; disease is the child of ignorance. Those who would have health, with all that magic word implies, will have to outgrow their lazy shiftlessness and become intense. A subject is either worth one's whole and undivided attention or it isn't worth anything. The subject of health is either worth enough effort to get it or it isn't. Every person should practice attention and concentrate. Learn to think. It's really worthwhile, yet how few use the grand prerogative of mind? How few think justly of the thinking few, and how many never think who think they do?

The chief obstacle to health is proud ignorance, that is to say, a congenital incapacity for thinking. People in general, including physicians, would have you believe that they think, but candidly, they only think they think. Thought does not easily cross the threshold of their understanding. What

they call thought is an aggregate of stereotyped ideas borrowed from someone else and never rigorously questioned or improved upon. Since these individuals have not yet elected to think for truly themselves, they are temperamentally allergic to ethical ideas concerning the law of cause and effect.

Neither profession nor people appear to have the slightest conception that they might, with a small mental effort, secure a knowledge of fundamental principles that would elucidate the law of cause and effect and assure them health through right living. Because of a lack of this knowledge, sickness has become more to be expected than health.

definite formula whereby he may obtain, retain, and radiate good health.

So far as we are able to judge, man is a transient, thinking, conscious, reasoning, and sometimes unreasonable, manifestation of Divine Energy. As such he enters this life with two all-important biologic characteristics; namely, the foodal instinct to keep the individual alive, and the sexual instinct to keep the race alive.

Fundamentally, then, the life of man rests on nutrition and sexuality. Around and about these primary instincts revolves everything in man's life. The manner in which he satisfies these vital urges

It is altogether impossible to have peace in the head and war in the stomach. A sour stomach means a sour disposition. Intestinal fermentation commonly ends in intellectual fermentation. In order to sweeten up the mental process we must sweeten up the digestive process.

Sickness is looked upon by the people, the state, the nation, as inevitable; and precautions, immunizations and preventions are in keeping with these false ideas. The reverse is true: If we live for health, and seek health instead of disease, we find it. Postmortems, vivisections, and laboratory investigations are all in the line of looking for disease—and we have found disease galore. If we look for health, it too can be found.

Obviously, all progress in mind, body, material things, and spiritual attainment has come to man through the study of cause and effect. And just in degree as he abandons the study of disease as futile and absurd, and applies himself to right living, here and now, will he prosper. The more we know of the unchanging laws of cause and effect the better we are able to use them for our personal advancement.

Man evolves from a cell; his entire evolution is cellular. Everything that influences him leaves its effect on the cells of his body. If the influence is favorable, the state we call health prevails; if the influence is unfavorable, the state we call disease prevails. Man's study of himself, then, becomes of significant importance; for an adequate understanding of the effect of all influences gives him a

determines his moral status and his moral status marks the degree of health and the length of life which he enjoys.

Since the human body is procreated by Divine Energy, it must be a suitable dwelling place for the power that creates and maintains it in accordance with laws which are identified in physiology and anatomy. The powers of life act through the functions of various organs, and in the human body, as in the animal body in general, the primary function is nutrition. The crucial importance of nutrition is emphasized by the fact that in the human body, as in all metazoal animal forms, the first step in embryonic development is the turning in of the outer layer of the embryo to form the body cavity, which is the beginning of the digestive tract.

Biologically considered, man is nothing but a peripatetic stomach with its appendages, an organized group of organs, clustered about his food tube. Now these organs, together with the food tube, constitute an exquisitely delicate mechanism, the orderly working of which depends entirely upon the nutrition of one's body.

Proper nutrition is achieved only by an individual's conscious effort—it requires a faculty known

as self-discipline and no mental massage or hypodermic injection of facts can take its place. It means living by knowledge, not by chance.

Nutrition, digestion, assimilation—one and all depend upon one's manner of eating. Awkward and untutored as we are in the art of living, we choose the wrong articles of food; we eat too much; we eat too fast; we eat when there is no need for food and often when absolute rest would do us more good. As man eats and digests his food so is he. It is altogether impossible to have peace in the head and war in the stomach. A sour stomach means a sour disposition. Intestinal fermentation commonly ends in intellectual fermentation. In order to sweeten up the mental process we must sweeten up the digestive process.

Maximum mental efficiency demands that intelligent attention be given to the diet. Balanced thinking goes hand in hand with balanced eating. Pure food is a direct aid to pure thoughts. Over-eating, hasty eating, and the eating of indigestible mixtures of food, all subtract from brain power and mental health and thwart spiritual attainment—in most instances by producing in the digestive tract certain poisons that are worse than alcohol in their paralyzing influence upon the delicate brain cells. Dullness, heaviness, or at times irritability of mind are the result of this toxemia resulting from undigested food stuffs. This accounts for the fact that many of our mental afflictions, such as worry, anxiety, fear, hate, and avarice, which were supposed in no way to be influenced by eating, subside or wholly disappear when the diet is corrected.

It is a wise thing to eat right. Not only for the stomach's sake, but for the sake of improved nutrition with its resulting health and happiness. In truth, there is no single measure that would so positively, so immediately contribute to the physical,

mental, moral, and spiritual welfare of the human race as inculcating the laws of health and right living. The ill man can be made well by teaching, and the healthy man can be made efficient by teaching. That is all there is to it.

The most important of the digestive processes, and the only one over which we have voluntary control, takes place in the mouth by thorough mastication and commingling of the food with the the saliva. Thorough mastication assures effective and complete digestion. It is also a sure way to avoid overeating. When thorough mastication is practiced, the taste buds on the tongue will say "enough" long before the stomach becomes overloaded. As individuals we must learn our respective digestive limitation, and be guided thereby.

It is a part of our sin that we are sick; it is a part of our religion and duty to be well. As a rational being, man

should not be forever thinking of his body nor yet of his soul. Rather he should be thinking of his job and his God. Good health or any other physical circumstance is not the chief end of life; nevertheless, good health is the supreme condition of our highest work and it greatly facilitates those intellectual, moral, and spiritual attainments in which consist the true worth and dignity of human life.

Health is nature's own reward for getting into harmony with her laws; by the same token man attains sympathy, moderation, equanimity and poise. Indeed, each and all of these cosmic attributes are concomitants of health—the reason being that thought is just as biologic as any physical function of the body.

Sympathy is a mark of attainment; the greatness of men can safely be gauged by their sympathies. Sympathy and the exuberance of health are twins. In health your heart goes out to all men; the high, the low, the rich, the poor, the learned, the

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unlearned, the good, the bad, the wise and the foolish—it is necessary to be one with them all, else you can never comprehend them. Empathy! It is the touchstone to every secret, the key to all knowledge, the open sesame of all hearts. Put yourself in the other man's place; then you will know why he thinks certain things and does certain deeds. Put yourself in his place, and your blame will dissolve itself into pity, and your tears will wipe out the record of his misdeeds.

The saviors of the world have simply been men with wondrous sympathy. But knowledge must go with sympathy, else, the emotions will become maudlin and pity may be wasted on a poodle instead of on a child; on a guinea pig instead of on a human soul. Knowledge in use is wisdom, and wisdom implies a sense of values—you know a big thing from a little one, a valuable fact from a trivial one. Tragedy and comedy are simply questions of value; a little misfit in life makes us laugh, a great one is tragedy and cause for expression of grief.

Poise is the strength of body and mind to control your sympathy and knowledge. Unless you control your emotions, they run over and you stand in the slop. Sympathy must not run riot, or it is valueless and bespeaks weakness rather than strength. In every hospital for nervous disorders are to be found many instances of this loss of control. The individual has sympathy but not poise, and therefore his life is worthless to himself and to the world. He symbolizes dependence, not helpfulness.

Poise reveals itself more in voice than in words; more in thought than in action; more in atmosphere than in conscious life. It is a spiritual quality, and is felt more than it is seen. It is not a matter of bodily size, nor of bodily attitude, nor of personal comeliness. It is a state of recollected inward being, of knowing your cause is just. And so you see it is a great and profound subject after all, great in its ramifications, limitless in extent, implying the entire science of right living.

Being the control of our sympathy and knowledge, poise implies possession of these attributes, for without sympathy and knowledge you have nothing to control but your physical body. To practice poise as a mere gymnastic exercise or study in etiquette is to be self-conscious, stiff, and ridiculous.

Spring's Sacraments

Lift up your hearts! The holy dews
Asperge the woodland throng;
Dawn after dawn the lark renews
His miracle of song;
While taper-like the crocus pricks
Athwart the yearning sod;
The primrose lifts his golden pyx,
And God looks forth to God.

The symbols blind, the visions fail,
Our souls strain out to Thee;
Within the leaf, the light, the veil,
Is Thy felicity.
O Hear of all the world's desire,
Breathe from around, above,
The mystic kiss of Fire to fire
That Love will yield to love.

—Harold E. Goad

We get knowledge by coming close to nature. That man is the greatest who best serves his kind. Sympathy and knowledge are for use—you acquire that you may give out; you accumulate that you may bestow. And as God has given unto you the sublime blessings of health, sympathy, knowledge, and poise, there will come to you a desire to show your gratitude by giving them out again; for the wise man is aware that we retain spiritual qualities only as we give them away.

Let your light shine. To him that hath shall be given. The exercise of wisdom brings wisdom; and at the last the infinitesimal quality of man's knowledge, compared with the Infinite, and the smallness of man's sympathy when compared with the source from which ours is absorbed, will evolve an abnegation and a humanity that will lend a perfect poise. In general, we may say that wherever a dynamic urge to live life wholeheartedly is in command of consciousness, health with all its cosmic attributes will be attained. □

—Leon Patrick, D.O., M.D.

HEALING

Mental Surgery

WE MUST, INDEED, marvel at the wonders of modern surgery—the genius and ingenuity manifested in the increasingly minute and complex operations which affect the delicate tissues of the brain and other organs of the human body so that amazing adjustments are made. Temporarily better health and happier lives thus result.

However, as truly marvelous and admirable as these accomplishments are, they must take second place to the miracles of surgery possible by means of the mind. Fully understood, the possibilities of mental surgery are indeed breathtaking.

The power of thought is as yet but dimly perceived and understood by the majority of people, but the coming years will bring increasing knowledge of this growing force in man. Already the pioneers are demonstrating the power of the mind in healing physical and mental ills.

When we understand, as occult philosophy teaches, that actually every thought we think is taken up by the blood and crystallized in our bodies and the situations about us, we may then realize how extremely vital it is that we learn to think constructively. If we want our bodies to function harmoniously and efficiently, then we must establish the positive thought patterns that naturally generate cheerfulness, trust, thankfulness and serenity. This can be done only by soulful repetition—a daily emphasis on the thoughts we wish actualize in our vehicles and environment.

Such emotional and mental illnesses as jealousy, cruelty, greed, hatred, resentment, worry, and vindictiveness—which have their physical counterparts in liver disturbances, impaired eyesight, digestive difficulties, headaches, irritability and



Oil on canvas, Carl Bloch (1834-1890), Chappel, Frederiksborg Castle, Denmark

The Sermon on the Mount is ever a guide and goal for establishing our moral, mental, and spiritual health.

general dysfunction—may be entirely eradicated by establishing vibrations of love, faith, optimism, forgiveness, and peacefulness in the mental and emotional bodies. Case histories of such healings are becoming more and more numerous, and they have the advantage not only of being less expensive, but of being permanent instead of temporary.

Truly, “as he (man) thinketh in his heart, so is he”—mentally, emotionally, and physically. □

Visible Helpers are just as necessary as Invisible Helpers, and our friends and patients may share in a high privilege, as well as add much to the power of liberated healing force, by joining us in prayer for the sick. Our Healing Service is held every evening in the Healing Temple at 6:30 (7:30 when Daylight time is in effect) and in the Pro-Ecclesia at 4:15 P.M., when the Moon is in a cardinal sign on the following dates:

- March.....1—8—14—21—29
- April.....10—18—24—30

Relax, close your eyes, and make a mental picture of the pure white rose in the center of the Rosicrucian Emblem on the west wall of our Pro-Ecclesia, and concentrate on Divine Love and Healing.

Meek and Mild

STRICKEN WITH FEAR the herd of sheep crowded into one corner of the corral. “My grandmother has seen it herself,” said an old sheep. “It is something most horrible and gruesome. Yet one does not know just exactly what it is. For she only passed a door that led into a dark room on her way to pasture. But there was heavy odor of blood, and as a terrible cry arose from within, my grandmother trembled violently and ran back to the fold.”

The rest of the herd shuddered and bleated in distress.

“Is your grandmother still alive?” questioned a young buck.

“I do not know, but not long after, they came and got her and she has never returned,” answered the older sheep. “They say that is always the beginning and there is no coming back.”

Just then the gate opened and a large shepherd dog, barking lustily, drove the herd down the lane and out into the pasture. There stood the shepherd talking with a man who did not have the appearance of a shepherd. Finally, with decisive steps, the stranger strode into the herd and critically sized up the various animals. Presently, he grabbed the young buck and threw a tether around his neck.

An ice cold tremor shook the body of the animal and with fearful eyes, he struggled vainly to free himself.

“I’ll take this one,” said the man, producing a dirty money sack and passing some coins to the shepherd. Thus, by the magic of money, the living flesh was transferred from life to death.

As he tugged the reluctant animal away from the



Oil on Canvas, Philippe de Champaigne (1602-1674), Musée des Granges de Port-Royal

The Good Shepherd

pasture and out onto the highway, the rest of the herd fixed wondering eyes upon the young buck, who turned his pleading eyes toward his relatives and playmates. Something inside seemed to cramp and convulse as he struggled again to return to the fold. “This is the beginning,” he thought. “I am being taken away.” But sensing the futility of resistance he mutely followed his captor.

Soon they turned a corner and as the herd and home disappeared from view, the wind carried faint sounds of the barking dog and the shepherd’s flute.

For a long time the man walked swiftly down the hot dusty road. The legs of the buck grew tired and weak; the dust was parching his throat, and the



The Lamb

Little Lamb who made thee
Dost thou know who made thee
Gave thee life and bid thee feed;
By the stream and o'er the mead;
Gave thee clothing of delight,
Softest clothing wooly bright;
Gave thee such a tender voice,
Making all the vales rejoice:
Little Lamb who made thee
Dost thou know who made thee.

Little Lamb I'll tell thee,
Little Lamb I'll tell thee;
He is called by thy name,
For he calls himself a Lamb:
He is meek and he is mild,
He became a little child:
I a child and thou a lamb,
We are called by his name.
Little Lamb God bless thee
Little Lamb God bless thee.

—William Blake

rope was nearly choking off his breath. Finally he bleated piteously for rest and water. But the stranger dragged him onward until they came to a little town. As they passed through some narrow streets the repellent odor of blood and decayed flesh met the animal's nostrils. Soon they stopped at a gate before a small building.

"Please, oh, please, let me go home," said the buck, bleating up at the man as he opened the gate. But the dumb supplication was unheard. Quickly the man bound the helpless animal's legs and carried him inside a dark stuffy room. A paralyzing terror gripped the buck's body as he instinctively knew the worst had come.

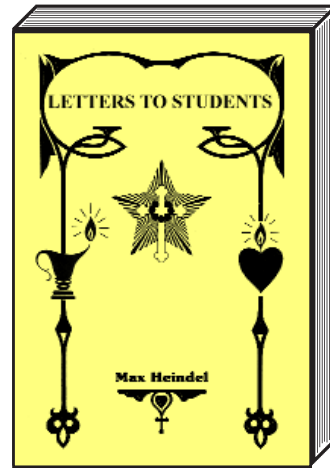
And come it did.

How full the world is of unheard prayers of man and beast! The cry of the stricken and suffering is all about us. They are all recorded in the large compassionate eyes of Christ as He walks unseen through the earth. □

—Manfred Kyber

Letters To Students

By Max Heindel



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