

READERS' QUESTIONS

An Incomplete Bible? Healing and the Planets Faith Problem with Core Beliefs

QUESTION: How can you follow the Bible when much of it is missing or stolen? The Gospels are not complete as the traditional churches do not want us to take our power back.

Answer: Yours is one position that may be taken vis-a-vis the Bible and the orthodox church. Another might be to concentrate on what is present in the Bible, for, be assured, the essentials are there: The account of the giving of the life of Christ to humans in a gratuitous death for our redemption, and the promise that we are Christs-in-the-making.

The New Testament Bible grew organically, its non-Gospel texts drawn principally from Paul's letters, which were actually written before the Gospels. For a while there was no need for the Gospels—eye witnesses of the life, death, and resurrection of Christ Jesus were living through much of the first century. But there was need for some explanation of what these momentous events signified, and Who this Being was over Whom death had no power.

Luke's gospel followed that of Mark and Matthew. The latter was one of the "eyewitnesses and ministers of the word." And Luke also thought it helpful ("good") to write of the Incarnation of the Son of God, since he "had perfect understanding of all things from the very first" and could vouch for "the certainty of those things." Likewise John, the Beloved, who was attuned to the heart of Christ, could attest to the love-wisdom embodied in Jesus, both in his Gospel and letters: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled,

of the Word of life ...That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye may have fellowship with us."

Who is better qualified than these seminal figures in the recording and formulation of the Christian Narrative, including Paul, who, in his words (1 Cor 15:8), was the last (up to his time) to see Christ. He was not ready to serve the Lord but Christ had need of him; therefore, he was "as one born out of time," that is born into an understanding of the Word before he would have come to such understanding through his own devices, for at the time of his stunning conversion he was a ferocious anti-Christian.

And Christ was "seen of James," whose letter has wonderful guidance and wisdom in it. And certainly the two letters of Peter—he who Christ at one time called Satan—are of great value.

Does this exhaust what we can know of Christianity? Clearly not. But few texts are more on target for a seeking soul. And nothing prevents us from seeking more. Indeed, we cannot but do so, because for many of us it is a love affair. When do we want to stop knowing more about what we love? Never. But if this is purely an intellectual matter, no amount of knowledge can, in and of itself, be a substitute for belief, for enabling us to make a decision for and in Christ. The fact that the canonical Bible does not contain all the writings that it could have included does not prevent a potential believer from finding the God of the Christian Church. Nor does that Church itself, whatever its perceived shortcomings. And what church might we be talking of? Roman, Orthodox,

Protestant, New Age, Unitarian, Mormon? More likely the problem involves some facet of ourselves. Perhaps, if we cannot affirm the core truths in scripture and live them in our life, we can only earnestly pray and ask God to guide us into the light of understanding and for a change of heart and a ordering of our mind.

The Rosicrucian Teachings were developed for persons who need more mental input, more logic to underpin their commitment to the God of Christianity. Railing against the church or the Bible will not serve our spiritual growth. Indeed, when we have assimilated these Teachings, we may well find that much that was opaque or even offensive in Scripture becomes clear and meaningful. A cardinal point that Max Heindel never tired of repeating is that if we live the life, we will know the doctrine—life's saving truths. Life becomes our teacher, and that teaching does not take place if we do not enter into the thick of things and daily give our utmost to be helpful, bringing all our energies and (often unknown) talents to bear upon our immediate circumstance. We are even now, each one of us, writing the book that teaches us what we most want and most need to know.

A FAITH PROBLEM WITH CORE BELIEFS

Question: I have been having faith problems with the core beliefs. I have concerns that astrology is not at all true. Max Heindel borrowed almost all his writings from others. I don't know if this is a trial of probationership to be exposed to this or not. I thought that I would send this email for advice.

Answer: The desire to know the truth is a fundamental human need. It was planted by God because, ultimately, God is the Truth we seek, and we do not truly know until we know God. Knowing more of His Creation—particularly in its spiritual aspect, in terms of the living Archetypes which are spirit Beings, members of creative hierarchies who partake more fully of the divine creativity—is the way we approach God and progress in becoming Who in essence we are. St. Paul enjoins us: Try the spirits and also be ever ready to give a reason for your faith.

If you read (or reread) the preface to *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*—"A Word to the

Wise"—you will see Heindel's objectives, appreciate his appeal to reason and fair-mindedness, and get a sense of his candor and honesty.

While it is true that much in the *Cosmo* can be found in other sources, you will find much in Heindel's entire opus that is found nowhere else: His crucial emphasis on and detailed study of the soul body; his scientific discussion of the difference between voluntary and involuntary clairvoyance (which Blavatsky never mentions, she being largely involuntary); information on the the description of the four-part silver cord, its gradual formation and multiple functions; the cause of the relatively high incidence of infant death. In regard to the latter, in Heindel's *Letters to Probationers*, to which only Probationers have access, the writer speaks of his being directed by the Brother to retrospect the lives of several hundred Egos who died as infants in order to come up with a common theme. Heindel's allusion to his Teacher (who guided or pointed out direction more than taught) in many contexts is highly persuasive, sewn into the fabric of his writings in such an organic, natural way as to virtually preclude fabrication or creative license.

It is healthy to call things into question, but it is self-defeating to approach esoteric teachings in a negative frame of mind rather than being receptive and impartial.

If you read a good amount of Heindel's writings, it is difficult not to be impressed by his clarity, rigor, and intellectual integrity. In the final analysis, whether Heindel is the first to make public a particular occult truth is beside the point. If you seek such truths, *who* gives them is of less important than *that* they are being given. Persons like Heindel are messengers. We esteem them for the message they deliver. If they are virtuous persons, as Heindel clearly was (moral development is his overriding concern), we are all the more appreciative and inspired. Heindel simply asks for a fair reading—one that is not interpreted through the lens of preconception or prejudice.

The following quote from Heindel's *Letters to Students* (#83) directly addresses your concerns, and also reflects on the character and trustworthiness of the one you are calling into question:

What, then, is the way to the heights of religious

realization, and where may one find it? This seems to be the next logical question. The answer to it is that it is not found in books, either my own or anyone else's. Books are useful in so far as they give us food for thought on the subjects dealt with. We may or may not come to the same conclusions as the writer of the books, but so long as we take the ideas presented into our inner being and there work over them carefully and prayerfully, whatever comes out of the process is our own, nearer the truth than anything we can get from anyone else or in any other way.

The within then is the only worthy tribunal of truth. If we consistently and persistently take our problems before that tribunal, we shall in the course of time evolve such a superior sense of truth that, instinctively whenever we hear an idea advanced, we shall know whether it is sound and true or not. The Bible in a number of places exhorts us to beware of all kinds of doctrines floating about in the air because many are dangerous and unsettle the mind. Books are launched on the market which advance this, that, or the other system of philosophy. Unless we have established, or have started to establish, this inner tribunal of truth, we may be like the lady referred to above—wandering about from place to place, mentally speaking, all our lives and finding no rest, knowing little more at the end than in the beginning and perhaps even less.

Therefore my advice to the student would be never to accept or reject or follow blindly any authority, but to strive to establish the tribunal of truth within. Refer all matters to that tribunal, proving all things, and holding fast to that which is good.

Until we have developed this interior tribunal, it will be impossible for us to confirm the truth claims for any proposition. The doubts we express are then, finally, self-doubts, due to lack of sufficient self-knowledge, for which experience, rigorous self-examination, and prayerful meditation are the antidotes.

PLANETS AND HEALING

Question: I am very interested in your article called "The Ductless Glands" that I was reading in your online magazine. In that article the writer discusses the 'seven roses' upon the cross of the body

and their relationship to six of the planets.

I was recently given information by my spirit guides on a new form of healing called Subterfuge Organic Healing which means...going around a problem and using the hidden, unseen, but completely organic parts of nature to alleviate all conflict and painful circumstances within the human body. The shortened name will herein be called SOH. And what my guides want me to use are seven of the planets. Each of these planets has a different strength. For example, Jupiter, since it has so many layers, is utilized in 3 different ways: As a DIVIDER, it often can separate a disease from its original source or thought form; as a SIMPLIFIER, it can ease rational pain by enabling the entities involved to go into the light; and as a UNIFIER, it helps to bring the body back into alignment, helping the meridians to socially fuse their energies into one line. I am wondering if you have ever heard about any thing like this before?

Answer: We are not familiar with the alleged healing method you describe, but Max Heindel does state that the occult astrologer who is able to work in harmony with the stellar forces addresses the ambassadors of the Star Angels of each planet, directing his petition for the good of others according to the planetary hours when those stars have rule. (See the chart in *Simplified Scientific Astrology*, p. 192.) However, several comments are in order: While planetary forces "make things happen," they are not the *cause* of our sickness, nor are they the cause of our healing. Each individual, by his thoughts, actions, and lifestyle has created his present circumstances. For any healing to be permanent, knowledge of wrongdoing, repentance, restitution, and efforts to reform are necessary.

One must always proceed with caution when attempting to work at the nonphysical level of disease. The word "subterfuge" is not inviting; it means deception. Who or what is being deceived? Let it not be you. We know you are well-intentioned, but work with spirit guides requires great self-understanding, self-control, discernment, and the ability to "try the spirits," for such opening of one's self can invite forces into his sphere beyond the point where his individual autonomy can be exercised. □